

ACT 1

PRESENT DAY: RURAL KANSAS

An empty dirt road in the country.

The sound of trees in the wind.

A rabbit hops across the road, kicking up a tiny bit of dust. It stops, alerted to the presence of something, and looks off into the distance.

Down the road, a cloud of dust is moving toward it, getting larger as it gets closer.

The dust is moving fast, like a living thing.

The rabbit jumps off the road just in time to avoid being mowed down.

Out of the dust come five black suburbans, each of them with tinted windows.

They zoom down the road and into...

EXT. DESERTED SCHOOL GROUNDS - DAY

A sign that says **School for Troubled Youth**, can be seen as the suburbans speed through a gate.

They pass broken down buildings, over grown lots, and small houses, falling apart.

This is a place has been abandoned for some time.

CUT TO:

EXT. A FIELD - DAY

The face of DR. BOB CHAMBERS lifts his head from the dirt. A bald man, he wears a strange fitted hood over his head that leaves his face exposed. Squinting, he looks toward the trucks as they speed toward him. Taking off his hood, he removes his glasses and wipes sweat from his eyes.

He walks toward the trucks and as he does we can see he is wearing protective clothes, the kind used at a crime scene.

The trucks come to a halt and their doors start to open.

We see feet step down from the back seat wearing a pair of black Manolos. Panning up we see AUGUSTINE SPIKE. A woman in her mid to late 30's who just by looking at her you can tell is all business.

DR. CHAMBERS
I didn't expect you so soon.

AUGUSTINE
How does it look?

DR. CHAMBERS
We only found the body this morning-

AUGUSTINE
Is it him?

DR. CHAMBERS
We won't know for at least a couple of-

AUGUSTINE
Take me there.

She steps forward and then stops. Even a woman who is as hardened as she appears to be, has a reaction to the site laid out before her. Her mouth opens slightly in surprise.

Looking out, she is staring at dozens and dozens of rectangular holes. Holes big enough to fit a body.

Dr. Chambers appears at her side.

DR. CHAMBERS
We found multiple bodies in some of them.

AUGUSTINE
How many total?

DR. CHAMBERS
So far? Over 200.

AUGUSTINE
So far.

DR. CHAMBERS
I think there are more. A lot more.

AUGUSTINE
Boys and girls?

DR. CHAMBERS

Yes.

She puts her hand out and an unseen assistant drops a pair of boots in her hands. She reaches down and one at a time removes her high heels, handing them back to the person.

AUGUSTINE

Take me to him.

CUT TO:

A GRAVE - DAY

Looking up from the bottom of a rectangular hole we see Augustine and the Doctor.

They both stare down in silence.

AUGUSTINE

I need to know for sure.

DR. CHAMBERS

I told you I can't-

AUGUSTINE

Fine. How long?

DR. CHAMBERS

How long what?

AUGUSTINE

Has he been down there?

DR. CHAMBERS

I could only give you a rough estimate.

AUGUSTINE

I'll take what I can get.

He looks down and wipes his face again and furrows his brow.

DR. CHAMBERS

If I had to guess I'd say-

TITLE: APRIL 8TH, 1935, BLACK SUNDAY, SOMEPLACE IN KANSAS

A ONE STREET TOWN - DAY

We come in on the Main Street of one of the many towns destroyed by the dust bowl. A farming community, once prosperous, now languishing in the death grip that is the depression.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

We see a general store. Two men sit out front, one drinking from a bottle. A dusty red sign for Coke a Cola hangs above them.

The front door pops open and a BOY, 9, comes running out and down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A trio of dirty broken down Studibakers sit idle. TWO BOYS, 10, 11, sit tossing pebbles from them into the dirt.

The boy from the store comes running by.

They watch him go, and follow.

CUT TO:

EXT. AN ALLEY - DAY

THREE BOYS, chase a dog down an alley out into the street. A car goes by blocking the boys from the dog.

A sign behind them reads, "**Jobless Men Keep Going. We can't take care of our own.**"

The dog runs on, the car that saved it from the boys, leaves a trail of dust.

