

A Gentle Brush to Wash One's Sins Away

By

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FADE IN ON:

INT. BMW - DAY

A BMW slides along a rural road. The car hugs every twist and turn. Overgrown trees cast shadows on cement.

CARVER STONE (40s) mans the wheel. He's over groomed and finely dressed. Designer shades on his face.

TIFFANY LAMPE (20s) fidgets in the passenger seat. She looks unaccustomed to her fine clothes - long polished nails on her hands; a diamond bracelet on her wrist.

She sticks her head out the window.

TIFFANY

This car matches me perfectly!

She SHRIEKS as a low tree limb skims by.

TIFFANY

Ow! That almost got my hair.

CARVER

Then keep your head inside. We're almost there.

TIFFANY

This sucks. I don't see anything.

Carver's eyes glint behind his shades.

CARVER

Come on, Tiff. We're in the country. Sit back, enjoy the breeze. And the scenery.

TIFFANY

Scenery?!? We haven't passed a rest stop for two hours. I gotta pee. Right absolutely-fuckin' now!

Tiffany scrunches up her face, reflecting her state of urinary distress.

TIFFANY

We shoulda taken the Thruway.

CARVER

I told you, we're avoiding the tolls.

TIFFANY

Why?

CARVER

Because Jennifer knows the password to EZ Pass. If we take the Thruway, she'll know where we are. She'll cancel the credit cards. And you can kiss Bermuda goodbye.

TIFFANY

Your wife burns my buns.

CARVER

Pretty though they may be...

(beat)

When we land, I'll call my lawyer right away. Then it's a hop, skip and jump to the Honeymoon Suite. I'll inspect those buns of yours personally.

Tiffany pouts, and plays with her shiny bracelet.

TIFFANY

Why we gotta sneak around?

CARVER

It's the pre-nup. The one my soon-to-be ex put in place?

TIFFANY

"Pre-nup"? What the hell is that?

CARVER

Nothing you have to worry your head over, dear.

TIFFANY

It's all Stephanie's fault. She never shoulda gotten old.

Carver whips off his shades, and squints down the road. The Expressway's flooded; blockades in place.

An unmarked turn-off on the right.

CARVER

Shit! Fuck this GPS...

He cranks the wheel hard, onto the exit ramp. Walls of mud SPLASH the car. All the way up: five feet high.

It even SPLATTERS Tiffany's face. She wipes it away, issues a heart-felt SIGH. Carver looks at the hood, does as well.

CARVER

I just got this son-of-a-bitch detailed!

The BMW cruises onto an isolated access road. Weeds poke through the asphalt. Tiffany SQUEALS in sudden relief.

TIFFANY

Honey, look. A station!

Carver glances, spots a run down shack.

The sign reads: "Rudy's Gas N' Wash 2 Go." And there's rusted stuff on display. Three Porta Johns in a row, next to an old vending machine.

And an automated, covered car wash in back.

Behind it: a JUNK HEAP of abandoned cars. And beyond *that* - a vast wheat field. Depleted. Dusty. Empty.

CARVER

Place looks abandoned to me.

TIFFANY

No, it's not. Over there!

She points to the gas pumps. RUDY and SOPHIE stand by the cylinders and wave. Old and wrinkled by the sun, they're dressed in flannel and torn jeans.

TIFFANY

Personalized service. That's so sweet!

CARVER

Old hillbillies, if you ask me.

TIFFANY

I gotta go to the bathroom!

Carver throws a perfunctory look at his Rolex.

CARVER

We got forty-five minutes before the flight. And those Porta Johns look diseased.

TIFFANY

I'll hover. Baby, please!

Carver SIGHS, and swings the BMW into...

EXT. RUDY'S GAS N' WASH PARKING LOT

Right up to Rudy and Sophie.

Carver throws the car into park. Tiffany hops out quickly, and darts towards the porta-johns on high heels. TIP TAP - at full speed.

She slips into one and locks the door. Sophie and Rudy smile at Carver expectantly. Carver averts his eyes. Rudy gives the BMW a once-over.

RUDY

Ya need gas?

CARVER

No. We're fine.

SOPHIE

How's 'bout some vittles for the road? We got Twizzlers and a Candy Bar.

CARVER

Well, the blood sugar's a bit low. What kind of candy bar you have in mind?

SOPHIE

A Milky Way. I think.

RUDY

No, Mother. Look at the wrapper: it's a Snickers. Last one we got in stock.

(to Carver)

We'll sell it to you on discount.

Sophie pulls a bent candy bar out of her pocket. She holds it out to Carver, who turns green.

CARVER

No thanks. I changed my mind. I'll wait.

An engine ROARS behind him. Carver swivels in his seat.

A beat up BUICK OPEN TOPPED CONVERTIBLE swings into the lot. A REDNECK TEEN COUPLE look cute and cuddly in front.

