

Ranch For Sale
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EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

A compact car screams down the highway, comes to a screeching halt, backs up, then turns down a rocky, dirt road with wide open desert spaces on each side.

The car passes a sign at the entrance to the dirt road that reads: "Ruby Ranch."

INT. THE CAR - DAY

TIFFANY ESPOSITO, 20s, holds a cell phone in one hand. With the other hand, she grips the steering wheel.

TIFFANY

I miss you already, baby. If I can close this deal, my promotion is guaranteed.

CARLOS (V.O.)

I worry about you being out there all by yourself.

TIFFANY

I've survived twenty-two years growing up in the Bronx and the last six months working for a cutthroat land developer. This will be a piece of cake.

CARLOS (V.O.)

Especially...stories...people gone missing...

TIFFANY

You're breaking up, baby. What'd you say?

She looks at her phone.

INSERT - THE PHONE

There are no signal bars.

INT. THE CAR - DAY

She throws the phone into the passenger's seat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Damn!

EXT. DESERT, GATE TO THE RUBY RANCH - DAY

The car pulls up to a barbed wire fence gate.

A sign on the gate warns: "Ruby Ranch - No Trespassing."

Tiffany gets out of the car. She wears a low-cut top, skin-tight jeans, and high-heeled boots. She locks the car and sticks the car key in her back pocket.

At the gate, Tiffany carefully shimmies through the barbed wire strands, but gouges her hand on one of the spikes.

TIFFANY

Fuck!

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Sweating profusely, Tiffany stumbles down a washed out, rocky road. She wipes her forehead with a bloody hand, then stops the bleeding by pressing the wound against her jeans.

EXT. THE GREEN RIVER - DAY

The Green River's rapids churn at the foot of the orange and red Book Cliffs Mountains. Juniper trees and sage brush line the shoreline.

EXT. PATH ALONG THE GREEN RIVER - DAY

Tiffany drops to her knees, cups some water from the river, and drinks deeply. She rinses the blood from her hand and examines the deep wound.

CHK-CHK, a rifle cocks.

Tiffany slowly turns and looks into the wrong end of a shotgun.

Holding the shotgun is weather-beaten OLGA BAUER, 70s. She wears worn, baggy jeans, a Peter Bilt-branded T-shirt, and a ball cap with "Vegas" bedazzled on the crown.

OLGA

You're trespassin'.

Tiffany raises her hands and slowly gets to her feet.

TIFFANY

Actually, I work for the man who's buying this land. I'm doing my job.

OLGA
It ain't for sale.

TIFFANY
How would you know? You certainly can't
be the owner?

OLGA
No.

TIFFANY
Then who are you?

OLGA
The caretaker. Now, shut up and move.

Olga motions with the rifle for Tiffany to follow the
path along the river's edge.

TIFFANY
Listen, this is all just a big, fuckin'
mistake.
(lowers hands)
Obviously, the word didn't get down to
you that the ranch is for sale. I'll
just --

Olga lifts the gun and aims at Tiffany.

OLGA
Watch your mouth. We don't abide by that
kind of language in these parts. Now, are
you gonna move, or should I just shoot
you here?

TIFFANY
I get it. You're the boss, but my car is
that way. I'll just go back the way I
came and --

OLGA
You don't listen, do ya, girl? Now, start
walking.

Olga sticks the end of the shotgun in Tiffany's cleavage
and pushes hard to make her move.

Tiffany slowly turns and walks down the path along the
river's edge, with Olga right behind her.

EXT. THE GREEN RIVER, DAM - DAY

The dam diverts water into two different canals. One of the canals points squarely at the Ruby Ranch.

Tiffany notices the diverted water.

TIFFANY
Is that the new dam?

OLGA
Yep.

TIFFANY
Is that where the Ruby Ranch gets its water?

OLGA
Does now.

The two women continue down the path.

EXT. RUBY RANCH - DAY

A lone horse grazes in a small paddock situated between a dilapidated ranch house and the river. Behind the house looms a large, old barn, and a small, ancient travel trailer.

The two women exit the tree-lined path, walk past an abundant vegetable garden, and toward the ranch house.

TIFFANY
You live in the house? It looks...
infested.

OLGA
It is. That's why I live in the trailer
out back.

TIFFANY
Doesn't look much better.

OLGA
It's home.

EXT. BARN, ROOT CELLAR ENTRANCE - DAY

The two women approach the old barn. Every kind of tool hangs from the side. Olga opens the door to a root cellar alongside the barn.

OLGA

Get in.

TIFFANY

What? Listen, I was told to come here and make sure the river runs through this property after the new dam was built. I see that it does, so I'll be on my way.

Tiffany turns, but Olga butt strokes her in the head with the end of the gun, knocking her to the ground.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

What the --

Her head wound bleeds profusely.

