

THE COYOTE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. ABANDONED GARAGE IN REYNOSA, MEXICO, EVENING

Six youngsters (15-25) are seated on top of rusty barrels, doing coke, listening to **narcocorridos**, playing cards. We see **Edgar (well built hispanic 17 year-old male)**, behind the group watching the scene and smoking a joint, head reclined.

**TITLE: THE COYOTE**

INT. NIGHT. EDGAR'S SISTER'S HOUSE, TINY.

*(All in Spanish)*

Two children are eating and screaming, pulling each other's hair and throwing food.

Edgar's sister (her name is **Viola - she is in her late 20s**) is at the stove in the tiny kitchen telling the kids to be quiet in Spanish.

**Edgar** comes in and takes out a toy for each of the kids.

VIOLA

Noches Edgar, where have you been?

EDGAR

Working

VIOLA

Until 9?!

EDGAR

until 7, after that I went to Rostro's house

VIOLA

That's a lie. Rostro probably has no desire to see you since you've been hanging out with that gang

EDGAR

Lay off me, I have a good job at the garage, I help you with the bills, what more do you want?

VIOLA

what I want is for you to stay out of trouble and stop hanging out in this shitty neighborhood

A knock on the door. A cartel guy shows up at the door.

Edgar goes outside. Chapa. Big hispano looking guy, more Spanish than native.

A bullet proof car is waiting at the curb, engine on, and two guys are watching over Chapa.

CHAPA

I was looking all over for you, I was told you spent your time here now. Are you hiding from me?

EDGAR

Que quieres? (what do you want?)

CHAPA

lo que me debes. (what you owe me).

Chapa shows a threatening gun.

CHAPA (CONT'D)

I have a job for you, you cross 15 illegals and a load, otherwise - (looking through the window into the house) - I now know where you live.

Edgar looks through the window at his sister's kids.

EDGAR

I know I owe you man but it wasn't my fault, you had me hanging in there for 90 days in that shitty house, without anyone picking up the chickens, they were gonna bust us sooner or later. At the end we got to be 75 in there, in 3 rooms.

CHAPA

dude you owe me, and a LOT. I kill you and the two kids in there if you don't cross the load. But if you do cross, they will take care of you on the other side, you'll be dealing with the real deal.

Edgar looks again through the window. The kids are sitting on the floor quietly, playing. All calm.

EDGAR

OK man, what's my cut?

CHAPA  
 \$1,000 per illegal , there are 15,  
 and \$10,000 for the load

EDGAR  
 ta bueno

CHAPA  
 good deal, like they say...

Chapa turns around to go back to his car where the two guys are waiting.

CHAPA (CONT'D)  
 fuck you. You better do it right  
 this time, fucking "indian".

INT. NIGHT. EDGAR'S SISTER'S HOUSE.

Middle of the night, Edgar leaves his sister's house with a backpack and leaves a stack of money on the table. He starts to write a note, hesitates, and gives up.

EXT. Later that night CARTEL controlled border "checkpoint"

Edgar meets with the other coyote he doesn't know at the border, mean looking guy, tough, older (**Racha, mid-50s**).

12 guys and 3 girls are among the illegals. A pregnant woman, and two young girls (15-16) none of them know each other. The immigrants look terrified, they are all lined up against a wall, at a checkpoint controlled by the zetas.

It is in the brush, at the border, but there is a small concrete house and bleak yellow lights. There are 5 scattered army looking guys but all dressed in black.

Edgar and Racha take a look at all the illegals. Edgar's gaze catches one of the girl's attention in particular.

Racha yells the directions about the trip.

*(all the conversation below is in Spanish)*

RACHA  
 don't speak to each other during  
 the trip;  
 (MORE)

RACHA (CONT'D)

you will be given water every 4 hours, not every time you want to drink, you will do exactly what we say, if somebody gets hurt or gets tired, they will be left right there, we cant wait around for anyone, got it??? Women: we will give you a contraceptive injection...

A female voice interrupts:

PREGNANT WOMAN

But I'm pregnant!!

