

RANGER BILL - SMOKEY IN THE CITY

Episode 1: "Welcome to the Forest"

Written by

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(A single camera, urban-forest dramedy with good guys, bad guys, and dancing bears, in 22-minute episodes; character/scene list in attached spreadsheet.)

## SCENE 1-A - EXT. FOREST, MORNING

Portland OR, early spring - **forest bird sounds: jay, crow, hawk, woodpecker.**

Shot of tiny clearing in small area of old-growth forest on ridge above downtown, a small cabin with mossy roof, smoke coming from chimney pipe, clearing lined with blooming rhododendrons. Camera pans forward to rustic outhouse behind cabin, pauses on outhouse door which opens as Ranger Bill (RB) in uniform and Smokey hat steps out w/magazine folded under arm, adjusting belt.

He walks to back door of cabin, past bank of solar panels and 2 small wind generators, stopping under cabin roof eave below small satellite dish, where water pipe w/spigot and attached soap dish comes up from ground. RB washes hands and dries them on hand towel hung on nail on cabin wall, then takes ancient, silver mountain bike off back porch, puts magazine in knapsack bungee-corded to bike rack, Smokey hat on top of knapsack tying hat strap through bungees, puts on bike helmet and jacket.

He walks bike around side to front of cabin, past rusty silver Ranger pickup with "Park Service" on door, gets on bike and coasts down dirt drive through trees.

## SCENE 1-B - EXT. ROAD, MORNING

**Low-noise traffic stream, opening music and titles begin.** At gate by road, RB closes gate and coasts to end of dirt drive at busy, two-lane asphalt road with a steady stream of vehicles moving down hillside toward downtown. With butt on bike seat, one foot on ground, he waits for traffic break then pedals across road to bike lane on downhill side, and begins coasting-pedaling toward downtown.

## SCENE 1-C - EXT. AERIAL VIEW, DAY

**Music, titles cont.** As RB moves down road, camera moves up through treetops to dramatic, helicopter view of city and downtown, then pans out to snow-capped Cascades and Mt. Hood to east, then slowly curves over city and down toward river, panning in on bridge.

## SCENE 2-A - EXT. BRIDGE OVER RIVER, DAY

**Music, titles cont.** RB slowly navigates stream of bikes and people crossing bridge, as loud pickup truck approaches from his rear. He glances in small rear-view mirror attached to helmet, sees pickup truck passenger's right hand holding large beverage cup w/lid and straw outside open truck window.

With one eye on mirror and one on bridge ride/walkway ahead, he reaches down and unclasps magnet-held, fish pole-net from bike frame and, as pickup passes him and passenger tosses drink cup toward river, he reaches up and intercepts cup w/pole-net above bridge railing, then reclasps pole to bike frame.

## SCENE 2-B - EXT. DOWNTOWN STREETS, DAY

**Music, titles end.** RB rides into Thomson Square and stops, near "Hector's" food wagon parked along curb, walks bike to window counter where Hector is reading newspaper.

HECTOR

Ranger Bill.

RB

Hector. A large Coffee Lido with extra milk, and 4 oatmeal cookies, please.

Hector talks as he fills cup and bag.

HECTOR

So you see bears again last night?

RB

Yes. A large troop. Doing a dress rehearsal of "Beauty and the Beast."

HECTOR

You have to admire that level of commitment in a troop of bears.

Hector puts bag on counter.

HECTOR

Three-fifty. Should I charge it to the Park Service?

RB puts four ones on counter, takes bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

Funny. Keep the change, and have  
a full day, Hector.

HECTOR

Thank you, Ranger four-bill.

## SCENE 2-C - EXT. SIDEWALK-ALLEY, DAY

RB walks bike down sidewalk then part-way down alley to old building with small hand-painted "Park Service" sign over door. He unlocks door and takes bike inside.

## SCENE 3-A - INT. RB'S OFFICE, DAY

RB flips light switch, turning on two table lamps, one by couch along wall near door, one on desk by wall opposite. The room is small, 12x12, with bare brick walls, high windows along the alley wall with a 2nd couch beneath, a file cabinet and stack of boxes in one corner, a chair behind desk and two in front, a small fridge and coffeemaker on a table along the back wall near the door to a small half-bath.

RB leans bike against entry wall, hangs helmet and jacket on wall pegs, walks to desk putting knapsack on floor, cell phone from pants pocket on desk. He sits, turns on and opens desk laptop and begins laptop fiddling as cell phone rings.