The Buick's mud-splattered as well. All the way to the cracked front window.

Sophie waves the Buick over. She leans toward the TEEN BOY in the driver's seat.

SOPHIE

Howdy, handsome! C'n I sell you two a Milky Way?

The boy nods. Sophie hands him the candy bar. He grabs it gratefully. Chews.

SOPHIE
That'll be two fifty.

The teen hands her a wad of cash.

SOPHIE
Now, how about a scrub for your ride?

She points to the covered car wash, just a few feet away.

SOPHIE
Since you bought food, it's complimentary today.

Rudy winks, whispers and elbows the teen.

RUDY
Come on boy. Go on. A clean car gets the ladies wet...

The teen looks at his girlfriend with lust in his eyes. Puts the Buick into gear and drives.

Sophie waddles over to the pumps and hits a switch. Mechanisms in the car wash RUMBLE to life.

A track in the ground catches the Buick's wheels. It pulls the car (and teens) inside.

Carver watches them disappear. The teens HOOT and HOLLER inside. Old Man Rudy CHUCKLES.

RUDY
See? They're having tons o' fun already.

Carver slides his eyes towards the Port A John. *What's keeping Tiffany inside?* He TAPS the wheel, impatient.

Sophie eyes Carver - a shrewd expression on her face.

SOPHIE
How's about you get your wash on, too? Your little lady looks like she got expensive taste.

CARVER
That she does. But - no thanks. We didn't buy anything. And we're running late for a flight.

He glances at his cell phone. Five missed calls from his wife, "Jennifer."

RUDY

Hell, we'll give you a free spin anyway.

SOPHIE

Takes two minutes of your time.

More YELLS from the teens in the car wash. Carver focuses his fury on the Port A John.

CARVER

Tiffany! Where are you?

He jumps out of the car, storms to the stalls. Tiffany totters out - disheveled. An upset look on her face. She holds up her wrist. The bracelet dangles from it - dripping wet.

CARVER

You're taking too long!

TIFFANY

I dropped this!

(beat)

In the sink.

Carver SIGHS and looks towards the BMW. Sophie's using her shirt to polish the hood.

CARVER

Ma'am. Please! Don't touch the car!

A final SCREAM (of Joy?) from the teens. Carver watches their car slide out the rear exit of the auto-wash. The Buick rolls toward the car junk heap.

It's now spanking clean. No teens inside. A confused Carver squints through his shades.

CARVER

Where'd they go? The car's empty.

Sophie looks away. Sounds tongue-tied.

SOPHIE

Ah, well. You know how it is. The young 'uns are randy folks these days.

RUDY

They prolly got frisky and ran into them there wheat fields. To grab themselves some "privacy."

CARVER

Privacy? That's ridiculous!

Tiffany looks sideways at her "man" and grins.

TIFFANY

Wouldn't that be fun, Carver? Who needs a Honeymoon Suite? Or a flight to a Bahama Beach? How's about you and me - right now - in the field?

She licks her lips like the sex-kitten she is. Carver's face twitches, forms a boyish grin.

CARVER

Hmmmm. Outside? Kinky. Jennifer never even did it off the bed...

He glances at his Rolex.

CARVER

But we're running out of time.

His phone RINGS an ABBA tune. It's Jennifer. Again. Carver ignores the sound, and focuses on Tiffany's curves. The girl seems dead set to get her way.

TIFFANY

Carrrrrvvvy, the car's muddy. I don't want to be seen in the airport this way!

CARVER

It's complimentary. Fine with me.

He jumps into the BMW, and throws it in gear. Rudy opens the passenger door for Tiffany like a British chauffeur. Takes her elbow and guides her inside.

RUDY

Here, my dear. Have naughty fun. We won't tell.

The BMW rolls to the wash entrance. Metal guides catch the muddy wheels. Tiffany grins at Carver as it starts to roll.

TIFFANY

Honey, forget the wheat field. We'll do something "naughty" right in here!

She reaches for Carver's fly. UNZIPS.

Rudy and Sophie wave goodbye to the couple... their old faces reflected in the BMW's rearview mirror.

The tracks pull the car inside. It disappears.

Sophie scratches her under-boob; her sagging breasts sway. Revealing: a Satanic pendant around her neck.

SOPHIE

Two in one day. That's special. Ain't it, Rudy?

RUDY

Yup. Told you blockin' the road wuz a good plan.

SOPHIE

Flooding it, too. Creates the right demand, don't you think? Pretty entrepreneurial idea.

RUDY

Well, if the soil don't bloom, we don't get fed. And the town'll be plumb clean out of business.

SOPHIE

Ain't that always the way?

RUDY

Yes'm. Sacrifices must be made.

He glances towards the car wash, pensive.

RUDY

In the traditional ways.