RACHA

you bitch, did they tell you to say that so as to be left alone? You are wrong, you are not going to receive any type of privilege. Or are you one of those bitches who come to give birth to their bastards in the US for them to be American? Either way, if you get tired, you and your baby are not gonna make it... So shut your mouth and take the contraceptive

PREGNANT WOMAN

No!!!! you can't do that!!!! it will hurt the baby!

Edgar takes charge.

EDGAR (TO THE PREGNANT WOMAN)

Can I see your belly?

He takes a look at her belly. Then to Racha:

EDGAR (CONT'D)

it's OK man leave her alone

After that Edgar tries not to appear too soft. He goes to the other girls and injects them the drug.

The girl who caught his attention earlier now looks at him defiantly. He now recognizes her from up close, and freezes. Looks at her again... (it is clear that they know each other)

**The girl (CARLA- 15 years old, petite frame, looks at him fiercely when he injects the contraceptive.**

The coyotes make three groups of 5 people and tie them together. As he ties the hands of CARLA he glances at her in forgiveness. She looks disappointed, disgusted.

EDGAR (CONT'D)- SCREAMING  
Let's go now pinche pollos!

Every one starts walking, dark, a hill. The other coyote in front and all the illegals following, in a row.

A Zeta guy, all dressed in army black, shows Edgar the load he has to take. He points to a big load lying on a wall.

Edgar approaches the large load of drug, covered in cardboard as if it were a large shipping package. He tries to lift it once but fails, he tries again and has trouble putting it on his back. He doesn't know what's in it until he tries to carry it... Not marijuana...

The army guy looks at him.  
It's a very important package, take care of it.

Edgar is on his way to catch the group. In the darkness now. On the road he has traveled many times.

EXT. WALKING IN THE BRUSH. ALMOST DUSK.

Brush between Mexico and US. A harsh land of soil with bushes scattered but not very high.

Everyone appears tired, at the end of a long stretch of the journey, they have trouble taking every step. CARLA looks more exhausted than everyone, she is pushed by the pregnant woman and another man from her group, she is almost carried.

The meaner coyote instructs (screams) for everyone to sit. They all sit down in their separate groups. In a row.

In Spanish, "We will take a short break now, just to eat and sip water and sleep for a couple hours and then we have another 8 hours of walking before the next rest".

CARLA has an exclamation of surprise and fear, the fear of death. She looks like she can't carry on. Edgar fails to scream at her..

Close up on her feet. Bloodied low tennis shoes with a thin sole. All the rest of the group has hiking or running shoes. She removes her shoes and socks. Edgar notices.

Edgar looks in the coyotes' direction. The other coyote is starting to grill meat only for him and Edgar.

Later, Edgar distributes canned beans to the illegals, seated, in a line, hands tied to a long rope. They all eat from a can of frijoles, looking haggard, exhausted from walking.

Edgar glances in the direction of CARLA as he eats his meat. They are now sitting down across from each other. Looks are exchanged, no smiles, just an acknowledgement. He chews on his meat faster now not to draw attention from the others, she eats her can of black beans with her fingers.

EXT. LATER THAT NIGHT. IN THE BRUSH

Everyone is sleeping. Edgar removes two slices of veal meat from one of the supply backpacks. Quietly, he puts two slices of veal meat in CARLA's shoes at the heel. Her shoes are drying next to her feet. Edgar wakes her up gently. He makes a sign for her to be quiet about what he did for her. He lets her put her shoes on and finish tying her knots. He waits a moment and then violently wakes the group, swearing, being rougher than usual.

EXT. CLOSE TO THE US BORDER. NIGHTTIME CLOSE TO DAWN

The group arrives at a US house surrounded by land. The house/ farm can be seen, a little light outside the house. Everything seems quiet.

RACHA takes out his Nextel radio device and instructs someone that they are close by. He then cut all the ropes that were tying the aliens together and shows where they will be expected to run to, a dark alley with a big distinctive tree.

A wave of fear shows on all of their faces.

At his signal everyone starts running. They run through a farmer's land, disorderly, like chickens.

The farmer comes out of his house with a rifle. "Get the hell out of my property!!!" He takes out his rifle and shoots to the crowd. One person falls to the ground, the man who had been helping CARLA out during the walk. We hear him screaming, moaning.

All but one manage to run to a dark alley by the tree where two wagons pull up and load all 14 of them.

Edgar glances to where the body is lying, clearly hearing the man screaming. He looks away quickly back to his task.

They all hop into those two cars, Edgar drops his huge load to the ground in front of him.

As they drive with Edgar in the front, they see a Border Patrol vehicle arrive to the farmer's house from another direction.

EDGAR

Apurate cabron!(hurry up, cabron!)

Both vehicles travel in opposite directions on the levee at full speed.

EXT. CLOSE TO DAWN. BOTH VANS PULL UP AT A STASH HOUSE

The drivers of the two vehicles stake out for 5 minutes before coming out. They mostly look at the neighboring houses for any signs of human presence. Once the path seems clear, they get all the 14 immigrants in the house through the back, acting rough with them.

INT. JUST AFTER. STASH HOUSE

In the house there is already a room filled with illegals, some sleeping on the floor, others just lying on the walls, seated, some with their faces buried in their lap. The group is instructed to go into another room, and be quiet.

INT. Day stash house.

All windows are plastered with silver color film.

Every one is sweating, looking dehydrated, we hear a moan.

Food is distributed by another guardian while Edgar watches over the rooms of the house. one tortilla, one tomato and one egg are given to each immigrant. The pregnant woman and CARLA are seated next to each other.

The pregnant woman (Arabela) gulps it down. CARLA offers Arabela her tomato and half of her tortilla.

*(in Spanish)*

CARLA

take this piece too, for the baby

ARABELA

I don't know if we're gonna make it, the baby and me, but thank you, god bless you

A brasilian guy asks the other guardian (Juan) for permission to go to the bathroom in broken spanish.

CARLA  
he wants to use the toilet

JUAN  
who does he think he is, this  
fucking Bresilian)  
To CARLA now,

JUAN (CONT'D)  
and you who do you think you are,  
zorro? I saw you give your food to  
the Guatemalteque. These people  
don't deserve favors, they are  
beneath us mexicans. If I see you  
give her food again, I will treat  
you like one of them.

He points to the 3 Korean men who are standing in their  
underwear in a small pantry, pants lowered to their feet,  
their underwear dripping with piss.

Juan throws a tennis ball at one of them, who moans.  
Juan laughs of his cruel laughter, showing his blackened  
teeth, his goatie making him look like the devil.

Edgar looks at the whole scene and says nothing. He focuses  
on CARLA for a moment as he surveys the group.

CARLA looks at him back, defiantly, but doesn't utter a word.  
Noticing her eyes on him, Edgar looks away, stone-faced,  
maintaining his view of the group.

INT. STASH HOUSE. NIGHT

The other young cute girl is raped in the toilet.

Everyone hears, she has a bandage in her mouth, we see that  
Edgar sees the scene through the cracked open door. He sees  
the other coyote's (JUAN) back, and a glimpse of the girl's  
resigned profile, and her dark black hair.

Apart from the sounds of banging noises on toilet porcelain,  
all is silent. Edgar goes to see where CARLA sleeps. She is  
in a room across from the toilet, her eyes open, terrified  
(will she be raped next?).

The pregnant lady is sleeping next to her curled in a ball.  
The Chinese men are still in the closet, their forehead  
against the wall, their hands still tied, kneeling.

Briefly we see that another guard is smoking outside,  
scouting.

Edgar goes into her room full of sleeping immigrants (10-15). He lowers quietly to the ground next to her, but still aware of his surroundings.

EDGAR (WHISPERING)

CARLA, why are you here?

CARLA

Like everyone else here, trying to start a better life

EDGAR

I don't understand. I thought you were in school doing good for yourself

CARLA

I was... then my mom got sick and last week Rostro stopped coming home. And we have no money for her health bills.

EDGAR

Rostro would never want you to be here...

CARLA

..hanging out with people like you.

Pause.

Things didn't work out for him, we don't know what happened to him and he didn't tell us, which is probably best. We don't know if he's alive or in hiding. But I know he had no time to repent or even try to lead a normal life like he wanted to. He's gone now. It's just me and I need to get over to Chicago with my tias and start sending checks back home.