## SCENE 3-B - INT./EXT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

(RB in office/Claire calling from outside hospital ER door, as RB picks up)

RB

Ranger Bill.

CLAIRE

Who else would it be?

RB

Not sure. Where are you?

CLAIRE

City Hospital. Had a patient  
admitted this morning.

RB

Becky Rain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

Yes. The notes say she called you at 3:00 and you called the EMTs.

RB

Yes. How's she doing?

CLAIRE

They pumped her stomach. She's stable now and sleeping. Any idea where she got the Ketamine?

RB

Nope. You releasing her to Baytown?

CLAIRE

Yes.

RB

Has Officer Friendly been by?

CLAIRE

He wants to quote "lock her up and send the key to Mars" close-quote. Which is just the usual, individual problem solving by reworking social-stereotype ideas, bullshit.

RB

So the aversion to bullshit is why you didn't go to vet school?

CLAIRE

(breath laugh)

Gee, Ranger Phil, is there a forest psycho-babble, tv talk show in your future?

RB

I can't talk about plans for the show. And the name is Ranger "Bill."

A nurse steps outside the ER doorway.

NURSE

Doctor?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

(turns)

Hippocrates calls. I'll catch  
you on the back side, Smokey  
Joe.

(hangs up)

RB

Now you're mixing tv show  
character metaphors? ... Hello?

RB looks at phone, hangs up and put it on desk.

## SCENE 3-C - INT./EXT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

RB sitting at desk, Hector calls from his wagon as RB  
picks up.

RB

Ranger Bill.

HECTOR

Yeah, I know. Just like you know  
it's me. It's a cell phone,  
dude. Why are you living partly  
in the '80s and partly in the  
20-teens?

RB

Not sure, Kemosabe. Is this  
burning question why you called?

HECTOR

No. The guy, whose photo you  
sent me from your phone  
yesterday, is sitting on a bench  
in Thomson Square, with two  
scruffy-looking dudes who parked  
their pickup truck partly on the  
curb.

RB

Let me guess -- a dark green  
pickup with California plates?

HECTOR

Yeah. How ...?

RB

It passed me earlier on the  
bridge. They're litterers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HECTOR

Oh, wow, not litterers. They both also appear to be carrying handguns in ankle holsters underneath their jeans. And photo guy is handing them a large briefcase.

RB

Cool, Kemosabe.

HECTOR

Stop calling me that. I'm not your Kemosabe. I'm a Mexican with a green card, okay?

RB

Got it.

HECTOR

And now the scruffy dudes are getting up, and the guy in the three-thousand-dollar suit is still sitting on the bench, and waving bye-bye to them. You know, like he's showing off that he owns them a few times over.

RB

Okay. Don't hang up. I'm going to try to make this long-distance walkie-talkie do a three-way thing.

HECTOR

Okay.

## SCENE 3-D - INT./EXT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

RB calling from his desk, with Hector at his wagon, as Detective Angel Harter, leader of the city anti-corruption task force, picks up, standing on a sidewalk beside her car.

ANGEL

RB -- this needs to be quick.

RB

I'll try my best. My emissary is on the line, saying your "photo guy" has just met with two scruffy-looking dudes who appear to be carrying guns in ankle

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB (cont'd)  
holsters, in Thomson Square;  
photo guy gave them a large,  
lawyer's briefcase, and the  
dudes are now walking back to  
their dark green pickup truck  
with California plates.

ANGEL  
Your "emissary"? What, is this  
the 16th-century? What emissary?

RB  
My Kemosabe. Hector, the lunch  
wagon-master.

HECTOR  
Uh, excuse me, one again. I am  
not your Kemosabe. Not that I  
have anything against Native  
Americans. It's just --

ANGEL  
Hector? Why are you playing cops  
and robbers with this Park  
Service reject?

HECTOR  
Hi, Angel. I don't know. Someone  
has to look out for him.

ANGEL  
You catch the California plate  
number?

HECTOR  
Able-Charley-Mama 9-2-7 Tango.

ANGEL  
Okay. Thanks, boyfriends.  
(hangs up)

HECTOR  
Man. That chick has, like, three  
sets of cajones, and they're all  
orbiting a really dark and  
powerful star.

RB  
They call her Detective Fierce  
behind her back.

HECTOR  
So are we through, now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

Of course. And the good citizens  
of Gotham City thank you, sir.

HECTOR

You realize this is Portland,  
right?