INT. CAR WASH

Machines RUMBLE. The air's pitch black. The BMW inches forward, Carver and Tiffany inside.

Liquid PATTERS on the roof. Carver and Tiffany don't care. They're engaged - in other ways. Carver GROANS. The windows STEAM from body heat.

The car roof starts to SIZZLE, develops tiny holes. One drop squeezes through, and SPLATTERS on Tiffany's bracelet. It burns a diamond clean away.

Tiffany pauses. Stops. Stares at her wrist.

TIFFANY

My bracelet!

CARVER

Don't stop, Baby. And stop messing with the jewelry. We only have two minutes!

He grabs her hand, SLAPS it back in place.

Less than one more stroke, and the roof holes grow - SPLASHING caustic liquid on Carver as well. Both of them jump out of their seats.

TIFFANY

Oh my God. My arm. It burns!

CARVER

Jesus Christ, what is this? Acid?

He reaches for the door. But the car wash walls are too narrow - there's no room to get away.

The hole in the roof widens more. A ROLLER BRUSH looms over their heads - studded with red tinted SPIKES.

TIFFANY

Rust?

CARVER

Stupid cow, that's not rust. It's blood!

TIFFANY

Did you just call me a cow?!?

His phone RINGS again. ABBA. And Jennifer. This time Carver answers - panic fills his voice.

CARVER

Jennifer? Oh my God, Sweetie! I'm in trouble. You have to help!

TIFFANY

Did you just call *her* Sweetie? I'm sitting with you. Right here!

Stephanie's VOICE echoes through static in the speakers.

JENNIFER

Is that Tiffany? Your bimbo secretary? You said you were golfing with Frank. I knew it. You're cheating with her. On me!

CARVER

Please. Baby, listen carefully.

The spiked roller descends. Carver ducks down low - cradles the phone against his ear.

CARVER

We're in a car wash off I-95. You have to call the police.

JENNIFER

'95? There's nothing out there.

(beat)

Except the airport.

An awkward silence reigns. The roller drops even closer.

Jennifer TAPS computer keys. Carver hears the "credit card" research over the phone.

JENNIFER

You bought tickets to the Bahamas?!? Less than thirty minutes away? That's the vacation you promised *me*!

CARVER

Jennifer -

JENNIFER

I've been following you, you bastard. Tracking your GPS. Wait'll my lawyer gets pictures! He's gonna nail your sorry-ass balls to a dartboard; the one you bought for your precious man cave!

CARVER

Honey, I hear you're upset.

JENNIFER

Then I'll cut them off. For earrings!

CARVER

Yes, dear. Just listen. Please!

Jennifer cuts the connection in a HUFF. Carver's eyes roll to Tiffany, who glares.

TIFFANY

You called her 'Baby'. I heard you. You said you only do that with me.

The BMW rolls towards the exit. Light beckons - with a siren promise of safety. Freedom. Carver holds out a hand, shields his eyes.

CARVER

Come on. Almost there.

Another SPLASH of acid. The spiked roller slams down on their skulls. SQUISH. Carver and Tiffany HOWL in pain.

EXT. BACK OF CAR WASH - MOMENTS LATER

Rudy and Sophie wait at the exit door, plastic buckets in their arthritic hands.

The BMW rolls out. Neither Carver nor Tiffany in sight.

Sophie positions her bucket near the front wheel. Charlie opens the passenger door.

A mixture of mashed blood and tissue gush out, filling the bucket to the brim.

The diamond bracelet SLIDES into the bucket as well. One of Tiffany's perfectly manicured fingers wedged between the links.

Sophie plucks the bracelet out, and PLOPS the severed finger back in.

Charles scoops liquefied bits of Carver from the driver's side. Sophie hands him her bucket. Tucks the bracelet primly into her jeans.

SOPHIE

This here bracelet's a find. Bet it'll buy lots of Milky Ways.

RUDY

Or Snickers. Depends on your tastes.

He old-man-shuffles to the Buick, and scoops out bits of the teens. Masticated organs SLOP into the buckets. Compact and liquified.

SOPHIE

Well, what you waitin' for?

Rudy heads out to the wheat field, and pours red goop onto barren soil. GREEN SPROUTS pop up instantly: everywhere the blood touches. Sophie nods, and smiles.

SOPHIE

We'll soon be done for summer.

RUDY

Yep, just need more customers.

A car ROARS into the lot up front. Sophie glances towards the noise.

It's a FORD PROBE with a pissed off MIDDLE AGED WOMAN at the wheel. The license plate reads JEN-E-4. Rudy smiles.

RUDY

Looks like we gots a visitor.

An annoyed MRS. JENNIFER STONE HONKS the horn.

The old couple put down their buckets in unison. They smile. Wave.

Walk to her side.

FINAL FADE OUT: