

AFTER OIL  
PILOT  
by  
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A small girl, SALLY DUNLAP (10), in a camo jacket kneels before a carrot patch, leaning over a bed of soil. Beside her kneels an older African-American girl in a battered olive winter parka and red flannel, BRIAR DUNLAP (19). She pushes her curly hair out of her face.

SALLY

Which ones?

BRIAR

When it's ready to come up, it'll start poking its head up outta the ground. See that one?

SALLY

Yeah.

BRIAR

Grab it.

Briar takes her sister's hand and guides it forward. Sally wraps her hand around the stalk of a carrot poking out of the dirt. Briar wraps her hand around her sister's. Briar wears a toy plastic ring with half a heart on it, on her ring finger.

SALLY

Pull?

BRIAR

Hard.

Sally yanks at the carrot, grunting with the effort. Briar watches. The carrot comes up, and Sally falls back, panting and smiling, carrot in hand. Briar smiles.

BRIAR (CONT'D)

Good.

Briar stops smiling.

BRIAR (CONT'D)

Same with the rest of 'em. Beets too.

The smile fades from Sally's face. She nods.

The carrot is tossed into a metal bowl with a clatter.

CUT TO:

Briar kneels over a patch of dirt at a trough, a garden fork in hand. She stabs the ground, breaking up the dirt, putting her all into it.

The sound of a car engine off-screen breaks the near-silence.

SALLY (O.S.)  
Briar! Briar, look!

Briar turns. Sally stands by one of the windows, pointing out. Out by the road, a police car can be seen crawling along, going past their driveway.

Briar turns away, shaking her head.

BRIAR  
It's just a cop car, Sally.

SALLY  
But it drives!

Sally watches the police car drive-off down the road, her face pressed to the fogged tarp. After a beat, she steps away, frowning.

SALLY (CONT'D)  
Briar...?

Briar turns to look. A woman is walking up to the outside of the greenhouse, her image obscured by the fogged tarp walls.

SALLY (CONT'D)  
Who's that?

BRIAR  
Go wash yourself off with the hose.

SALLY  
Bri...

Briar gives Sally a sharp look. Sally slinks off.

2

EXT. DUNLAP HOME - DAY

2

\*

Briar steps out of the greenhouse. JOSIE GANNON, 45, a sturdy, bare-faced woman, comes storming up to the greenhouse, smoking a cigarette. Briar walks forward, and Josie steps in front of her.

\*

BRIAR  
What can I do for you, Mrs. Gannon?

JOSIE  
You seen my boy, Dunlap?

BRIAR  
Earl? Can't say that I have. Why?

JOSIE  
Was wondering if he weren't out on  
another one of your damn food  
runs. He's missing.

BRIAR  
That was Tuesday. Missing?

JOSIE  
He ain't turned in for two nights.  
Says he's goin' out on an errand  
for you. Never came home.

BRIAR  
Well, I ain't seen him.

Josie tosses the remains of her cigarette to the ground and stomps it out. She takes another step towards Briar.

JOSIE  
You know, he's always coming in  
past town curfew these days,  
clambering through the back window.  
When I ask him where he's been,  
says he's been out on one of your  
runs -

BRIAR  
(incredulous)  
I don't send my Riders out past  
curfew, Mrs. Gannon. If Earl's been  
telling you I been keeping him out  
late, I think you oughta ask him  
what he's really up to.

Josie scoffs at Briar, shaking her head. She stuffs her hands into her pockets and pulls out a wad of folded up paper. Briar watches her unfold it and extend it to her.

JOSIE  
Make yourself useful.

It's a crumpled stack of homemade missing posters, filled with large, handwritten letters: "HAVE YOU SEEN EARL GANNON?" Some of the flyers have been garnered with small crayon drawings of a stick figure boy who is presumably Earl.

JOSIE (CONT'D)  
 Have your "Pahoee Riders" post  
 these around town, would you?

Briar takes the stack from her.

BRIAR  
 Why not have the police do it?

JOSIE  
 (laughing sharply)  
 You think they'll waste any gas on  
 one of my kids?