## SCENE 3-E - INT. RB'S OFFICE, DAY

Both RB and Hector hang up. RB looks back at laptop screen with over-the-shoulder camera shot showing newspaper stories involving allegations of corruption connected to the mayor, governor, and various business people engaged in real estate developments funded by laundered drug money.

RB closes browser, laptop screen, stands and walks to door, putting on jacket and Smokey hat with knapsack hanging off of shoulder, as he speaks to bike.

RB

Hi-ho, Silver, you stay, big  
fella.

## SCENE 4-A - EXT. ALLEY-STREET NEAR RB'S OFFICE, DAY

RB walks out door, turns and locks it, walks up alley to street, as camera jump-follows him to a corner 2 blocks away where he stops, watching scene of 3 patrol cars and 4 uniforms who have stopped the dark green pickup truck. The truck's driver and passenger are sitting in the backseats of separate patrol cars. A flatbed tow truck arrives, the patrol cars leave.

## SCENE 4-B - INT./EXT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

Standing on sidewalk, RB's phone vibrates as he pulls it from pants pocket. Angel is calling on her cell phone, sitting at her desk.

RB

Yo, Sister Harter.

ANGEL

Thanks for the tip. We just  
rolled up 2 ex-felons from  
California, with several weapons  
in their truck, a few ounces of  
coke and other drugs, and a  
briefcase with \$40,000 in cash.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

Cool. Was Ketamine one of the drugs?

ANGEL

Yes. And stop saying cool. You aren't hip. You're, like, a dork with a tiny, toy badge, who lives in the woods and communes with forest creatures.

RB

Thanks for your assessment. May peace be with you and your bullet-clan, Mama Jama.

ANGEL

What does that even mean?

RB

No idea. Also -- Becky Rain, the Mayor's former director of teenage entertainment, ended up in City Hospital this morning after overdosing on Ketamine, which I'm now thinking may not have been self-inflicted. She's due to be released to Baytown later today.

ANGEL

Can you call Claire?

RB

Sure. Can you go there with an AB-19 protective discharge, and I'll take her to Happy Valley?

ANGEL

Sure. By 2:00.

RB

I'll tell Claire. This is Ranger Bill saying over and out.

ANGEL

Yeah, Bill -- it's just a phone. Get used to it.

## SCENE 4-C - EXT. SIDEWALK, DAY

Waiting on corner for bus, RB calls Claire and gets her voice mail.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

Claire, it's RB. There could be a more sinister backstory for Becky's o.d. Angel's going to drop off an AB-19 form this afternoon, and I'll take Becky to Happy Valley. Call me if that's a problem. Otherwise, I'll see your back side on the ... wait, how does that go?

## SCENE 5-A - EXT. STREET, DAY

A city bus stops at the corner, where RB and a few other people board.

## SCENE 5-B - INT. CITY BUS, DAY

RB sits on right side near back door, next to Lady in a bright Hawaiian print dress with a collapsed, rainbow parasol. The Lady glances at him then looks forward.

LADY

Officer.

RB

(French accent)

Madame.

LADY

Thank you for recognizing that I am French-Hawaiian royalty, traveling incognito.

RB

Sure. My Aunt Sissy was French-Hawaiian. Her brother-in-law, Kiawana René, invented the French-Hawaiian-fry, a side dish made from deep-fried poi balls that are shot into the frier with a special poi gun.

LADY

(looks out window)

I hate poi guns.

## SCENE 5-C - INT./INT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

Seated in bus, RB's phone vibrates and he pulls it from pants pocket. Becky Rain is calling from City Hospital room on cell phone that says "Big John."

RB  
Big John?

BECKY  
It's Becky.

RB  
Where are you?

BECKY  
City Hospital, room 625. They took my clothes and phone so I wouldn't split. I borrowed an orderly's phone to call you.

RB  
Do you remember what happened?

BECKY  
Not really. I met two guys at Ricky's on Temple. They bought a pizza and I was eating and drinking one guy's beer, then next thing I remember I'm lying in a puddle of barf in an alley and calling you, then I woke up here 30 minutes ago.

RB  
I'll be there in 40 minutes. You might not be safe. Can you walk?

BECKY  
Yeah. I'm okay.

RB  
When you hang up, delete the call and leave the phone on the tray table by the bed. Then go to the hall restroom nearest your room, go into a stall and stay there until I come. Okay?

BECKY  
Okay.

RB hangs up, puts phone in pocket, stands and rings the bus bell, nodding to Lady.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

Bonsoir.

