

REZA

By

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INT/EXT. TRUCK - MINUTES BEFORE DAWN

A rough man in his early 30s speeds across the desert in a beat up single cab Toyota pickup from the early 1990s. He is bleeding badly from his chest, a wound that will end his life. An assault rifle is leaned against the passenger seat. He closes his eyes, as if in prayer, and opens them again in conjunction with a painful breath.

He wears a thin gray military jacket with a yellow emblem sewn onto the sleeve - a uniform in tatters. His hair is ragged, his hands filthy.

The truck comes to a stop. He then struggles out the door, leaving the truck running and the headlights beaming over the sand.

The soldier stumbles across the sand towards a freestanding arch made of ancient stones. Hanging from the center of the arch is an iron bell. With great difficulty, the soldier removes his jacket and shirt and leaves them on the ground as he walks.

He approaches the arch and removes a coin from his pocket, and places it inside a bucket hanging off a nail on the arch.

The man faces death with gratitude, looking up at the sky that will be lit by sunrise within the hour. He drops to his knees, and falls into the sand face down directly beneath the arch . . . A cloud of dust rises around him.

TITLES - REZA

EXT. OSHO SANCTUARY - DAWN

Sohm crouches outside of an earthen shelter in the middle of a barren desert. The sanctuary is humble, separated from the outer world by the Arch.

Sohm wears cotton shorts and is shirtless. He is a boy on the cusp of manhood. A feather earring hangs from one ear, and a small tattoo of wings is sprawled over his heart. His skin is tanned and hardened from a lifetime lived outside. Sohm cannot be separated from the earth, and the earth cannot be separated from him.

The wind whistles through the desert, uninterrupted for as far as he can see. In the distance is a range of mountains dark blue against the brightening sky.

He closes his eyes and listens for the angels . . .

(CONTINUED)

Somewhere they are moving . . .

Singing their eternal songs . . .

The sanctuary is dotted with colorful clothing hanging on lines, pots of plants, fish nets in need of mending. Spears lined up and resting against the shelter. Lanterns providing the interior light.

Someone whistles from one of the windows. Sohm glances back at the hut to see AMI, a girl around Sohm's age. Her hair is tied and hanging on one side. She too wears a feathered earring. Sohm stands and looks out past the arch. A courier is coming towards them.

Sohm lifts the sand and lets it fall to test the wind.

He turns and walks inside.

EXT. OSHO SANCTUARY - MINUTES LATER

The courier rides up to the gate on a bicycle, pulling a wooden cart on wheels. He is old, weathered, a small shotgun strapped across his back. This is a journey he has made many times over a long life.

He walks around to the cart and removes a brown cotton sack filled with an unknown substance. The courier places the sack under the arch, and drops a gold coin into the bucket.

SOHM O.S.

May you gather us in the storm.

The courier mounts his bicycle and pedals back towards the civilizations in the mountains, leaving the sack between the two worlds.

SOHM O.S.

And shield us from the wind.

After he is gone, Ami and Sohm walk out of the sanctuary and approach the arch. Sohm takes the coin, and Ami takes the sack. They walk towards an old single cab pickup truck and the other four OSHO children, all varying ages and younger than Sohm, run out of the sanctuary to join them.

SOHM O.S.

We leave this world for the world
you intended.

EXT. REZA - EVENING

A paradise . . .

An oasis in the desert . . .

Heaven . . .

SOHM O.S.

May the angels of the heavens carry
us away as the wind carries a seed
to new ground.

Lush with birds and plants, Sohm walks through the jungle pathway until he enters into view of a great hidden pool with a waterfall trickling from the heights.

EXT. REZA - MOMENTS LATER

The Osho Children sit beside a small fire in reverence as Sohm finishes the prayer.

SOHM

May our journey be light, and our
burdens be forgotten.

AMI

Amen.

DAVA lights a candle from the fire and sends it floating over the waters. As the candle floats across the waters, Sohm takes the coin out of his pocket. Ami opens the sack and he drops the coin onto gray ashes and chunks of bone.

EXT. REZA - EVENING

Sohm and the others swim into a deep and narrow hole that sinks far into the earth. The fading sunlight scatters through the perfectly clear waters as their silhouettes flutter like birds flying for the heavens . . .

They carry the sack into the depths and leave it resting inside of a cave.

Ami reaches out to hold Sohm's hand as they swim upwards.

EXT. REZA - BLUE HOUR

The OSHO play in the water as children do . . .

Dava checks the fish lines they have set. Wela and Mas skip stones across the waters, laughing as they try to hit a mark on the other side of the pool. Sashi makes whistling noises with her mouth that Baro tries to copy.

Sohm watches Ami who is separated from the others. Ami uses a small knife to carve a small wooden angel. She stands and steps out into the waters and sings a quiet song to the heavens.

INT. OSHO SANCTUARY - NIGHT

The children sleep in the quiet sanctuary, lit by a few dim lanterns. Only Sohm is wide awake, staring out the window at the endless desert overshadowed by a sheet of stars.

