

## SCENE ONE THE BACK OF A PICKUP TRUCK NOW

*In the darkness we hear crickets, night sounds. Then we hear breathing, softly, then growing. Heavy. Big. Something terrifying. Then.., silence. Lights rise on PABLO and OWEN, both 30s, wearing work uniforms, as they sit in the back of a pick-up truck in a field. Chilling. Both men have recently eaten edibles, but they haven't taken effect. They are eating tacos. PABLO eats birria tacos while OWEN eats beef. OWEN is in the middle of a story.*

*This play is for Holly Beightol,  
my best friend and 90s scary movie date forever.*

*And*

*To Rodrigo, who makes my art—and life—better.*

**OWEN**

So, picture this, Pablo. I'm out there, riding solo on this trail like I'm king of the mountain, and bam! I slip, fall, and snap my ankle—right in the middle of nowhere.

**PABLO**

Dude. What did you do?

**OWEN**

First thought? "There's definitely mountain lions out here. I'm dinner."

**PABLO**

Right?

**OWEN**

So I'm hobbling with my bike and dragging my ass down this trail. And the sun's setting. And I'm scared. And hungry.

**START**

*PABLO takes a bite of his taco. OWEN takes*

Then it hits me: predators don't like noise.

**PABLO**

Wait, who told you that?

**OWEN**

Bro, Netflix. Some nature show. "Claws and Effect" or some shit.

**PABLO**

You learned wilderness survival from Netflix?

*PABLO take another taco bite.*

**OWEN**

So I'm thinking, "If noise scares 'em off, I better start talking." So first, I'm just yelling random crap like, "HEY, MOUNTAIN LIONS, I TASTE TERRIBLE!" But after a while, I got bored of hearing my own voice.

**PABLO**

I don't think that's possible, Owen.

**OWEN**

I got tired of *talking*. So I started singing.

**PABLO**

It's of the utmost importance that you tell me what you were singing.

**OWEN**

Okay, but don't judge. I couldn't think of any songs, right? Full on brain freeze. So I defaulted to... "God Bless the U.S.A."

**PABLO**

What?

**OWEN**

You know, like... (Sings dramatically) "I'm proud to be an American..."

**PABLO**

...Nope. Never heard it.

**OWEN**

Seriously? We used to sing it all the time in elementary school. Right after the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PABLO**

Wow. Peak propaganda.

**OWEN**

Nah, just public school. But dude, I sang that song on repeat for three hours. All the way down the trail, to my car. Got the bike on the rack, got in, started the car—and guess what's playing on the radio.

**PABLO**

No way.

**OWEN**

(Sings again) "Proud to be an American!"

**PABLO**

What were you listening to, the Bald Eagle Station?

**OWEN**

Nah, dude. It was a sign. That song saved me.

**PABLO**

Bro, you are so fucking stupid.

**OWEN**

Even mountain lions are scared of Americans.

**PABLO**

Mountain lions are Americans too, dumbass.

*They both bust up laughing.*

**PABLO**

Are you feeling it yet? I don't think I am.

**OWEN**

Gummies take time.

**PABLO takes another taco bite.**

You've been tearing at those tacos. Are they really that good?

**PABLO**

You should've tried one, man. Birria's all the rage now.

**OWEN**

Nah, gimme ground beef. American as apple pie.

*Owen takes a bite of his own taco.*

**PABLO**

(Sings) "Proud to be an American"

**OWEN**

But its, like, goat meat, right?

**PABLO**

Yeah.

**OWEN**

And it's cooked in... like, goat blood?

**PABLO**

Stupid, it's cooked with spices and oils.

**OWEN**

Yeah, yeah, I heard it's goat blood too.

**PABLO**

Who told you that? Netflix?

**OWEN**

Some guy.

**PABLO**

Some guy...

**OWEN**

At work.

END