The boys stop and watch the first boy from the store, run by, closely followed by the other two.

They dog chasers look at each other, shrug, and follow.

What else do they have to do?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DAY FARM - DAY

A man, JOE DAY, 40s, alone in the carcass of a wheat field. A field that was once a productive family farm, but now lies dead, another victim of the dust bowl.

Dust blows past him as he stares down at the dry, dead earth.

He kicks at the ground, grumbles to himself, and, reaching into his back pocket, pulls out a small bottle of cheap whiskey. As he takes a long swig, something catches his eye. He looks across the landscape.

He watches as 6 boys walk along the edge of his farm. They walk toward a barn, his barn. Something's off. As the boys go in, Joe sees there are other figures in the main door. Some kind of activity taking place inside. But no one uses the barn now, no reason to.

Then he hears the voices. Cheers and laughing. Young men having a good time, blowing off steam. Joe doesn't like that noise, not one bit. He sneers and moves toward the barn.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY HOUSE - DAY

Nearby, in a small farm house, stands APRIL DAY, 8, busy sweeping. The broom in her hand so much bigger than her it is almost comical. April is a quiet girl, literally, she hasn't spoken a word since her mother died a year prior. Right now she is standing at the front door, sweeping up the dust from the previous day, pushing it out onto the porch. She does this daily, always at the same time.

Stopping to revel in her boredom, she sighs. Then, pushing the dust out, she looks up. In the distance, as she squints her little eyes, the eyes her father always says are too close together, she stares at something.

We see a storm moving in our direction. It's pretty far away, probably nothing to worry about, but still, it's moving awful fast.

CUT TO:

INT. BARN - DAY

Joe finds a crowd of young men jammed inside. They cheer, jeer, and yell at something happening in the middle of the room. He pushes his way through the crowd and stops.

He sees, his son, BILLY DAY(16) shirt off, blood running from his face, taking a fist to the nose.

BILLY
Come on. That all you got?

Billy pulls his fist back, and then-

JOE
What the hell is this?

Everyone stops and looks at Joe.

BILLY
Pa? Thought you went to town?

The boy fighting Billy realizes no one is watching. Taking advantage of the moment, SMACK! With one punch he lays Billy out, flat on the ground.

From the floor, Billy watches as the crowd makes a hasty exit. As they go, a BOY, Billy's age, stops and kneels next to him, shoving a wad of cash in his palm.

BILLY (CONT'D)
He was supposed to wait till I was ready.

BOY
Sorry Bill. Nice job though. Fall looked real.

BILLY
Fall was real.

The boy scurries away.

Billy starts to get up, wobbling to his feet.

Joe stares at the money in Billy's hand greedily.

JOE
What's the hells going on here?
What's that money for?

Billy looks up at Joe, moves up to his elbows, spits, and smiles a bloody smile.

BILLY
Lost a fight for it.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY HOUSE - DAY

April is still standing at the door watching that storm roll in. It's getting pretty close now. Looks like it's gonna be a doozy.

As she looks on, the clouds begin to change shape, their form, not quite right, and, these clouds, go all the way to the ground.

April's eyes open wide. That's no rainstorm.

The broom clatters to the floor.

April runs inside.

INT. DAY HOUSE - KITCHEN

A large hand bell on the counter. April snaps it up and runs out.

INT. BARN - DAY

Joe is looking down at Billy with the sad eyes of a drunk past his limit.

JOE

Where'd you get money to gamble with?

BILLY

Took it.

JOE

From who?

BILLY

I wish you were just slow, but I know you're drunk. From you.

Joe is taken aback by this information. He reaches into his pockets.

Empty.

JOE

You stole my money.

BILLY

I stole our money.

JOE

You steal and then gamble with what little we have? You shame all of us. You give that money here.

Billy stands and slowly, so Joe can see, pockets the cash.

BILLY

Nah. I'll be keeping charge of this. Least that way I know April will get a meal and you won't drink it.