Nearby, the house is warmed by a fireplace with the last coals still aglow. On the table are remnants of a dinner eaten some hours before.

Sohm slides off the bed and fills a wooden cup from a bucket of water and sits at the table. He listens to the stillness. His cup begins to rattle on the table, then settles once again. He watches as the cup rattles again, then settles.

EXT. SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Sohm walks out and crouches in the usual place, looking at the gate in the distance. He drinks his water. Bombs rattle on the mountains, sending plumes of smoke and fire into the sky barely visible from so far away.

Ami approaches Sohm from behind. They sit beside one another for a quiet moment. Sohm is contemplative. Somber.

AMI

Why are they still fighting?

Sohm says nothing, entranced by the violence . . . Finally, he speaks . . .

SOHM

The most dangerous storms are born
far away in the middle of the
ocean. And one day the storm finds
a shore where it can land.

Ami listens, unsure of why he is talking about storms . . .

(CONTINUED)

SOHM

Men have to choose whether they
will be the storm or the shore.

AMI

How long until He comes for you?

SOHM

Only God knows.

AMI

You could stay here. Nothing would
have to change.

Sohm remains silent to preserve Ami's innocence. He looks to the gate.

EXT. RIVER - DREAM SEQUENCE

A red wash of blood flows into the river, cleaned off the blade of a knife by the soldier's hand. He is dressed as an Osho.

Sohm approaches the man from behind.

SOHM

Osho . . .

The man continues cleaning the knife. Sohm moves closer.

SOHM

Are you hurt?

The soldier continues working while Sohm moves closer, within reach.

SOHM

What are you doing . . .

The soldier stands abruptly and rams the knife into Sohm's belly. His eyes widen with terror as he looks at a mirror image of himself. Only, the eyes of this 'other' self are perfectly black voids.

INT. OSHO SANCTUARY - DAWN

Sohm awakes in the soft light of morning to see a carved angel sitting on the windowsill.

He takes the angel from the sill and rolls onto his back, looking at the outstretched wings . . .

EXT. REZA/DESERT MONTAGE - DAY

We run behind Ami as she enters the front of the sanctuary, passes through the room, and exits the back without ever slowing down. As soon as she steps back outside, Osho-Dava and Osho-Wela are there to chase her. She screams out with playful laughter as she tries to escape them.

They throw dead cactus from a wheelbarrow into a fire as they dance around the flames with songs and laughter.

At Reza, Sohm stands at the edge of a boat holding a spear. He leaps off and casts it into the water at a fish.

They take turns trying to move a massive boulder.

They practice making echoes into the canyons . . .

Ami and Wela lean over a small bug and allow it to climb onto a leaf they are holding.

Sohm watches from distance. He is growing older. The games they play are no longer as interesting as they once were. Ami looks over and recognizes that perhaps it is true that Sohm no longer a boy.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A bicycle wheel rolls over the sand of the desert. The courier approaches the sanctuary and stops at the arch. He walks around to the cart and removes not one, but a dozen sacks of ashes. He piles them under the arch, and then drops the coins into the bucket. He kisses his hand and extends it to the OSHO, offering a modest bow before returning to his bicycle and riding away.

EXT. SANCTUARY - CONTINUOUS

Sohm and the others watch as the courier rides away.

AMI
The war is coming closer.

Sohm stares out the window.

AMI
(softly to Sohm)
Your heart is heavy.

(CONTINUED)

SOHM
I mourn for the dead.

He walks outside and she watches him move to the ashes.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The OSHO truck drives through the desert. Sohm and a few of the others stand in the bed of the truck hanging onto the railing, the wind blowing through their hair.

Piled at their feet are the bags of ashes.

EXT. REZA - EVENING

The OSHO swim into the depths of the pool, carrying one of the sacks of ashes into the pathway of angels. Ami and Sohm are the final two to swim upwards, their shadows floating against the glowing surface.

She reaches for his hand but he doesn't notice and continues swimming upwards.

EXT. REZA - LATER THAT EVENING

The OSHO play innocently in the waters. Sohm sits on the beach in contemplation.

AMI
Sohm!

Sohm looks over at Ami, who throws a handful of mud at him. The mud splatters across his shoulders.

Sohm immediately stands and rushes across the beach chasing Ami with laughter. She cuts away from him several times before he tackles her into the waters. They both come up laughing, and he smears mud on top of her head. She spits water on him and swims out into the middle of the pool, washing out her hair.

EXT. DESERT - MONTAGE

Timelapses of the sunset and the beauty of the desert. The wildness of this world.

AMI O.S.
God watch over us.

The sparse grasses blow in the breeze.

AMI O.S.
Protect our hearts with a shield
that cannot be broken.

The sun lingers on the horizon.

AMI O.S.
Always let our baskets be full of
bread.

The mountains rise against the pink sky.

AMI O.S.
And the winds bring us beauty and
joy.

Water trickles through the rocks at Reza.

AMI O.S.
May the angels always carry us into
your arms.