Josie turns away, walking towards the drive. She picks up her rusted bike by the road and walks off with it. Briar watches her go. The door to the greenhouse opens and Sally pokes her head out.

SALLY  
 Who was it?

Briar passes the stack of flyers down to Sally, saving half for herself.

BRIAR  
 Do me a favor. If Tucker or Elsie  
 come by, tell them to pass these  
 flyers out.

Briar takes a padlock and a key out of her pocket and presses it into Sally's hand.

BRIAR (CONT'D)  
 And lock up the greenhouse before  
 you go.

SALLY  
 Is Earl okay?

BRIAR  
 He's fine.  
 (puts a hand on her head)  
 Just don't forget.

Sally nods. Briar ruffles her hair fondly, and walks away.

3

EXT. DUNLAP HOME - DAY

3

Briar steps out of a rusted mobile home, carrying a bike under one arm and a backpack on her back. She carries it down the steps. She attaches a wagon onto the back rack with a chain.

She throws a look over her shoulder. ROSEMARIE DUNLAP, 46, gaunt and withered, sits looking out the front window, her eyes empty. Briar shakes her head and rides away.

4 EXT. ROAD - DAY 4

Briar rides her bike down the empty road, peddling hard. \*

5 EXT. COLE'S FARM - DAY 5

Briar races up the farm road to Cole's farm.

CUT TO:

FARMHANDS are crowded inside the barn, busy milking the cows. More FARMHANDS are out in the fields, harvesting the autumn crop.

Briar's bicycle rests up against the side of an old shuttered barn, the wagon attached. Briar stands beside it, arms crossed, waiting. Barn cats sit around the steps to the barn, bathing in the sun. One brushes up against Briar's legs.

MARCUS COLE (65), steps out of the open barn, carrying a crate of boxes in his arms, filled with produce - ears of corn and heads of cabbage especially. Briar steps forward and takes it from him.

Briar drops the crate onto the wagon. As she straightens, she pulls a wad of cash out of her pocket, thumbing through it. She extends a handful to Cole. He shakes his head.

COLE  
Price's changed.

Briar shakes her head and counts out more bills.

BRIAR  
The more you charge, the steeper my  
delivery fees climb.

COLE  
Don't blame me. Blame the feds.  
Rations've doubled this month.

Briar hands over the money. Cole nods his thanks.

BRIAR  
Cole. You seen Earl Gannon?

COLE  
 Josie's youngest? That was  
 Tuesday.

BRIAR  
 Hasn't turned up, Josie says. If  
 you see him, lemme know?

Briar hands him one of Josie's flyers. Cole nods.

COLE  
 I'll put it up by the stand.

Briar nods her thanks and Cole walks inside the barn. Briar  
 turns, preparing to hop on her bike. The sound of a bike  
 approaching is heard off-screen, followed by the ring of a  
 bell.

Briar looks up. SARAH HAMMOND (19) a butch girl with bleach  
 blonde hair, in a flannel, band tee and ripped jeans, peddles  
 up the dirt drive, a field hockey stick hanging in a sling  
 over her shoulder. She comes to a stop in front of Briar,  
 grinning as she hops off her bike. \*

SARAH  
 Sorry I'm late. Traffic's a bitch.

BRIAR  
 Very funny.

Briar and Sarah embrace and give each other a kiss. They hop  
 on their bikes, and the two of them peddle up the road. \*

6

EXT. FARM ROAD - DAY

6

Briar and Sarah bike side by side.

BRIAR  
 You don't have to come with me  
 today, Sarah. I'm on an errand. \*

SARAH  
 What sort? \*

BRIAR  
 Earl's gone missing. \*

SARAH  
 (laughing)  
 Knowing that kid, he's probably  
 holed up somewhere with a bottle of  
 'shine.

BRIAR

All the same, I owe it to his  
mother to drag his ass home.

SARAH

And where you suppose his ass is?

BRIAR

Thought I'd check in with the  
Miller's. They were first on his  
route.

SARAH

Guess I'll tag along then.

BRIAR

You don't have to -

SARAH

(grinning)  
Afraid of a lil' company? C'mon,  
I'll race ya!

Sarah speeds off down the road. Briar shakes her head and  
grins, racing after her.

