

grenadine 06_26

By

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CUT INTO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A pale, round mouth. POP.

MILES (8, freckled) makes spit bubbles. POP. He sits in a RUSTY, half empty BATHTUB. The dirty bathroom is covered in scarlet red tiles.

TRISTAN (11, lean) walks in. He strips, carefully steps into the tub. He TURNS ON the hot water.

Tristan imitates Miles. POP. Miles giggles, creates a bigger spit bubble. Saliva comes out of his mouth.

TRISTAN

Eww.

The two boys laugh and-

SPLASH. Cold water SPLASHES them from the side.

MILES AND TRISTAN

AHH!

They raise their arms protectively.

TRISTAN

What are you doing?

MILES

Gustav, stop!

GUSTAVO (13, hardened) puts his WATER JUG down, goes to TURN OFF the water. He wears one of his dad's dress shirts. It's loose on him.

GUSTAVO

How many times do I gotta tell you?
It's getting cold downstairs.

TRISTAN

Sorry.

GUSTAVO

Get to bed, it's late.

Gustavo exits.

Tristan plays with the tub water. Miles scans his brother's face, TURNS ON the hot water. Tristan smiles.

A CRICKET wanders along the tub's plastic liner.

EXT. JUNKYARD - DAY

Where old car parts, rotten wood, and broken furniture go to die.

Miles scavenges, evaluates various items. He moves through the mess with a certain agility, picking up OLD AUDIO TAPES, a SILVER NECKLACE.

His eyes land on a RED PING PONG PADDLE covered in ash. He picks it up, palms it. He smiles. It's a snug fit. Miles dusts it off, swings his hand as if he's playing.

INT. TRISTAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

An organized bedroom, relatively clean. Painted blue. Tristan neatly combs his hair in the mirror, a RED toothbrush stuck in his mouth.

A drop of BLOOD drops on the BEIGE carpet. Tristan looks down at it, covers his bloody nose.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

A medium sized DELI.

Gustavo stands in front of the imported MEATS and CHEESE section. He eyes the food and the workers.

Gustavo walks through the aisles, putting various NON PERISHABLE CANS in his COAT POCKETS.

He walks to the CONDIMENT & SNACKS aisle, looks up and down. He stops, smiles, snatches a bottle of GRENADINE.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Gustavo opens greasy wooden CABINETS, empty for the most part. He grabs PEANUT BUTTER and a half empty bag of SLICED BREAD, tosses it on the dining table.

Tristan walks in, wears a clean BLUE POLO.

GUSTAVO
You want any?

Gustavo spreads peanut butter on toast, folds it.

TRISTAN
Do we have anything else?

Gustavo looks at the cabinets.

GUSTAVO

I'm gonna have to find a new store,
they almost caught me this time. I
did find this though.

He grabs the bottle of Grenadine, hands it to Tristan who
liveness up.

Miles walks in, carrying the AUDIO TAPES and wearing the
SILVER NECKLACE. He hands them to Gustavo, who puts them in
his pockets and gives Miles a KNIFE.

GUSTAVO

You cut, I choose. Thanks, I'll see
what they give me for 'em.

Tristan snatches an UNWASHED GLASS, cleans it. He pours the
syrupy liquid into his glass, fills it with tap water. Miles
cuts the sandwich in half. Gustavo takes one half, bites
into it. Miles does the same.

HONK. Tristan turns to the window. Gustavo wolfs down his
sandwich.

GUSTAVO

That's Cam. I'll see you guys
later, don't do anything stupid.

He grabs a BACKPACK, exits the house. Miles' gaze sticks to
the door.

INT. GARAGE - DUSK

A small, dusty garage. Empty boxes are piled up in the
corner. A fern green PING PONG TABLE stands half open in the
middle of the open garage. A broken paddle rests in a straw
basket.

Miles serves with the new paddle. The ball bounces back to
him. He hits as both players, trying to outdo himself with
each strike.

The ball falls, bounces to the street. Miles follows.

EXT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Miles runs after the ball. He grabs it, and-

BUBBLES pass in front of his face, carried by the wind. He
turns his head to see RIRI (9) carelessly blowing bubbles on
the sidewalk. She walks next to her SISTER (16) and her
sister's BOYFRIEND (17) on the sidewalk.

GUSTAVO (OS)
Miles! Are you out here?

Miles heads back into the garage.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Shattered curtain drapes spill on the STAINED CARPET. There are holes in the walls, the wallpaper folds in on itself. NEWSPAPERS are laid out on the floor, COUPONS are cut out. An old GAS FURNACE rests against the wall.

Tristan lies on the floor, YELLOW RUBBER GLOVES around his hands. He pats a red STAIN with a wet sponge.

Gustavo walks in, carries a METALLIC GAS CAN. He opens the furnace, pours gas into it.

GUSTAVO
You should go outside, Tris. The sun's nice today.

TRISTAN
Can you pass me the cream? It's on the table.

On a burnt COFFEE TABLE rests cleaning items and a shaving kit. Gustavo clasps a bottle of SHAVING CREAM, throws it to Tristan, who squirts some on the stain.

