

# FEMALE DISPATCHER

26.

EXT. DARRYL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Half a dozen cars. NINE GUESTS visible through a front window. A POLICE CAR pulls up, LIGHTS FLASHING. Helen comes outside. Guests gather in the window, among them the one-named Rivera and his EXOTIC WIFE, 38.

Helen meets the OFFICER, 30, at the curb.

HELEN

So, Chris, I think I'm missing my nudnick future husband. How d'ya like that? I don't.

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

We PUSH AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING, identifying it as located in Las Cruces...

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

All units, Las Cruces, West Texas, ears on. APB for white, Anglo male, Darryl Tripp, 27...

INT. DISPATCH CENTER - DAY

An espresso steams from a high quality machine.

FEMALE DISPATCHER, 50, sets her demitasse next to her needle-point of her 2 peculiar looking grandchildren.

FEMALE DISPATCHER

...last heard from at 2:45 this afternoon, reportedly from a café somewhere between Deming and Silver City. For those of you topographically challenged, there is no café between Deming and Silver.

INT. RV - NIGHT - COUNTRY ROAD

The POLICE SCANNER crackles.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Mr. Tripp is presumed to be driving a Kawasaki 1600 Classic motorcycle, which if you're wondering, is a fabulous, steroidal stud of a machine.

Amelia stares at the scanner.

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# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
...found the Kawasaki 1600 Classic  
registered to unofficially missing  
person, Darryl Tripp, 27.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

A POLICE CAR cruises past. The RV is parked.

OFFICER "GUMMY," 30, a voluminous man, glances at the RV  
without interest; he dangles a Gummy Worm between his  
front teeth, sucks it in, bites a piece off.

Out at the far end of the Mortuary Parking Lot, 3 YOUNG  
MEN PLAY basketball.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
That speed machine is on the property of  
Jack and Amelia Philips. When Miss  
Portillo arrived to collect Mr. Philips  
at 6:16, a recreational vehicle belonging  
to the Philips was gone, much to Miss  
Portillo's consternation.

Amelia and MELODIE SEMPLE, 29, exit and approach the RV.  
Melodie pushes a gurney.

MELODIE  
Prostate cancer in a fella so young just  
stinks. Sometimes I think the Good Lord  
has 'im a big pantload and ain't payin'  
attention.

Melodie wears rubber apron, plastic head cover, goggles  
atop her head, a mask and stethoscope around her neck, as  
well as a collection of mismatched rings and bracelets.

Officer "Gummy" honks. Amelia keeps an eye on him.  
Melodie waves, calls...

MELODIE (CONT'D)  
Hey there, Gumster!  
(to Amelia)  
Officer "Gummy." His gums are good but  
his teeth are rottin' from all them gummy  
worms and otters he sucks.

— Refuge —

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# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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DARRYL

I have books everywhere and I cannot get rid of them.

MELODIE

That's not anything like my philia --

DARRYL

Yes, it is, trust me. Now, don't talk, Mel. I feel we should cut a deal here, and the deal I think we should cut is you fry Jack up and I won't out you and Cynthia when I talk to the cops, which eventually I will. Talk now, Melodie.

Melodie is between a corpse and a hard place.

MELODIE

The gentleman wearing a pacemaker?

AMELIA

The deceased had no heart. How long's it gonna take?

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

Melodie wheels Jack inside, Amelia and Darryl following. What Amelia doesn't hear is this...

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

...that Security Guard Philips serves and protects at Teacher Tripp's high school. Best guess is the proximity of Tripp's motorcycle to the Phillips' property ain't a coincidence. Let's do some police work, people, life is precious!

INT. CREMATORIUM - DAY

Jack stares up from a WAXED CARDBOARD COFFIN in the BODY TRAY, toupee hanging. Melodie spits on her palm, moistens the glue on Jack's rug, sticks it to his head cockey and closes his eyes as...

MELODIE

Oh, you'll have 6 pounds of aesthetically pleasing sand consistency ashes and maybe, like, a smidge of organic bone fragments and non-consumed metals.

AMELIA

Toast him.

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Refuge

# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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Melodie flips the lid of the cardboard coffin shut.

