

The Convoy
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FADE IN:

EXT. SALT FLATS - DAY

A lonely, barren wasteland. Oppressive silence and stillness. Nothing but cracked earth as far as the eye can see.

In the distance, specks crawl along the horizon, dwarfed by the expanse. Tiny plumes of dust kicked up behind them. Faint, guttural ENGINE noises.

Closer, a convoy of worn-down, dusty trucks and vans driving, the ENGINES deafening.

INT/EXT. FRONT TRUCK - DAY

SAMUEL, 22, a rag masking the bottom half of his face, piercing blue eyes, drives the truck in front. BLAKE, 37, a ragged blindfold over his eyes, sits beside him.

Behind, a gaunt, hooded man, MILTON, 62, sits handcuffed, jostles around. He starts COUGHING, HACKING uncontrollably. His whole body heaves.

Samuel takes no notice. Blake hears something over the din of the ENGINES. He turns his ear toward Milton.

Milton continues to violently COUGH.

Blake taps Samuel's shoulder. He looks at Blake. Looks at Milton. Wordlessly turns the wheel.

EXT. SALT FLATS - DAY

Their truck slows down, a rock formation in the near distance. The rest of the convoy comes to a halt haphazardly around them.

Samuel hops out, checks his holster for his revolver.

Blake tentatively steps down.

In the truck bed, Milton shakes, shudders.

Samuel clambers on, unlocks Milton's handcuffs as Blake searches with his hand around a pile of assorted supplies.

Others stand outside their cars, watch from afar, scared to come near.

MARY, 35, the lieutenant, approaches on her motorcycle, stops.

Blake pulls out a large, black bag, turns to the RUMBLING sound of Mary's bike.

BLAKE

Wait here. We'll be done in 10 minutes.

Mary nods. Blake walks away, bag over his shoulder.

Samuel is already marching Milton to the rock formation. Blake joins him.

They walk in total silence, save FOOTSTEPS and Milton's COUGHING.

EXT. ROCK FORMATION - DAY

Behind the rocks, hidden from the convoy's view they stop. Samuel takes off Milton's handcuffs and hood, revealing a haggard, aged, harsh-edged face.

Milton heaves, COUGHING worse than ever, his entire body racked, doubled over. He coughs up something black.

Samuel and Blake stand idle.

Milton coughs up more and more black, viscous fluid, his body thinning. His struggling subdues.

There is now a pool of black fluid. Milton's body is a shell of its former self.

From the pool, a humanoid shape starts to form, rise.

Blake unzips the body bag, puts it over Milton's body.

A black shell of a human now sits on the ground.

Blake zips the bag, stands back up.

The shell begins to break, revealing another Milton.

Samuel's face contorts in disgust.

BLAKE

You wish he wouldn't come back,
don't you?

Samuel pulls out his revolver. The shell fully gapes.

Milton, slick with fluid, starts breathing suddenly, gasping for air. He crawls around. Starts to open his eyes.

Samuel, panicked, immediately puts the hood back on Milton. He throws some clothes at him.

Milton understands. He starts to put the clothes on, struggling and slipping.

A RUMBLING ENGINE sound in the distance. Blake and Samuel immediately turn. It gets closer.

Mary shows up around the corner in her motorcycle.

BLAKE
I told you to wait.

MARY
You took too long.

She looks at the body bag, at Milton in the black fluid, shakes her head.

MARY
Never getting used to that.

She picks up the bag, throws it on the back of her motorcycle, ties it to the chassis.

Samuel roughly hoists Milton up, cuffs him again.

MARY
Need a hand there, Samuel?

He simply glares back as he starts to lead Milton away at gunpoint.

Mary turns to Blake.

MARY
Charming, as usual. What about you?

BLAKE
I'm blind, not helpless. I'll follow the racket your bike makes.

MARY
Suit yourself.

Mary gets on her motorcycle, kickstarts it, drives off.

Blake starts to walk back.

EXT. CONVOY - DAY

As Blake returns, Samuel is handcuffing Milton to the truck again. Blake feels his way onto the truckbed, lifts himself onto it, stands next to Samuel and Milton.

A crowd watches.

Samuel finishes cuffing Milton, taps Blake on the shoulder in morse code. Blake nods.

BLAKE

I was just about to.

Milton jerks his head toward Blake.