GUSTAVO
I'll go play with you if you want.
I'll come outside with you.

Tristan scrubs the sponge over the stain. Gustavo closes the cap on the furnace, looks into the empty gas can. He puts it down, looks at the coupons.

GUSTAVO
I can keep watch here if that makes you feel better.

TRISTAN
It's okay.

Tristan stops scrubbing, smells the shaving cream on the carpet. His mouth inches closer to the carpet. He licks it.

GUSTAVO (OS)
This one's for a jacuzzi. Would you like that, a jacuzzi? With bubbles and shit.

Tristan pinches the carpet hair with his index and thumb.
The stain is almost gone now.

TRISTAN
I'd like a jacuzzi.

Gustavo palms a razor, holds it to his cheek. He grazes his
skin with the blade. A soft sizzle cuts through the silence.

GUSTAVO HAS TO CLEARLY FAIL AT BEING A PARENTAL FIGURE

MILES COMES IN, GUSTAVO IMPLIES THEY NEED MORE STUFF FROM
JUNKYARD

EXT. JUNKYARD - DAY

Miles scavenges, walks around the yard. He walks past a
TOTALLED CAR. The back window SQUEAKS OPEN.

Riri is inside the car. She eats a SANDWICH.

RIRI
Who are you?

MILES
Sorry?

RIRI
What's your name?

MILES
Miles.

RIRI
I'm Riri. Look at my bracelets.

She throws her arm out the window, revealing a couple
RAINBOW COLORED BRACELETS.

MILES

MILES
That looks complicated.

RIRI
It's not, really. I could make you
one if you want.

MILES
No it's okay...

Riri reels her arm back in.

MILES
I mean, you don't have to.

RIRI
Okay. What do you like to do?

MILES
I like ping pong.

RIRI
Really? Who do you play with?

MILES
Whoever's around.

Riri nods, looks down at her arm.

RIRI
I make them with my sister. She's sixteen. She's made way more bracelets than me.

MILES
Cool.

RIRI
Her boyfriend is a pain in the butt but he buys me ice cream on weekends.

MILES
That's nice.

Riri rolls the window back up.

RIRI
Maybe I'll come play ping pong sometime.

Miles' smiling face is reflected in the dirty window.

INT. TRISTAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tristan leafs through at an old PHOTO ALBUM.

A KNOCK on the front door.

Tristan looks up. He closes the album and puts it under his bed, before stepping out to the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Another KNOCK. Tristan hurries his pace.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tristan opens the front door... to find a STRAY DOG, panting at him. Tristan looks left and right. Nothing.

EXT. GAS STATION - DUSK

A forgotten pit stop for truckers. An old CHEVY is parked behind the KIOSK.

Gustavo walks through the empty station, carrying the GAS CAN. He looks around, no one is in sight.

He stops at a pump, pulls on its side panel. It opens up, revealing wires and levers. He twists forces them.

A thin stream of gas beings flowing out of the nozzle. Gustavo grabs his can, slowly fills it.

Suddenly, a CAR pulls up behind the kiosk. Two MEN (early 20's) get out carrying various tools. They walk to the CHEVY, kneel by its side, screw off the tires.

Gustavo watches in disbelief. The two men finish their job, roll the tires to their car and drive away.

A lone KIOSK EMPLOYEE (late 50's, walks with crutches) comes out, disturbed by the noise. Upon seeing his car, he wails, kicks the car.

Gustavo looks down at his can, back up at the kiosk employee. He takes his can, begins pouring the gas back into the nozzle. It SPILLS on his shirt and pants.

The employee turns to Gustavo.

INT. CORNER STORE - AFTERNOON

Miles puts his grocery bag on top of the counter. Behind it stands FRANCENA (40's, frizzy hair). She scans the items.

FRANCENA

I can't find the right bra. I don't have the money to go buy one. Someone said go without it. (looks down at her chest) They just hang. I'm not into Victoria's Secret or lingerie crap. I mean I look around. I go to thrift shops.

(MORE)

FRANCENA (CONT'D)

I have this one tank top that pulls them up... I should save up my money, go to IHOP, eat a plate of pancakes and go sleep in a park. That's what I should do. I grew up here in California. There's a lot of stuff out here. You wouldn't believe it. We got three amusement parks, and LA's huge. I couldn't walk it all. It'd take me a while to walk it all.

Miles takes out some CHANGE, puts it on the counter. JOEY (6, scrawny) walks up to the counter, in tears.

JOEY

Excuse me ma'am, I lost my mom.

Francena bats her eyelashes.

JOEY

I was with her and I don't know where she went.

FRANCENA

Well where was she the last time you saw her?

Joey looks around, unsure. Francena isn't concerned.

MILES (O.S.)

What is she wearing?

Joey turns to Miles.

JOEY

A big green coat with pockets.

Miles frantically leads Joey toward the back. They pass aisle after aisle, to no avail. Miles shares Joey's anxiousness.

JOEY'S MOM (30's) comes in from outside the store carrying her grocery bags.

JOEY'S MOM

Joey! Joey, are you okay, hun?