LADY

Oreo voir, Poi Boy.

## SCENE 6-A - EXT. STREET, DAY

Bus pulls up and stops at corner by St. Vincent de Paul thrift store. RB gets off and walks into store.

## SCENE 6-B - INT. STORE, DAY

RB walks into store and smiles at Cheryl behind counter.

RB

Cheryl.

CHERYL

Ranger Bill. How's the forest growing?

RB steps to a clothing rack near counter and talks while grabbing a pair of jeans, a t-shirt, and flip-flops from a table.

RB

Up. ... And down. Sideways, too, I guess.

CHERYL

So, basically, it's life in three dimensions.

RB

That's it.  
(puts stuff on counter)  
And that's it, again.

Cheryl speaks while putting stuff in bag.

CHERYL

\$8.00. Should I charge it to the Park Service?

RB

(going through money)  
Why is that such a popular joke?

CHERYL

No idea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB hands her \$10.00 and takes the bag.

RB

Here. Keep the change, and have  
a day you won't have to talk  
about later.

CHERYL

Will do. Thanks, RB.

RB walks out of store to sidewalk.

## SCENE 6-C - EXT. SIDEWALK, DAY

RB, with knapsack slung on one shoulder, and clothes bag  
in hand, walks up sidewalk to corner, disappearing in  
crowd in distance.

## SCENE 7-A - EXT. HOSPITAL, DAY

RB walks up drive to front door of City Hospital,  
stepping aside at door as older guy wearing John Deere  
cap, seated in wheelchair pushed by a couple in their  
50s, comes out. Guy flashes RB peace sign, and RB flashes  
one back, the 50s couple not noticing.

## SCENE 7-B - INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY, DAY

RB walks in through front door, turns and walks to  
elevators, briefly waits, then gets on elevator.

## SCENE 7-C - INT. HOSPITAL 6TH FLOOR HALL, DAY

Elevator doors open and RB steps out, looking for room  
number direction sign, then walks down hall to room 625.  
He stops at edge of doorway and sees guy standing at tray  
table by bed, going through contents of cell phone. RB  
looks across and down hall and sees sign for restroom,  
walks to "Women" door, opens it and steps inside  
entryway.

## SCENE 7-D - INT. HOSPITAL RESTROOM, DAY

RB looks around corner of entryway and sees no one, then  
speaks in a low voice.

RB

Becky? It's RB.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Becky opens door to last stall and comes out, wearing just a hospital gown.

BECKY

Hey, dude. We have to stop meeting like this.

RB

(holds out bag)

Here. The latest escapee-wear from Sax Fifth Avenue de Paul. Put it on and stay in the stall for a few more minutes. Some guy is checking out the phone you left in 625.

BECKY

Oh, man. Are people after me?

RB

Not sure. But it's going to be okay. Just wait in the stall.

## SCENE 8-A - INT./INT. SPLIT-SCREEN PHONE CALL, DAY

Becky takes clothes back to stall, shuts door and changes. RB calls Angel who picks up in her car, stopped at a traffic light.

ANGEL

RB.

RB

I'm at the hospital and potential bad guy no. 3 is standing in Becky's room.

ANGEL

Where is she?

RB

We're both in a restroom across the hall. Can you send uniforms?

ANGEL

Sure. And I'll be there in five minutes. You stay put.

RB

Oh, you bet. Put as much forest as possible between yourself and danger. When does that ever work?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGEL

RB ...

RB

(hangs up)

ANGEL

Bill?

(looks at phone)

Shit.

(hangs up)

RB

(to Becky in stall)

Stay put, sweet cheeks.

BECKY

Okay. But don't be a hero.

RB

There are no heroes in the forest. Only animals and plants.

## SCENE 8-B - INT. HOSPITAL HALL AND ROOM 625, DAY

RB comes out of restroom and walks down hall to room 625, his left hand adjusting the front brim of his Smokey hat with the two small bear mace jets, his right hand in his pants pocket flipping the cap off "Little Reaper," his mini taser.

He stops at door to 625. Guy and cell phone are gone.

RB steps inside room and sees bathroom door closed, walks to it and hears noise of someone standing and peeing in toilet. Then bathroom door suddenly swings open and Hans steps out.

HANS

(looks up, surprised)

RB

Really -- don't you want to go back and wash your hands?

HANS

Who the freak are you?

RB

Ranger Bill, protector of all the plants and animals in the forest.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HANS

(steps face-to-face)

Then go back to the freaking forest, Dork Man.