MILTON

Blake? Is that you?

BLAKE

Quiet.

MILTON

Blake, let me go! Or if not you,
surely Samuel--

Samuel punches Milton in the gut, anger in his eyes. Milton reels. He then kicks Milton in the ribs, once, twice before Blake stops him.

BLAKE

Somehow, I doubt that. Now listen.

Blake leans closer to Milton.

BLAKE

I'm reasonable, but my brother
isn't. Unfortunately, we need you,
but if you so much as step an inch
out of line, Samuel will gladly
beat you senseless. Isn't that
right, Samuel?

Samuel nods.

BLAKE

(for Milton's benefit)

He nodded.

Milton is silent.

MILTON

What do you want from me?

BLAKE

So we understand each other. Good.
It's quite simple, really.

Blake lifts the hood off Milton. Milton closes his eyes, blinks, the sudden brightness overwhelming.

As his eyes adjust, he sees the desolate expanse.

BLAKE

Which way to Sanctuary?

MILTON

Why do you expect me to know?

BLAKE

Because, you old fogey, you were
kicking around before the Blight.
Before people got infected and the
world went to shit. You must know
your way around.

Milton nervously looks around.

He sees Mary throwing his past body in the back of a van,
where several other gaunt bags lay.

Blake notices Milton's silence, grimly chuckles, takes a
guess.

BLAKE

They knew where Sanctuary was. Are
you saying you don't? Because if
so, we can get rid of you a lot
more quickly.

Samuel cocks his gun. Milton gulps.

MILTON

I-I know.

BLAKE

Glad to hear it. So?

Milton looks back out at the desert. He points to the left
of the rock formation.

MILTON

That way. You'll find Sanctuary
that way.

Blake hands Samuel the hood.

BLAKE

Good. We'll bring you back out in a
few hundred miles.

Samuel shoves Milton down. Milton catches the eyes of EMILY,
14, looking on concerned. Samuel throws the hood back over
Milton's head.

Milton cries out.

MILTON

Why are you doing this to me!?

For the first time, anger is visible on Blake's face.

BLAKE

You damn well know.

Blake and Samuel get off the truck, lift the tailgate.

Blake turns to the crowd watching.

BLAKE

This man is dangerous beyond
imagination! Do not go near him,
and above all else, never let him
see you.

He lets his words sit for impact.

BLAKE

Let's go.

Everyone gets in their cars. Mary casts a concerned look at
Blake that he does not notice as he gets in the truck with
Samuel.

EXT. SALT FLATS - DUSK

Headlights illuminate the dark plane, ENGINES roaring. Mary
drives her motorcycle between two other cars, a heavy scarf
now wrapped around her face.

One car window rolls down. Emily's head pops out.

Mary moves closer on her bike.

They have to shout over the din.

EMILY

Why do they act like they know that man!?

MARY

Maybe I'll tell you later!

Mary drives away from a disappointed Emily's face.

INT/EXT. FRONT TRUCK - DUSK

Milton shivers in the exposed truck bed.

Inside, windows open, Blake turns to Samuel as Samuel drives.

BLAKE

You didn't need to kick him like that.

Samuel taps on Blake's shoulder again.

BLAKE

Because there's a difference between scaring him and being needlessly cruel. What if he escapes? What if you just gave him yet another reason to?

Many taps. Blake's face falls.

BLAKE

"We're all dead if he gets out anyway." You may be right.

Blake sighs.

BLAKE

But I've known him longer than you. Be careful. He's hurt us enough already.

Blake absentmindedly scratches his blindfold. The breeze blows Samuel's rag too far inward.

EXT. SALT FLATS - DUSK

Beyond the headlights, the evening horizon is menacingly dark.

EXT. CONVOY - NIGHT

The convoy is parked in a circle around several small campfires.

Most of the people are asleep. Mary walks with a canteen in hand. From underneath a sleeping bag, Emily pops up.

EMILY

Psst! Mary!

Mary jumps. She whispers back.

MARY

Jesus, kid, do you have to always pop out like that?

EMILY

How do Blake and Samuel know that man?

MARY

You're persistent, aren't you?

EMILY

My parents won't tell me.

MARY

Fine.

Mary crouches down.

MARY

The man handcuffed back there? He's their father.

Emily's eyes widen.

EMILY

But that's horrible! How can they treat him like that?