7

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

7

ELSIE WINN, (11), a slight girl with short, wispy blonde hair  
and a young Hispanic boy, OSCAR PASCARELLA, both Pahokee  
Riders, bike down a deserted street.

Elsie rides up to a curb, pausing by a telephone pole. She  
steps off her bike and unfolds a missing poster from her back  
pocket.

Elsie pulls out a roll of duct tape and tears off a piece  
with her teeth. She sticks the poster onto the pole.

They ride off down the road. The entire street is dotted with  
the flyers.

8

EXT. ROAD - DAY - LATER

8

Briar and Sarah ride down a deserted road.

9

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

9

Briar and Sarah walk their bikes down a bumpy dirt road. They come to a fork in the path and stop. Briar points down one path.

BRIAR

Miller's are this way.

SARAH

You mean the way with the skull nailed to the trespassing sign?

They exchange a sarcastic look before Briar walks on.

BRIAR

Yup.

Sarah follows after, shaking her head. They pass the sign, which reads: "No Trespassing. Violators will be shot. Survivors will be shot again".

SARAH (O.S.)

Who the fuck are these people?

10

EXT. MILLER'S HOME - DAY

10

Briar and Sarah stand at the door of a decrepit wooden cabin in a large, wooded area. Their bikes are parked on the gravel drive, leaned against an effigy with animal skulls nailed along it. A confederate flag flaps dully in the wind by the porch.

The two of them exchange a wary look. Briar knocks.

There is a pause. Sarah wanders off, peering through one of the cabin windows.

11

INT./EXT. MILLER'S HOME - DAY

11

The interior is a fire hazard waiting to happen, loaded up with small animal skulls, hunting knives, and rifles.

SARAH

(to herself)

Holy shit...

The sound of Briar knocking again is heard off-screen.

PAM MILLER (49) opens the front door a crack, leaving the chain on. Sarah returns to Briar's side.

BRIAR  
Mrs. Miller?

Pam gives her a shifty look and doesn't answer.

BRIAR (CONT'D)  
Mrs. Miller, a Rider of mine, Earl Gannon, was here this Tuesday with a delivery. You remember him?

Pam slams the door shut.

PAM (O.S.)  
Ryan!

There is silence for an uncomfortable beat. Briar and Sarah wait a moment while footsteps are heard approaching the door off-screen. The door jerks open and RYAN MILLER (55) fills up the gap in the threshold, a cigarette tucked behind his ear. \*

RYAN  
What do you want?

BRIAR  
Mr. Miller, a runner of mine was here this Tuesday -

RYAN  
You're two days late on deliverin', now you come 'round asking questions?

SARAH  
Late?

RYAN  
Did I fucking stutter?

BRIAR  
So Earl never came.

RYAN  
Listen here, I've half a mind to report you. First you're overcharging for this shit, now you ain't showing up?

Ryan lowers his hand from the door.

RYAN (CONT'D)

What's the use of you puffed up  
dykes and your "Pahokee Riders" if  
you ain't reliable?

Ryan reaches into his back pocket. Seeing the movement, Sarah reaches back and grabs the handle of her hockey stick threateningly, taking a step forward. Briar puts an arm out, stopping her.

SARAH

What you got there?

Ryan pulls out a cigarette lighter, eyeing them darkly.

RYAN

You best back the fuck off.

Stone-faced, Briar pulls Sarah back. Briar turns and walks back to her bike. She grabs a box out of the back of the wagon and walks back to the front door.

BRIAR

On the house.

Briar extends the box. Ryan glares at her before removing the chain. He reaches through and grabs the box out of her hands, looking down at it with dissatisfaction.

BRIAR (CONT'D)

So Mr. Miller, do you have any idea  
where - ?

Ryan slams the door in their face. Briar and Sarah exchange a look. Pam stands in the front window, looking out at them, and hurriedly closes the blinds.

CUT TO:

Briar and Sarah pick their bikes off the drive.

BRIAR (CONT'D)

Well. Now what?

SARAH

What time you reckon it is?

BRIAR

Dunno. 'Round two.

SARAH

School's just let out. I bet you  
one of Earl's friends'll know where  
he is.

\*  
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\*