RB

Dork Man? Why do people think that's even close to accurate?

RB presses button on WiFi remote in left front pants pocket, releasing a spray from the front brim of his Smokey hat that, at two feet, is like a bear mace pressure washer for Hans' eyeballs.

Hans yells, hopping around, his left hand rubbing his eyes, right hand grabbing the 9mm handgun with silencer from the rear waistband of his pants, underneath his coat.

RB steps forward and jams the taser against the left side of Hans' neck.

Hans does a full-body spasm, dropping gun, then collapsing face-down onto floor, unconscious.

RB puts taser back in pants pocket, swings knapsack off shoulder, kneels beside unconscious Hans. He slides gun away from body and pulls two heavy nylon cable zip-ties from knapsack pocket, ties wrists, then ankles, tight. Still kneeling on floor, he picks up 9mm and checks that a round is chambered and safety is on, as he waits with gun pointed down at floor, watching hallway for more bad guys.

## SCENE 8-C - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM 625, DAY

From inside the room, two city police officers appear in the hallway outside door.

Officer Thompson is in the lead. He sees body lying on floor inside room, and RB kneeling beside it with gun pointed at floor. Both Officer Thompson and 2nd Officer draw weapons, pointed at RB.

OFF. THOMP.

(yelling)

Put your weapon on the floor!!

RB reaches out, places the 9mm on the floor and slides it toward the door, then raises both hands, empty palms facing officers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

I'm the good guy. That's the bad  
guy, and the bad guy's gun.

Both officers enter room, guns still pointed at RB. They  
see name tag on his uniform.

OFF. THOMP.

You're Ranger Bill?

RB

Yes.

Both officers holster their guns.

OFF. THOMP.

What happened here.

RB

(lowers hands, stands)

Two guys tried to o.d. a girl  
last night, but she survived  
after being brought here. Today,  
guy no. 3, lying on floor, shows  
up with that gun. The girl is  
safe across the hall. He  
confront me. I mace him, he  
pulls the gun, I taser him, he  
spasms and collapses on the  
floor unconscious. I put cable  
ties on his wrists and ankles,  
then pick up the gun in case  
more bad guns show up, but you  
come instead.

## SCENE 9-A - INT. HOSPITAL ROOM 625, DAY

Angel walks in, scans room, speaks to Officer Thompson.

ANGEL

I'm Detective Harter.  
(looks at RB)  
You okay?

RB

Yep.

ANGEL

(looks at Hans)  
Who's this?

RB

Bad guy no. 3.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGEL

Is he alive?

RB

Alive and sleeping.

ANGEL

Was he shot?

RB

No. Just maced and tasered.

ANGEL

(looks at RB)

Where's the girl?

RB

Across the hall. Come on.

RB and Angel walk out the door and down the hall toward the restroom. Then RB stops.

RB

Angel, I think the guy on the floor is Hans Bolo.

ANGEL

The phantom hitman? No way. He's not real. Just an urban legend.

RB

Who happens to be lying on the floor in 625.

ANGEL

Why would you even say that?

RB

Before I maced and tasered him, he braced me and said I needed to return to Forestville -- with a German accent heavy enough to slice-and-dice a Bratwurst, and breath that reeked of garlic and sardines.

ANGEL

Are you sure?

RB

Yes. Hans Bolo's "breath of death."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGEL

One sec.

Angel turns and goes back to the doorway of 625 where, inside, Officer Thompson is kneeling by still-unconscious Hans' feet, about to cut off the nylon ankle tie.

ANGEL

Wait. Leave the flex cuffs on.  
Call dispatch and say Detective Harter needs a wagon with portable ankle and waist restraints for the suspect. This might actually be the breath of death, himself.

## SCENE 9-B - INT. HOSPITAL RESTROOM, DAY

RB and Angel enter restroom.

RB

Becky? It's RB.

Becky pushes the stall door open and rushes to where he's standing.

BECKY

About freaking time, Lone Ranger.

She hugs him, then unclenches and sees Angel.

BECKY

Wow. Detective Fierce, in the flesh.

ANGEL

(to RB)

Why do people think that's even close to accurate?

BECKY

(to Angel)

Did you get the bad guy?

ANGEL

Three, and counting. And the Lone Ranger is now going to hi-ho you out of town, in his trusty Ranger called Silver.

Claire has entered the restroom unnoticed, and been watching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAIRE

I can drive the children.

BECKY

Hey. Dr. J. takes the ball.