...

maybe after a while things will work out for me and I'll start school again, but I don't know...

EDGAR

I have cash to send to your mom... I can help you cross back... things are not good here

CARLA

I don't want that sort of money,  
it's cursed!!

A moan, a door opening. Juan is done raping the girl.

Hurriedly now, Edgar gets up.

EDGAR

I'll think of something..

CARLA

don't get in trouble for me, I'll  
be fine on my own.

She turns away from him. Edgar quickly stands up.

EXT. DAY. PARKING LOT OF A HEB SUPERMARKET.

Edgar comes out of the supermarket with huge bags, walks to his pick up truck, loads all the groceries for the immigrants in the stash house.

**A young guy (Elvis Morales- 15 or under, hispanic looking but with a more american style and demeanour)** parks right next to his car, opens the passenger window, and yells.

ELVIS

orale wey! (hey man)  
que paso? (what's happenin'?)

EDGAR

nada man, I have a favor to ask.

ELVIS

que man? (what man?)

EDGAR

I got a polla to cross asap.

ELVIS

why asap?

EDGAR

she stays in the house I guard in  
Edinburgh but she needs to get to  
Chicago ASAP.

ELVIS

well I got no one going to Chicago.  
My next trip is tomorrow to Dallas.

EDGAR

OK wey, but do you got someone going up from Dallas?

ELVIS

I can find you that. But that'll cost a lot of di-ne-ro, wey.

EDGAR

She has money.

ELVIS

why can't she wait for a trip with other pollos going up there? Don't tell me you got a vieja pregnant.

EDGAR

I'll explain later. Here's \$10,000 for her whole trip. Make sure she's well taken care of, no shady "pinches" involved.

ELVIS

OK, I can load her tomorrow night but I hope she likes it tight cause we have a full house... she can meet me at the usual spot. 2.45 am. All set. Otherwise I'll ring your radio

EDGAR

thanks man, ta bueno.

EXT. DAY EDGAR PULLS UP IN FRONT OF A MANSION IN MC ALLEN, TX

The gate is closed, guarded by rotweillers and two armed guys get out of booths before he even rings the bell and let him in without any word exchanged.

It's a house with marble, two symetric stairway cases, statues of lynx, checkered black and white floor. Edgar is escorted upstairs. Huge wooden carved doors open. The capo is there waiting. His large leather seat and his large black desk face the entrance on a sort of podium.

He is a **handsome middle aged hispanic man**, with sharp features and a square jaw, he wears a long blue T shirt with a black army vest with weapons in each pocket. He gets up and we notice he is short. He lets Edgar come closer to the podium to shake his hand.

EL CAPO

Hola Edgar

EDGAR  
 Hola... Senor...

EL CAPO  
 call me Boss that's all

EL CAPO (CONT'D)  
 I heard you crossed a whole cocaina  
 load by yourself on foot? No one  
 helped you?

EDGAR  
 no one helped me.

EL CAPO  
 you know that wasn't a fair  
 request. Chapa wanted you to  
 collapse and had people wait for  
 you in the brush and steal my load.  
 This load should have been crossed  
 on a boat, not by foot. Or maybe he  
 trusted you. But it doesn't matter,  
 I'll take care of him. But the good  
 of this story is that God has  
 brought me a diamond in the rough.

El Capo pads him on the shoulder.

EL CAPO (CONT'D)  
 OK, I hope to see you around more.  
 Come to my party tomorrow night.  
 See you, Edgar.

Edgar leaves the room awkwardly.

INT. STASH HOUSE THAT NIGHT.

House is quiet, Edgar still scouring the house, Juan is  
 sleeping. He wakes CARLA up.

EDGAR  
 I will get you on a car up north  
 with another group of immigrants  
 tomorrow.

CARLA  
 Why are you doing this?

EDGAR  
 if something happens to you, I  
 won't forgive myself. All I can do  
 is get you out of here on the next  
 van going north.

CARLA

And you? Aren't they going to notice that I'm gone? Aren't you gonna have to explain why they lost a "pollo"?