MARY

Well, he did some awful things.

EMILY

No one is that awful.

MARY

Don't tell them that. Especially Samuel.

EXT. SALT FLATS - NIGHT

Outside the ring of vehicles, Samuel leads Milton at gunpoint.

INT/EXT. FRONT TRUCK - NIGHT

Blake, wrapped in a scratchy blanket, quietly sits in the truck.

Someone KNOCKS on the door.

BLAKE
Who is it?

MARY (O.S.)
Mary.

BLAKE
Come in, then, already, what are
you waiting for?

The door opens, and Mary hops in next to Blake.

MARY
I didn't want to shock you.

BLAKE
I think you're grossly
overestimating what shocks me at
this point.

MARY
Where's Samuel? And your father,
for that matter?

Blake nods toward the windscreen.

BLAKE
I told Samuel to take him to the
watering hole. Don't want him
prematurely dying on us.

MARY
You think that's wise? Samuel and
Milton alone like that.

BLAKE
He's the one with eyes.

MARY
I have eyes.

BLAKE
And I appreciate that.

Mary glares at Blake.

BLAKE
I feel that glare. He's just
dangerous with anyone else.

MARY
Mind telling me why?

BLAKE
I do.

Silence.

MARY
One of the kids asked me about him.

BLAKE
And?

MARY
I told her he was your father.
Nothing else. Not what he did to
you.

She lightly touches Blake's blindfold.

MARY
Do you miss it?

BLAKE
Sight? No. I lost my eyes and
Samuel lost the lower half of his
jaw.

Mary winces.

BLAKE
Between you and me, I think I got
the better half of the deal.

MARY
Well, you do love the sound of your
own voice.

Blake chuckles.

BLAKE
I do.

MARY

Seriously, are you ever going to tell me more about what's going on with Milton? Why you'll only let Samuel or yourself look after him? Why he dies and comes back from his own black goop like some fucked up Phoenix?

BLAKE

No.

MARY

Why?

BLAKE

If I could tell you, I would. I'm sorry.

INT/EXT. FRONT TRUCK - NIGHT

MARY

You are ridicu--

She sees Samuel and Milton's silhouettes fighting by the flashlight in the distance.

MARY

Oh shit.

She opens the door and runs out. Blake quickly follows.

EXT. SALT FLATS - NIGHT

Samuel holds Milton's struggling head in the water. Mary runs up and pushes him off, pulls Milton out of the water.

MARY

What the hell!? He's our only way to Sanctuary, you maniac!

Blake follows, first putting a hood and handcuffs over Milton again.

BLAKE

I told you to be fucking careful!
Does this look fucking careful to you?

Samuel, still seething, teary-eyed, grabs Blake's arm and taps.

MARY
What'd he say?

BLAKE
..."I was just scaring him like he
scared us."

Blake's expression softens. He turns to Mary.

BLAKE
Mary, take Milton back to the
truck.

Samuel immediately leaps up to protest. Blake whips back
around, angry.

BLAKE
No! I don't want to hear it! I can
trust her a hell of a lot more than
I can trust you right now!

MARY
Thanks, Blake.

She shoots Samuel one last scathing look before escorting
Milton back to the convoy.

Samuel taps Blake on the shoulder as Mary walks away,
looking concerned after them.

BLAKE
I know. She won't find out.

Samuel goes back to the water hole, kneels down, fills his
canteen. Gets back up.

He takes off his rag mask, revealing his mutilated jaw. He
drinks from the canteen, puts the rag back on.

He and Blake stand quietly. He nudges the canteen into
Blake's arm.

BLAKE
No thanks.

Samuel slings the canteen back across his arm. He taps Blake
one last time.

BLAKE
I'm sorry too.

EXT. CONVOY - NIGHT

Mary puts Milton back in the truck bed, handcuffs him.

MILTON

Surely you can be reasoned with--

MARY

Nope! Night, old man.

Mary walks away. As Milton shivers alone, Emily sneaks up. She takes off Milton's hood and gives him some food.

MILTON

(whispers)

Thank you.

EXT. DESOLATED CITY LIMITS - DAY

The convoy sits outside a dilapidated city.

Standing on the back of their truck, Samuel taps Blake's shoulder as they look at the city.

BLAKE

It looks like shit?

Blake leans down next to Milton.