Joe's arm bridges the space between him and his son and, whack, the back of his hand hits Billy's face.

Billy staggers a little, and smiles.

Joe looks as shocked as Billy. He steps forward.

JOE

Billy I'm sorry...I didn't mean-

Billy steps away and turns around.

BILLY

Sall right. Go on. Hit me again. Losing a fight's a sure thing. Winning's a sucker's bet.

JOE

Who taught you to think like that?

BILLY

You did old man.

Joe stumbles back as he trips on the truth.

Then, they both hear the panicked sound of a bell.

Billy moves to the door.

EXT. DAY HOUSE - DAY

April stands of the back porch of the house, swinging her arm, ringing the bell as hard as she can, staring out toward her brother and father.

INT. BARN - DAY

At the entrance to the barn Billy appears and looks out, behind him staggers Joe. What he sees drains all the color from his face.

In the distance, about to overtake the house is the mother of all dust storms. It's so big you can't see from end to end. Swallowing any and all light it comes across, it marches forward, turning day, to night.

Billy reaches back, grabs his father, and pulls him out of the barn.

BILLY

Make for the fruit cellar.

They run for the house in the shadow of the storm, its darkness chasing them every inch as they go.

EXT. DAY FARM - DAY

April stands on the porch, frozen, staring up, the silent bell still in her hand. Joe runs past her and she doesn't move. Billy snaps her up.

BILLY

Come on girl.

The bell falls to the ground with a dead clang.

INT. DAY HOUSE/FRUIT CELLAR - DAY

Darkness is broken by the dim light of a door opening. Billy, April and Joe pile in to the musty cellar. Joe closes the door behind him, leans against a wall and gasps for breath.

Wind slams the door back open.

Billy runs up the stairs.

EXT. DAY FARM - DAY

Billy's head pops out the cellar door. He looks up and sees a tidal wave of dust and dirt, carried by 60 mph winds.

Frozen for a second he just stares up, in awe of the dry death moving toward him. Then, snapping himself out of it, he reaches for the handle of the door.

He can't quite get it.

He climbs out of the cellar, grabs the handle and jumps back down, closing the door, just as the storm overtakes the house.

INT. DAY HOUSE/FRUIT CELLAR - DAY

Billy lands with a thud on the ground.

The door starts to rattle with the force of the wind upstairs. Any light coming through it's few cracks disappears.

Billy gets to his feet and looks to Joe.

We see him, leaned up against the wall, drunk, angry, and tired. He pull out his bottle and takes a swig.

Billy smacks the bottle away.

BILLY

That all you can do?

JOE

Leave me be.

Joe goes scrambling for the bottle.

BILLY

No. No I won't. You got two kids here. You just gonna stop-

JOE

All I got here is this house and this land. Land's dead. Wife's dead. Kids...

EXT. DAY FARM - DAY

We see the house in the storm. Everything is being ripped apart. Windows are breaking, paint is being stripped from wood, and piles of dust begin to form inside, covering everything.

INT. DAY HOUSE/FRUIT CELLAR - DAY

Joe stands on one side of the room while Billy and April stand on the other. Joe eyes his children with a sudden anger. He takes another drink, and points at Billy.

JOE

You're no good Billy Day. You take our money, you destroyed your mother, and it's cause of you your sister don't talk. You're no good now and you never will be.

Billy is stung.

April runs over to Joe and shakes her head. She points at Billy and then at herself.

JOE (CONT'D)

I know you love your brother but-

BILLY

This place took mama, not me. It broke her heart. Just like you. We never should have come here. I wish we could leave. I wish we could leave and never come back.

Then...a change in the air. Something electric. Billy's hair starts to rise as he is besieged by some kind of static electricity. Arcs appear around him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Ow...what...

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Outside, in the storm, a dark shape appears moving through the dust. A car. A black sedan to be specific, but, this isn't just any black sedan, there's something different about this one. Something strange. The windows are black and it moves through the storm, like a shark searching for a meal.