EDGAR

I will figure something out. I'll meet you in Chicago very soon, if you'll accept, I'll change my ways... I don't want to keep doing this.

...  
I'll escape, too

Conversation interrupted by an altercation between Juan that leads to a man from Guatemala being tased and two other guys being punched in the face and gut. Juan looks high.

INT. STASH HOUSE THE NEXT DAY

Edgar nervously paces inside the sweaty , crowded front room. It's now 11am. All is calm. Edgar exits the house through the front and quickly jumps into his pick-up truck parked around the side of the house.

There he opens the black backpack on the passenger seat and inside he places 3 cereal bars that he pulls from under his shirt. Already inside are a small oxygen tank and mask and full water bottle he has prepared for CARLA's journey.

4 pm. Heat overwhelms the house. Edgar paces inside again. Staring at the group maintaining his face of stone. He wanders to back room. An exhausted CARLA is asleep and drenched in sweat. Edgar feels more determined now.

11 pm. Edgar waits for the last line of coke to be snorted by the other guards and the last bottle to be drunk. He waits, watches his clock. Time lapse on Edgar face and fidgeting hands as the kitchen clock turns 12. 1.20. 145. 2.00...

At 2.00 he goes outside and notices no noise. He comes back in and goes to her. She is ready, he gives her the backpack. He lifts her and quietly walks her outside from the back of the house. They jump down from the porch.

He runs with her, a fence, they jump. A dog barks briefly, then stops. They duck, behind a horse trailer. Clear. They run to the main dirt road surrounded by trees. No one. They stop running at the tree where she will be picked up.

EDGAR

my friend should be here very soon in a green van, it's going to be full in there, it's only a 1h30 drive to Falfurrias. My friend will have no problem at the checkpoint, he knows everyone there. And then it's a 7 hour drive to Dallas. In Dallas, he will hook you up with a driver who can take you to Chicago. Things get much easier after Falfurrias.

CARLA

Edgar, thank you for this. I can't begin to say how grateful I am...

EDGAR

You are a good person, always have been.

...

I'm sure Rostro is fine, just taking time away to figure things out. It's a tough business to quit. He is strong, he will succeed.

...

As for me, if you accept me up there, I'll do my best to help you. We will live close by, you'll be my anchor. You can repay me then

She gives him a quick kiss.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

Suerte! (good luck)

CARLA

Suerte!

EXT. LATER IN THE ALLEY

We see her being placed in the van on top of everyone else. The Van is packed with illegals, 14 people in a normal van. Edgar is seen at the house, praying on the porch.

INT. EL CAPO'S HOUSE. SAME NIGHT

He is taken into a grandiose room full of gold and we can see that the opulence is as great as the cartel member's violence. Some women, not from Reynosa, way more beautiful. The cartel guys are all scary looking. Drugs.

El capo walks eagerly over to Edgar.

EL CAPO  
Hello there.

EDGAR  
Hello Capo.

EL CAPO  
you finally made it! I'm so glad  
you came! You will enjoy yourself,  
loosen up. This is a tough  
business, lots of stress...  
He looks around at the girls.  
...but also lots of perks...

EL CAPO (CONT'D)  
I want you by my side. I'm sick of  
all these wimps, complainers, I  
need a guy like you, who just does  
it and doesn't fail or whine. I  
need an executor, a right arm.

EDGAR  
I'm very honored, Sir.. uh Boss

EL CAPO  
I hope you didn't have other plans

EDGAR  
Uh...

Suddenly, someone screams to watch the local news. Local TV  
news blasting- a van full of immigrants rolled over in  
Palmview, TX. Brains, limbs scattered on the road, bodies  
distorted.

We learn that it was a 14 year old driving (his friend's  
photo is on TV).

El capo laughs that it wasn't his load, it was his nemesis's.

Edgar is in shock and completely in distress, All promise of  
love and goodness and a new life in Chicago gone. His friend,  
his promise, is dead.

House full of vices, he is catching his breath in a hallway,  
wants to cry. Then a cartel guy comes and drags him to get  
high.

THE END.