OLGA

Now, you listen. Without this job, me and my horse got no place to live, so I take my job serious. Now, get up!

Tiffany slowly gets to her feet. Before she can stand up straight, Olga pushes her into the open root cellar with her foot.

INT. THE ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Tiffany lands hard on a dirt floor. She groans.

The cellar door slams closed. A sliver of light shines through.

The small, dirt cellar is lined with empty shelves.

TIFFANY

You can't leave me in here!

EXT. THE ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Olga locks the padlock on the door to the root cellar.

OLGA

Gotta. It's the only room with a good lock on it.

Olga heads toward a small travel trailer in the distance.

INT. THE ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Tiffany scoots to a sitting position and hugs her knees to her chest. She screams when she hears something SCURRY along the shelving.

TIFFANY

Help! Somebody help me! Help!

EXT. THE RUBY RANCH - NIGHT

In the distance, one small light burns through the vast darkness of the desert.

TIFFANY (V.O.)

Help! Get me out of here!

INT. THE ROOT CELLAR - NIGHT

Tiffany kicks one of the wooden shelves loose.

TIFFANY

I'm being held prisoner by a crazy, old woman! Help me!

Tiffany uses the broken piece of shelving to dig a hole in the dirt floor.

EXT./INT. THE ROOT CELLAR - NIGHT

Olga carries a lantern in one hand and a small paper bag and a long stick in the other. She puts the lantern and bag down, then opens the padlock to the root cellar.

The lantern casts a light into the cellar.

TIFFANY

What are you going to do with me?

OLGA

In the morning, you're gonna bring in the garden crops...store 'em in this here cellar. Then, you and your car are going to disappear.

TIFFANY

Disappear? You're going to kill me? That makes no sense. I'm sure we can work something out. How much do you want?

OLGA

Can't have you goin' back to your big
shot employer telling tales about this
here land.

Tiffany charges Olga. Olga zaps her with an electric
cattle prod. Tiffany's dead weight lands with a thud on
the dirt floor.

OLGA (CONT'D)

Since you can't behave, I suppose I'll
have to bring in my own garden.

Olga throws the bag at Tiffany.

OLGA (CONT'D)

Here's your last dinner, girlie. Now,
shut your hollerin'. It attracts the
grizzlies.

Olga slams the door to the root cellar, locks it, and
heads back to her trailer. The lantern lights the way.

INT. THE ROOT CELLAR - NIGHT

Tiffany opens the bag to find pieces of rotting melon.
She sobs.

EXT. THE ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Olga unlocks the root cellar. She carries the cattle prod
and wears a Bowie knife on her belt.

OLGA

Rise and shine, buttercup. Let's take a
walk.

Tiffany squints as she stumbles out of the cellar. She's
covered in mud and dry blood. Smearred eye makeup covers
her face and her hair is a mess.

TIFFANY

I didn't mean to offend you yesterday. I
understand how important your job is.

OLGA

Turn around and put your hands behind
your back.

TIFFANY

I'm sorry if I offended you. I really
didn't mean to. I'm really, really sorry.

OLGA

Don't matter.

TIFFANY

I know that you are a valuable employee and taking care of this land is an extremely important job.

OLGA

Stop talking and put your hands behind your back.

TIFFANY

If you let me go, I promise we'll find a win-win for both of us.

Tiffany suddenly whirls around, grabs a shovel off the side of the barn, and swings it at Olga. The shovel connects and the cattle prod flies out of Olga's hands.

Olga skillfully removes her Bowie knife from its sheath and slices through Tiffany's mid-section.

Tiffany swings the shovel at Olga again, connects solidly with the side of her head and knocks her unconscious.

Tiffany turns and runs toward the river.

EXT. PATH ALONG THE RIVER - DAY

Tiffany limps along the river path. She holds her hands over her gushing stomach wound.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Tiffany hobbles along the rocky desert road. She checks to see if Olga follows.

Tiffany breaks the heels off of her boots on a rock. She takes off her shirt and presses it against the wound.

EXT. ROOT CELLAR - DAY

Olga shakes the stars out of her head, gets up, and staggers toward her trailer.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Wearing just a bra and tight jeans, Tiffany stumbles over rocks along the desert road. Her shirt is drenched in blood.

EXT. THE RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Olga grabs her shotgun and heads for the horse in the paddock.

EXT. GATE TO THE RUBY RANCH - LATER

Severely wounded, half-dressed, and exhausted, Tiffany squeezes through the barbed wire fence.

EXT. THE COMPACT CAR - DAY

Tiffany pulls the car key out of her back pocket and presses the unlock button. The car CHIRPS. Tiffany smiles, leans over, and opens the car door.

A bullet enters Tiffany's ear and exits the other side of her head. She collapses on the ground.

EXT. A DESERT HILL - DAY

Olga sits on her horse and lowers her shotgun.

OLGA

I told ya, I take my job serious.