BLAKE

You were supposed to take us to Sanctuary.

MILTON

This isn't Sanctuary. It's on the way to Sanctuary. We have to go straight through.

BLAKE

Why should I trust you?

MILTON

Why would I lie?

Blake thinks for a moment.

He walks over to the edge of the truck bed, calls down to Mary.

BLAKE

Tell the rest of the group we're going through the city. Big trucks up front to push through the debris.

EXT. DESOLATED CITY - DAY

Skyscrapers lean and crumble over the streets, huge billboard advertisements are faded beyond recognition. The city is a shell of its former self.

Wind rustles through the narrow alleys as the convoy slowly drives through the main thoroughfare, the larger trucks pushing the husks of cars out of the way on the street.

Mary slowly drives next to Blake and Samuel's truck.

MARY

I don't like this. Cities like this
were incubators waiting to happen
once the Blight hit.

BLAKE

That was at least four decades ago.
Everyone knows the Infected are
long gone.

RUSTLING in the distance.

MARY

Are they?

BLAKE

Have you ever seen an Infected?

MARY

No.

BLAKE

I have. It's not like a zombie from
those old movies. They're normal
people, just --

MARY

Carrying a disease that's dangerous
to 99% of the population.

BLAKE

A 99% that's long been dead.

MARY

Whatever you say, if I see one, I'm
shooting.

BLAKE

I'm telling you they're not here--

A lone figure appears on a rooftop. Several convoy members pull up their guns.

CONVOY MEMBER

Halt! Hands where I can see the--

The convoy member is shot from behind. Gunfire erupts from windows and hidden blinds in all directions.

The convoy comes to a screeching halt.

Mary leaps off her motorcycle, ducks behind the nearest cover.

MARY

You were saying?

People fall over left and right.

Emily cowers in a corner near the lead truck. Milton calls to her.

MILTON

Emily! Emily, free me! I can help!

Emily looks over, hesitates. More people die around her.

MILTON

Emily, now!

Elsewhere, Samuel hides behind a car door, taking pot shots with his revolver.

Blake runs over to Mary's cover.

BLAKE

I don't understand, why are they shooting at us?

MARY

Not as peaceable a people as you thought, hm? They need supplies just like us and are willing to murder to get them.

Emily runs over to Milton, takes off his hood, frees his handcuffs.

Samuel, peering over the car door, sees one scavenger on a rooftop in the open.

Samuel takes aim at the scavenger.

Starts to squeeze the trigger.

The din of GUNFIRE stops.

The scavenger on the rooftop starts to convulse, clutching his chest.

Samuel lets go of the trigger, eyes wide with fear, looks around.

All of the scavengers are on the ground SCREAMING and convulsing. The cacophony is unbearable.

Emily has her hands over her ears.

Samuel sees everyone cowering, scared, or blocking out the noise. Everyone but Milton, standing, unaffected, his eyes watching every single one of the scavengers.

Samuel, possessed by terror, rushes Milton.

Milton immediately looks at Samuel. Samuel falls to the ground, clutching his chest.

Blake's mouth goes agape.

The SCREAMS continue, Samuel only able to make a guttural CRY. Samuel is compressed and compressed into a smaller and smaller shape, his limbs bending and CRACKING at unnatural angles as he is slowly squished by an invisible force.

Blake cries out from the distance, his screams inaudible amongst everyone else's.

Emily hits Milton over the head with a rock. He's knocked out, the SCREAMING stops. What's left of Samuel falls to the ground with a plop.

The remaining survivors stand up. Tears stream down Blake's face. Next to him, Mary has her hand over her mouth with wet eyes.

BLAKE
(shakily)
Now you know.

EXT. DESOLATED CITY - LATER

Blake pats down the last of packed earth in an abandoned park. He puts his hand down on the dirt, bows his head.

He stands up. Mary walks up next to him, puts her hand on his back, the convoy in the distance behind them.

MARY
I'm so sorry. I can't imagine what
you're feeling right now.

BLAKE

I can't articulate it. And even if
I could, we don't have the time.
Let's go.

Blake stalks off. Mary rushes after him.

MARY

Now wait a second --

Another convoy member interrupts them, rushing up.

CONVOY MEMBER 2

Excuse me, Blake? You're going to
want to see this.