CLAIRE

(steps toward group)  
From cops and robbers to  
basketball?

ANGEL

(hands Claire form)  
Here's the AB-19 discharge.

CLAIRE

(looking at form)  
Thanks.

BECKY

So, where-the-Oregon am I going?

RB

A small farm near Corvallis.  
Goats, apples, strawberries, and  
two retired draft horses named  
Gwendolyn and Ruby. That okay?

BECKY

Cool.

ANGEL

(walking to door)  
Later, boys and girls.

## SCENE 9-C - INT. HOSPITAL RESTROOM, DAY

Angel leaves, Claire, Becky and RB still standing  
together.

CLAIRE

(to RB)  
So you did the hero thing. But  
you could have waited for the  
people with guns and vests to  
get here. I think they call it  
backup? They did teach that at  
Lone Ranger school?

RB

I was probably day dreaming,  
that day, about high-rise  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB (cont'd)  
buttermilk pancakes smothered in  
butter and real maple syrup.

CLAIRE  
And you could have waited.

RB  
(two steps toward  
serious)  
Yes. But an armed, professional  
hitman, cornered in a room when  
two mostly unsuspecting, armed  
cops walk in -- how does that  
scenario play out without a  
shoot out and people dead?

CLAIRE  
Okay. You're right, in a wrong  
world. But --

RB  
-- in a right world, I'd be  
wrong. I get it. And what am I  
in a world that's pretending it  
can be both right and wrong, at  
the same time?

CLAIRE  
(breath laugh)  
... I guess then you'd be "often  
intercoursed."

BECKY  
Wow. I just realized -- you two  
are the prelude to a couple.

Claire and RB, suddenly taken aback, look at each other  
with their assurance shaken, then look at Becky, then  
back at each other, as assurance returns.

CLAIRE  
That's just the Ketamine  
talking.

RB  
Absolutely.

Becky shakes her head as she walks past them toward the  
door.

BECKY  
Right. Come on. Someone has to  
buy me pancakes now.

## SCENE 10-A - INT. CAR, RURAL INTERSTATE, EVENING

**Low hum of tires on pavement, music and closing credits begin.** With little traffic on road, Claire is driving her older Volvo station wagon, RB slouched in the passenger's seat, both mostly looking out windshield as they do an easy back-and-forth dialogue exchange with pauses. Becky is curled up asleep in the backseat.

RB

Thanks for driving.

CLAIRE

Sure. Cars can be handier than bear-mobiles, for some things.

RB

True. In campgrounds, bears love car-seat grocery shelves. ... I can drive back, if you want. Since Ranger school, I'm fully licensed on roads, tracks, migratory bird flyways, ice floes.

CLAIRE

That's impressively disconnected.

RB

Your diagnoses are always insightful and clearly written. It's good to know that medical school doesn't ruin the handwriting of everyone.

CLAIRE

... I guess sharpening your pencil with a Swiss Army knife, does keep you close to the fundamentals of writing.

RB

... The interstate, in the early evening, out here in the rural-lands, can be like a bowling alley that no one comes to.

CLAIRE

Yes. I usually think of it as an empty golf course, with concrete fairways.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB

That's desolate-pastoral.

CLAIRE

... So how's the girl?

RB

(looks at Becky)

Curled up, asleep. And drooling. Must be random-access pancake memory. And her feet are twitching, like she's dream-running from the bad guys.

CLAIRE

Did you know, in her sophomore year in high school, before the floor collapsed, that she was a national merit scholar?

RB

I'm not surprised. She's a smart girl, for a drooler.

(looks back at road)

... I'm guessing I'm not the first to spot a possible connection, between being smart and being prone to drooling. Is there a medical name for it?

CLAIRE

I think it's called "bullshit."

## SCENE 10-B - EXT. HIGHWAY PANORAMA, EVENING

**Music and closing credits cont.** From bridge over interstate, camera follows Volvo as it passes underneath, moving down interstate into distance.

RB

(voice-over)

... So the full Latin name, then, would be: 'bullshitum ideum pooppyato'?

(bull-'shit-us i-'deem poop-ee-'ah-toe)

CLAIRE

(voice-over)

... Around the forest campfire, I bet Latin jokes are a big hit with the raccoons.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RB  
(voice-over)  
... Yes, it's true. Raccoons  
will pretty much laugh at  
anything.

## End.

(/wr tlp - ranger bill e001 d03 20170103.fadein)

20170103 11:18 (4575 words)