Joey runs to his mom. Miles inhales deeply.

INT. GARAGE - DUSK

Miles grabs his new paddle. He serves, plays against himself. The ball falls down.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Miles, Tristan and Gustavo sit around the table, eating MAC AND CHEESE. The grenadine bottle sits on the table.

TRISTAN

It's cold.

GUSTAVO

I know.

(to Miles)

Did you find anything today?

Miles shakes his head.

TRISTAN

You can't get more gas?

GUSTAVO

We need to stop stealing things.

TRISTAN

Why?

Miles sponges the cheese sauce with a piece of BREAD.

GUSTAVO

Because...

Tristan takes the Grenadine bottle to serve himself, accidentally DROPS IT.

The bottle SHATTERS on the floor. The red syrup spreads on the tiled floor. Gustavo looks at Tristan.

INT. MILES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miles moves in his sleep. Suddenly, he wakes up, covered in sweat. He pushes himself up, sits for a second.

He hears a noise coming from the hallway. He gets out of bed.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Miles steps out onto the hallway, sees Tristan clean the floor with a mop, undisturbed. The air is cold.

MILES

Tristan.

Tristan turns to him. They whisper to each other.

TRISTAN

Hi.

MILES

What are you doing?

Tristan looks down at the mop.

TRISTAN

Nothing.

MILES

Okay.

TRISTAN

Are you okay?

MILES

Yeah.

TRISTAN

Okay.

Miles slowly walks back into his room. Tristan keeps mopping, and-

They stop at the sound of the front door opening. They hear FOOTSTEPS, WHISPERING, CLOSETS opening and closing.

Tristan and Miles are frozen. They stare at each other.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

An empty kitchen. The little they had is gone.

Gustavo sits on the cold ground, his back to the wall. He dips his foot inside a RED SNEAKER, wrestles to get his heel into the shoe. His knee sways side to side.

His foot slides into the shoe. He pinches his laces together, they escape him. He pauses.

He does his laces, takes the SECOND SHOE. He bends his body to make it easier for him this time, to no avail.

He sits back, one shoe on, the other halfway there.

Tristan walks in, distressed.

TRISTAN
I can't find my brush, my broom.

Gustavo looks up at him, gets up.

TRISTAN
Why would they take them? I, I need
to-

GUSTAVO
It's okay, Tris.

Tristan shakes his head.

TRISTAN
It has to be the way it was for
when they come back.

Gustavo swallows.

GUSTAVO
Okay. We'll go get some more.

Tristan walks to the window, stares out at the empty street.
His nose starts bleeding.

EXT. JUNKYARD - DAY

Miles and Riri sit next to each other.

RIRI
I told my sister about you.

MILES
You did?

RIRI
She said Miles means soldier in
latin.

MILES
Really?

RIRI
Are you a soldier?

MILES
Yeah.

RIRI

Show me.

Miles gets up, his eyes fixed on the horizon. Riri raises her eyebrows. He performs a military salute.

RIRI

My sister said we're moving to
Colorado next week.

MILES

Where is that?

RIRI

Up north.

MILES

Are you gonna come back here after?

Riri shrugs her shoulders. She hands him her BUBBLE BLOWER.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Gustavo runs around in the grass, playing with a SOCCER BALL. Miles watches him from a broken LAWN CHAIR.

Tristan comes out of the house, sits next to Miles. Gustavo stops playing. He pulls his brothers up.

They start running next to each other, they wrestle.

Gustavo trips, falls face first into A WOODEN PICNIC TABLE. He looks up at his siblings. BLOOD comes out of his mouth, his FRONT TOOTH is missing.

Gustavo begins shaking, feels the inside of his mouth with his tongue. Tristan looks at him, horrified. He runs back inside the house.

Gustavo feels around in the TALL GRASS, trying to find his tooth. Miles helps him look for it.

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tristan sits awkwardly on the corner of his parent's bed, looking around the room as if it's the first time he notices its details.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Gustavo's tears make it hard for Miles to concentrate.

Miles holds a bottle of LIQUID GLUE, takes the tooth, turns it around and-

The tooth falls, ricochets on the dirty floor. Miles puts the glue on the counter, kneels down to grab the tooth, washes it with water.

He pours glue onto the base of the tooth, raises it up into Gustavo's mouth.

Gustavo closes his mouth, looks into Miles' eyes. The tooth falls out.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Miles walks down the hallway, stops when he sees light under his parents' bedroom's door. He pushes open the door.

INT. PARENT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Tristan sits up against the wooden bed frame, one leg over his sheets, the other under. He cries anguished tears.

He sees Miles, wipes his eyes with the corner of his shoulder. Miles steps out.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

Miles runs out of the CORNER STORE, holding three bottles of GRENADINE. In the middle of the road, he keeps running and running, a clear blue sky above him, and we-

CUT TO BLACK

QUESTIONS

- 1) does it work without a traditional plot / obstacle
- 2) does the grenadine play for you as a symbol of their familial union / token that represents the parents?
- 3) should there be an external force that threatens the kids to separate?
- 4) what would be a better reason for them to wrestle in the end?