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

All is still on the street. Seen from the front bumper of the RV, we may notice there's a two-on-two game going.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)  
...1986 35 foot Stratocruiser registered  
to Jack Philips, New Mexico tag number  
SJM 416, Santa-Jimbo-Marvin 4-1-6...

Officer "Gummy" again. He stops, backs up. Chewing a protruding Gummy Alligator, he shines his floodlight on the Wyoming license plate of the RV.

AMELIA (V.O.)  
I can only imagine what would have gotten  
Cynthia tossed into the county jail?

"Gummy" glances at the hoops game, picks a nostril.

INT. MORTUARY KITCHEN - DAY

An EGG TIMER beats the seconds until Jack is done. RACK TO Melodie at a cupboard getting garlic salt, oregano.

MELODIE  
Oh, she's not like in the slam. She's a  
guard in the women's wing.

AMELIA  
Prison guard by night, mortician's  
assistant by day -- life is good.

MELODIE  
She lives to kick the poo outta bad  
girls.

Microwave dings. Melodie gets the bag of popcorn out. Doctors the popcorn.

DOORBELL: Pachabel "Canon." Amelia tenses, guns up.

AMELIA  
Who's that?

MELODIE  
Kinda gotta answer the door to find out.  
Best guess is Officer Gummy.

Melodie grabs a cookie jar, opens it, reaches in as...

— Refuge —

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# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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...and lifts her, one hand between her shoulders, the other at the base of her spine. What it lacks in grace, it gains in conviction. Dappled there, among the trees.

AMELIA

Wow.

DARRYL

Indeed.

She arches her back, bends one leg inward, toe to knee, extends the other out, toes pointed in classical beauty.

DARRYL (CONT'D)

Big finish.

AMELIA

Uh-oh.

He flips her and catches her. Lowers her down his chest. Her head rest against his chest, his chin on her head. He goes to his knees, lifts her shirt, puts his lips to her bellybutton.

EXT. BARN - DAY

An ATV screams at us, Darryl driving, as...

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Breaking news, folks: Security Guard Philips lost his wife's car in a roundball classic to a hoopster fitting the description of guess-who -- Teacher Tripp -- then assaulted a drug dealer and took the citizen's stash of Oxycontin.

EXT. ORCHARD - DAY

Darryl flies through the orchard on the ATV and onto a wide irrigation ditch.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Despite the ability to fly, he took a ride home from Phys. Ed teacher Portillo, whom Guard Philips was reputedly boinking against school fraternization regs.

—Refuge—

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# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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HELEN

Darryl....Bumby....Let me out. I need to tell you something face to face.

DARRYL

Tell me from there.

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Amelia pulls up. Dismounts. She hefts her backpack, turns to the water and wades in.

INTERCUT: INT. RV/INT. BATHROOM - DAY

HELEN

I only put twenty-two-five in the bag.

Writing intently, it doesn't register...

DARRYL

What?

HELEN

I put your half of our savings in the bag. My half is now in another account. In my name. I was angry at you because I knew you weren't...that neither of us was the other's...Aw, Christ, you know.

Darryl resumes writing, the speed of his hand increasing.

HELEN (CONT'D)

Now, let me out of here.

DARRYL

Mmph.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

All units, ears on. On that APB for Amelia Ontiveros Philips, Jack Philips, and one Darryl Tripp. Hang tight -- lemme confirm this.

HELEN

Darryl, I mean it!

DARRYL

Second.

HELEN

You know what -- never mind. Locked up here is good.

(MORE)

— Refuge —

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# FEMALE DISPATCHER

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HELEN (CONT'D)

I'm safe here while the rest of you whack  
jobs run free. Leave me! Bring me my  
banky and pillow!

EXT. RV - DAY

Writing, Darryl comes outside, sits on the steps in the  
doorway. We PULL BACK WIDE AND HIGH.

ABOVE THE TREES, we can SEE Darryl as he writes...and  
AMELIA as she climbs out the other side of the Rio  
Grande, and takes off. This as...

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Las Cruces P.D. reports a woman matching  
Mrs. Philips I.D. committed assault with  
a deadly weapon and grand larceny on a  
mortician's assistant, as well as one --  
and we could be trailblazing here, people  
-- one... repeat, one forcible cremation.

Darryl writes, Amelia runs...and we FREEZE FRAME.

AND ROLL END CREDITS.

— Refuge —

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