

THE GAZELLE

A seasoned agent must decide between an old friend and his agency.

EXT. OASIS - DAY

A MAN with no name leans on a sleek black motorcycle. He fumbles through his backpack, taking stock. The pack is filled with an assortment of items: water, a protein bar, a plastic bag of biscuits, a tube of chap stick, and a B&T V9 suppressed pistol.

His makeshift camp sits above a watering hole with a range of wild animals vying for the natural resource below. A gazelle creeps in to steal a drink without being caught by a lurking crocodile. This catches the man's interest.

The gazelle sticks its neck in and laps up a few gulps of water. The crocodile pretends to not see the animal while slowly floating over. In a flash the reptile lashes out at the gazelle, but the gazelle leaps away at the last second.

Refreshed and victorious, the gazelle takes off in the opposite direction.

MAN
(chuckling)
You sneaky bastard. Good on you.

Following the gazelle, his eyes catch a jeep speeding down a rocky path, coming right towards him. He stands up and plops his backpack on the motorcycle's seat, placing his hand firmly on the gun.

I/E. JEEP - DAY

CHRISTINA, a middle-aged, dark skinned woman, frantically steers her car on the uneven path. The sounds of the dirt road and her bag of clanking hard drives drown out the local radio station. She screeches to a stop a few feet from the man and his bike.

She composes herself, grabs the bag full of hard drives, and exits the vehicle.

EXT. OASIS - CONTINUOUS

Christina uses her hands as cover to block off the sweltering sun.

MAN
I'm surprised you came.

Christina ignores the comments and tosses her bag over to the man. He catches it.

MAN (CONT'D)
You're just giving me these?

CHRISTINA
Isn't this why you came?

Christina walks towards the motorcycle and crouches down, leaning up against it. The man resumes his earlier position.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Do you remember back at the agency, when we were going through training? We had to do those trust exercises. Test our devotion to the agency. What is it they would say?

MAN
The agency before all else.

CHRISTINA
Yeah, it's all bullshit now, isn't it?

MAN
Christina.

Christina cuts of any high-horse plea her old friend would make. She looks over at the back pack, now in the man's lap.

CHRISTINA
What's my last meal?

MAN
(taken aback)
I got a, uh, protein bar and some biscuits. Nothing too glamorous.

CHRISTINA
I'll take the biscuits.

The two sit in the dry heat eating silently. He gestures the bottle of water to her; she gestures no.

Their focus is on the animals drinking from the watering hole. They watch as the gazelle returns for another drink.

MAN
Why did you come here?

CHRISTINA
What else was I going to do. Can't run from the agency forever?

(MORE)

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
Figured if they were gonna come knocking, I'd at least want it to be an old friend on the other side of the door.

They sit in silence again.

MAN
You know it's nothing personal.

CHRISTINA
I know, just doing what you're told.

MAN
What is on these drives could compromise multiple agents.

CHRISTINA
Even if those agents are committing murder! Don't you think those agents deserve to know who they are fighting against.

Christina's stoic face turns desperate.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
You have to realize, it wasn't just criminals we were tasked with taking out. There were good people; innocent people. People the agency didn't want aro...

MAN
I have to believe that no matter the mission, we were doing what was best. Best for everyone, best for the country. I'm not saying there were never casualties.

CHRISTINA
Bullshit! I think you're scared. Scared that on these drives lies the realization that someone YOU killed may not have really deserved it.

She strikes a nerve. The man falls quiet.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
That's what I thought. It's easier to blindly follow rather than face the truth. Whatever gets you to sleep at night.

This time the crocodile waits longer, letting the gazelle think it is safe. The gazelle notices, but keeps drinking. The croc swims forward, but before it can even get close enough to lunge, the gazelle takes off.

CHRISTINA (CONT'D)
I'm a little jealous.

MAN
Of who?

CHRISTINA
Them. These animals. Their world may be brutal, but it's so simple.

MAN
Yeah... yeah it is. No good, no evil. Just survival. I guess there is something to that. The gazelle has to drink and the crocodile has to eat. That's all there is to it.

Christina finishes the last of the biscuits and tosses the empty plastic baggy on top of the man's backpack.

CHRISTINA
What'd you got in there. A taser watch? Lipstick that doubles as a laser? What state of the art tech did the agency kit you out with?

MAN
You're way off.

He reaches into the bag

MAN (CONT'D)
It's chap stick that doubles as a laser.

They both share a laugh. However, the light moment quickly brushes away like sand in the desert.

CHRISTINA
How am I gonna go?

MAN
Any preference?

CHRISTINA
Quick.

She flashes him a smile. He gives an unsure one back.

From a distance the jeep obscures the two agents and the motorcycle. After some pause the man stands up and puts his helmet on while slinging his backpack over his shoulder. A few revs of the engine and he drives off.

The gazelle prances down to the watering hole again. This time the crocodile races towards it throwing caution to the wind. It lunges out of the water and is too quick for the gazelle. The predator pulls its prey into the water.