

Three Weeks Gone  
by  
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**EXT. YOUNG RANCH - MORNING**

We open on a wide open landscape of WYOMING. It is summer time. The sun sits low in the sky, but we can tell it's going to be a HOT DAY.

Chickens graze around their coop. A cow chews it's cud. A horse in the stable lets out a RESTLESS HUFF.

An **OLD CHEVY WORK TRUCK** makes it's way down a dirt road toward a group of men working on a fence line.

JIM YOUNG gets out of the truck. He is mid-40s, wearing an old pair of Levi's, a tattered pocket t-shirt, and a cowboy hat. His exposed skin is like leather from years in the sun. From the way he approaches the group, looking over the progress of the project, it is clear he is in charge.

JIM YOUNG

How is it coming along?

RANCH HAND

Oh, you know. One post at a time.

JIM cracks a smile. There is no other way to approach such work. As Jim inspects the fence, yanking on a post to see how sturdy it is, we pull out to see the **EXPANSE OF THE FIELD** and just how far along the fence isn't. It is going to be a LONG DAY.

RANCH HAND

Haven't seen your nephew yet this morning.

JIM

I saw him heading out the barn to check on the animals a little bit ago. Should be down soon.

RANCH HAND

We could certainly use the extra  
ha---

His sentence is interrupted by the SOUND OF A GUNSHOT. The men look back toward to house and barn. Startled geese honk as they fly up and away from the buildings up on top of the hill behind them.

JIM

I'll go check on him. Probably chasing off those damn coyotes again.

RANCH HAND

He did a helluva number on that back hoe, Jim.

JIM

Take it easy on him. Your first few weeks weren't nothing to write home about either.(beat) He is a good kid.

CUT TO:

**EXT. BARN - MORNING**

Jim's truck putters to a stop between the house and the barn. He looks around as he makes his way between the two buildings. Seeing nothing unusual, he heads into the house.

CUT TO:

**INT. KITCHEN - MORNING**

Jim's WIFE, LAURA, is at the sink drying a plate. The remnants of breakfast are still on the dining table.

The door opens and Jim walks in.

JIM

Any ideas what Mason was shooting at?

LAURA

No. 'Bout gave me a heart attack though. He musta been close to the house.

JIM

How was he this morning?

LAURA

Didn't eat much. Said he wasn't hungry. Poor kid. He feels terrible, Jim.

JIM

Nobody got hurt. It can be fixed. Nothing to lose sleep over.

Jim grabs a pieces of cold bacon off the table.

CUT TO:

**EXT. BARN - MORNING**

Jim's boots CRUNCH through the gravel as he heads out to the barn.

Before he reaches the door, there is a SCURRY from around the corner.

**A COYOTE.** It sees Jim and freezes in place.

A beat.

JIM  
(shouting)  
Git outta here!

To emphasize his point Jim reach down to grab a chunk of gravel to throw. As his hand approaches a rock he notices something on the ground.

**A POOL OF DARK RED LIQUID.**

He pauses and stares.

It's BLOOD. Unmistakable.

Jim cocks his head to the side and then looks toward the barn.

The blood is seeping out from under the large door.

Jim slowly SLIDES THE DOOR OPEN to reveal...

A BODY.

We cannot see the face, and based on what WE CAN see, WE WOULDN'T WANT TO.

We see the body is lying supine on the ground. Wearing WORK BOOTS, JEANS--resting on top of a large pool of blood.

JIM  
(in shock)  
Jesus!

Jim grabs a handkerchief out his back pocket and covers his mouth. He might VOMIT. He looks away.

The body belongs to his nephew, MASON. He is DEAD.

**SMASH TO BLACK**