EXT. DESOLATED CITY - LATER

The convoy member leads Blake and Mary to a back alley.

CONVOY MEMBER 2

We found this after the fight. I
should warn you, though, it's some
freaky shit.

Blake sniffs, recognizes a smell. He tenses up.

They turn the corner, and find an alleyway full of empty
black shells with black fluid running out of them.

Mary's eyes widen. She turns to Blake, her anger rising.

CONVOY MEMBER 2

So, Blake, what we're looking at
here is--

BLAKE

I'm familiar with it. Thank you.

CONVOY MEMBER 2

Really? How--

BLAKE

Leave.

Blake's tone leaves no room for argument. The convoy member
leaves.

Blake turns to Mary.

BLAKE

Now, Mary--

MARY

When were you going to tell me your father was Infected!? That that's why he kept emerging from that black shit?

BLAKE

We need him to find Sanctuary, remember?

MARY

How could you, in good conscience, keep an Infected, monstrous--

BLAKE

He's not contagious! Like I said, all the people who would die from an Infected are dead already, remember?

MARY

And what the fuck is up with his psycho murdering shit--

BLAKE

His genes just went awry when the Blight hit, and he got like -- that.

MARY

Like able to kill people just by looking at them? I have half a mind to just go kill him right now--

Blake grabs Mary forcefully as she starts to walk away, yells.

BLAKE

IF ANYONE HAS A REASON TO KILL HIM, IT'S ME!

Mary flinches.

BLAKE

But I don't. And won't. Because we need to find Sanctuary, remember?

Silence.

BLAKE

Mary, I need you to keep this secret. You're the only one who knows--

MARY
I'm not doing that, Blake.

BLAKE
But Sanctuary--

MARY
How do we even know that idea is
real?

BLAKE
We just do.

MARY
Not good enough.

BLAKE
Please--

MARY
No. Get out of here, Blake. I'm
giving you until sundown to leave,
and then I'm enforcing this exile
more forcefully. Take your father
if the monster means that much to
you.

Blake looks down, starts to walk away.

MARY
Blake?

Blake turns back.

MARY
Take this.

She hands him Samuel's revolver.

MARY
Good luck out there. I'll miss you.

Blake nods. And leaves.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Blake and Milton walk, marooned in the wasteland. Blake
pushes a hooded Milton along at gunpoint.

MILTON
How long do you think a blind man
will last without any guidance in
the wasteland?

BLAKE
And whose fault was that, Dad?

MILTON
I never meant to blind you. That was an accident. Come on, let me help.

BLAKE
Shut up.

MILTON
What choice do you have?

Silence.

Blake stops, Milton stops in front of him. He takes Milton's hood off. He looks around.

BLAKE
Which way is Sanctuary?

Milton points.

MILTON
That way.

BLAKE
Then walk that way.

He starts to walk.

MILTON
I'm sorry about your brother.

BLAKE
Stop it.

MILTON
He would have killed me. It was me or him.

BLAKE
Most fathers would have picked their children over themselves.

MILTON
Didn't say I liked it.

They walk a few paces to the top of a dune. Milton stops, sighs sadly.

MILTON

Oh, fuck it. Charade's over,
anyway. Here we are. Sanctuary.

Blake looks around.

BLAKE

Where is it? I don't hear anything
but desert.

Milton stays silent.

Blake points his gun at Milton.

BLAKE

This better not be intentional.

MILTON

You had a gun pointed to my head
and told me to point you in the
direction of a mythical place. What
else did you expect from me?

BLAKE

You son of a bitch!

Blake hits Milton with the butt of his revolver. Milton
falls to the ground.

MILTON

I was just doing what I had to to
survive. I never meant to hurt
anyone.

BLAKE

Well, you did.

Blake puts his gun against Milton's head.

BLAKE

Why shouldn't I pull the trigger
right now? You killed Samuel.
Doomed me to die in the desert.

Milton laughs.

BLAKE

What? What's so funny?

MILTON

You still have no idea if I'd come
back from a gun shot, do you?

Blake goes silent.

MILTON

You don't know if I'll just be
resurrected again. You never did
stick around to see if those other
Infected came back.

BLAKE

Will you?

MILTON

Honestly, Blake, I don't know. And
I am just as curious as you are.

They sit quietly.

MILTON

So what are you going to do?

BLACKOUT