INT. OSHO SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Ami sits cross-legged in the center of the room, finishing her prayer. A lantern is lit at her side. The others are in bed.

AMI
This we ask tonight. Nothing more.

She blows out the lantern.

INT/EXT. SANCTUARY - DAWN

Sohm walks through the room eating a piece of bread. He opens the back door and walks outside, bending over a bucket of water. He washes his face and hands, then takes a cup and waters some of the nearby potted plants.

He picks up the bucket and walks around the side of the house towards the front to water the rest of the plants.

As he turns the corner, he sees the truck running with the headlights still on. And under the arch is the dead soldier, face down in the dust. Ami is already there, crouched beside the body.

Sohm places the bucket on the ground and walks towards her. She looks up.

(CONTINUED)

AMI
His skin is still warm.

He walks past the body and goes to the truck.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Sohm stands in the doorway of the truck looking inside. Blood is scattered over the seat and pooled in the floorboard. The auto rifle is leaned against the seat. He climbs inside and turns off the truck.

A half empty pack of cigarettes is on the dash. A gold ring hangs from a string around the rear view mirror. A photograph of a beautiful woman is tucked in front of the odometer.

Sohm opens the compartment between the seats and looks inside, finding nothing of interest. He then opens the glove compartment and looks inside. He finds a carved angel exactly like the one Ami made for him. There is also a folded letter.

Sohm takes the letter and holds it up into the light, confused about its intent. He unfolds and begins to read...

EXT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Sohm reads the letter. He stares straight ahead, shaken by the words . . .

AMI
(distant)
Sohm! Sohm!

Sohm continues to read.

Ami comes to the truck and taps on the window. Sohm conceals the letter and opens the door.

AMI
Sohm . . . Look at this.

Sohm follows Ami to the arch. The body has been flipped over and is facing up. Sohm slowly approaches as Ami backs away. Not only are the bullet wounds gruesome, something else strikes Sohm. *This is the man from his dream.*

Sohm moves closer to the body, and sees why Ami is unsettled.

There is an Osho tattoo of wings over the man's heart.

AMI
He was an Osho . . .

Sohm's breath increases . . . The other Osho have gathered near the arch to see the scene. They await on Sohm's instruction. He stands and goes to the bucket, finding the coin. He looks at the blood smeared on the coin, and then places it into his pocket.

AMI
I'll send for the elders.

SOHM
No. I'll make the ashes.

AMI
Sohm . . .

SOHM
It has to be me.

AMI
We can help you.

Sohm approaches Ami and stops just in front of her so the others cannot hear.

SOHM
He came here for me.

EXT. DESERT - EVENING

Sohm sits on the tailgate reading the letter one last time. The carved angel is standing up on the tailgate beside him. He is alone in the middle of the desert. Nearby, great flames rise out of a pit where the body is being burned. The warm glow flickers against Sohm's face.

Sohm stands and walks to the flames, dropping the letter into the fire. He watches it turn to ash, and then returns to where he was sitting. He picks up the angel and runs his fingers over the careful carvings on the wings.

A second truck approaches from the desert road and comes to a stop next to him.

Ami gets out and sits on the tailgate beside him. They both watch the fire for a moment before she leans over and kisses his cheek. He turns to her, as if awoken from a trance.

AMI

We never lose the good things
inside of us.

Sohm looks back at the flames.

SOHM

You need to be ready for what comes
next.

EXT. REZA - BLUE HOUR

Sohm sits on his knees beside the waters and lights a candle.

SOHM

Father . . .

He pushes the candle over the water, watching it float away.

SOHM

Let me keep the good things.

He lifts the sack of ashes and drops the bloody coin inside.

EXT. REZA - MOMENTS LATER

Sohm dives into the deep carrying the sack of ashes. He swims for the caves and leaves the sack of ashes in the pathway of angels.

He swims for the surface.

EXT. REZA - BLUE HOUR

Sohm stands ankle deep in the waters, looking up at the changing sky. He knows this is the end of one life and the beginning of another . . .

He reaches down and lifts the water up to his face, then screams out with a primal rage, as if testing the limits of his voice. A great echo surrounds him.

INT/EXT. OSHO SANCTUARY - NIGHT

Sohm faces the door, his eyes closed in prayer. He is fully dressed. He carries the rifle from the soldier. He opens his eyes and pushes open the door to the night . . .

(CONTINUED)

Lining the pathway to the arch are the other Osho. They hold their lanterns up, creating a glow of light leading to the exit. Sohm steps forward, the other Osho mumbling soft prayers as he passes. Ami stands at the end of the row, and Sohm stops at her.

SOHM

Decide if you are the storm or the shore.

Ami nods. She takes his hands and places an angel into his grasp. He looks at the outstretched wings. The hope. The memory of innocence that slips through your fingers with every day that passes.

He walks forward to the arch and stands under the bell, looking at the life he leaves behind. He reaches up and rings the bell that echoes into the stillness of the night.

Sohm turns and runs into the darkness of the desert . . .

TITLES - REZA