The Puppy Mill

ALAN NAFZGER
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Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CLASSROOM - UNIVERSITY - LUBBOCK - DAY

Three African American girls, athletes, enter a predominantly white classroom. Professor KYLE BRUGHA (68) is about to begin his lecture. There are three minutes until the top of the hour. Also in the classroom are a noteworthy African American, RASHARD PAGEOTTE (19) and an ultra conservative WHITE GIRL (19).

BRUGHA
Hello girls.

GIRLS
Hi, professor.

BRUGHA
Girls, did you go to the dog show?

GIRLS
Thanks for the tickets. We went.

BRUGHA
I didn’t see you but I wasn’t there long.

(beat)
If you lose you go home. You know what I mean?

GIRLS
Sorry you lost.

BRUGHA
That’s part of it. Right?

GIRLS
Sure.

BRUGHA
What’d ya think?

GIRLS
Doctor Brugha, your friends have foul mouths.
BRUGHA

What?

They are all “Bitches in the ring” and these ladies bring their dogs in. And then the winner is “Winners Bitch”. “I like your bitch” and bitch this and bitch that.

Brugha’s jaw drops. Half the class laughs. Half the class doesn’t understand what is so funny. Brugha tries to keep a straight face.

BRUGHA

Bitch? That’s a female dog.

The remainder of the class chuckles.

BRUGHA

Well, I’m sorry. I should have explained that to everybody when I gave you girls the tickets. My fault.

BRUGHA

It’s not really a bad word. It...

RASHARD

Why is that?

BRUGHA

Well, if someone calls you a bitch. They are calling you a female dog. But what do you call a female dog?

RASHARD

Well, I don’t know; black girls where I’m from, the first thing they call each other is bitch and the hair pulling and fighting begins. Most of the time, one girl waits until the other one turns her back.

BRUGHA

Female dogs do that.

RASHARD

Is that why women are called that?
BRUGHA
I don’t know.

RASHARD
But that is true?

Beat.

BRUGHA
My dog’s fight, every once in a while. The boy dogs they will have bites sometimes on their face or front legs or shoulders. Face to face. Female dogs... sometimes they will have bites on their hips and rear legs. You just know what happened.

RASHARD
Oh, that’s the way black girls fight. They sneak up on ya.

The entire class laughs.

WHITE GIRL
How come?

BRUGHA
Nature. I’m sorry if you are offended. But that is just the way dogs are. But to answer your question, that’s how some people “perceive” women. It’s probably a false analogy.

A girl pops out of her chair and walks toward the door. She frightens/concerns Brugha, who is mild mannered and doesn’t want to offend anyone.

BRUGHA
I’m sorry. That might have been inappropriate.
   (beat)
I didn’t mean to offend you.

WHITE GIRL
You didn’t.
She reveals a tissue that she throws in the trash. We realize she has a cold.

  RASHARD
  Oh, women they like that. Sneaky.

  BRUGHA
  So you would advise men to watch their back.

  RASHARD
  Protect yourself at all times.

The class chuckles.

  BRUGHA
  Well, its about that time.
    (half beat)
  Okay, I have the magic list…
    (gesturing to a small index card)
  … which is basically taken directly from your test. Coercion, legitimacy, revolution and elections and tyranny. Totalitarianism. The Soviet system. Nazi use of power. Official corruption in Mexico. The Arab Spring. So is everyone ready?

The student open notebooks and take out pens.

  BRUGHA
  This lecture… regardless of how boring you think it might be… this sets the theme and tone of the entire relationship between government and citizens. Without this foundation, your political experiences might make little or no sense at all.
    (half beat)
  It’s important.

  BRUGHA
  What does the government use coercion for? You know fines, handcuffs and prisons.
RASHARD
To scare and intimidate.

WHITE GIRL
Law enforcement.

BRUGHA
What is the different between influence and coercion?
    (long beat)
One is persuasion and one is force. Right?
    (beat)
Why do we obey? Who are they to tell us what to do and not do? What's easier for the government - persuasion or coercion?

RASHARD
It’s easier just lock everyone up.

WHITE GIRL
No, it’s easier to persuade people to follow the law.

BRUGHA
(to the white girl)
Like the Pledge of Allegiance? I think you are right.
    (to Rashard)
Prison’s and cops cost a lot of money. (half beat)
So, legitimacy is the best way. Everyone just agrees to follow the rules.

Beat.

BRUGHA
Compare our country to a country like Syria now.

RASHARD
The dictator has lost his legitimacy.

BRUGHA
Why?
RASHARD
He used gas on his own people.

BRUGHA
Maybe, he did. What else might he have done?

WHITE GIRL
He oppressed his people.

BRUGHA
Good. Basically, when that happens the people have the right to rebel. So we have a civil war. And its’ a balancing test... every leader has the right to defend itself but there comes a time when maybe they lose their legitimacy (right to rule) and everyone piles on them. Foreigners begin to enter the fighting.

(half beat)
So, just to make this easy to understand, if you suck at government, then you lose your authority. And people either ignore you or they get a gun and try to kill you. Think about the Arab Spring.

(half beat)
How does our democracy work with all this? It prohibits power without legitimacy. Elections give you legitimacy.

(half beat)
What do you get when you combine legitimacy with power?

WHITE GIRL
Authority.

BRUGHA
You read your text book. That’s great!

(beat)
Who has authority in here? I do. What if someone comes into this room with a gun and he points it at my head and says, ‘class is over’? Don’t argue
with him, just leave. Whether you like this class or not, don’t get me shot.

The students chuckle.

BRUGHA
Now when you lose your legitimacy that pretty much leads to revolution. We are a bit stressed for time and you had all this in Western Civ. So I’ll just mention a few... 1688 Glorious Revolution, American 1776, French 1789, Russian 1917, Chinese Communists in 1949 and Cuba in 1959. There have been thousands but they all share a beginning... a eroded legitimacy.  
(half beat)
Now do you have the right to question the government?

WHITE GIRL
No.

RASHARD
Yes.

BRUGHA
(half beat)
Anyone know why we have the second amendment? Guns? Anyone?

WHITE GIRL
To keep people from robbing your house.

BRUGHA
And?

OTHER WHITE GIRL
So if you are gonna get rapped, you can shot them.

BRUGHA
Do you carry a gun?
OTHER WHITE GIRL
No but my momma does. She keeps it in her umbrella, in her car.

The class chuckles.

BRUGHA
That is all very true. Any other reason?

RASHARD
To keep communists from taking over the government.

BRUGHA
(half beat)
Yes. Basically... to persevere our right to limited government. Tonight I’m going to ask you to read the Declaration of Independence again. And tell me if you think it was a revolutionary document. And if you think it was... is it still? I mean does it mean anything today, or is it a bunch of old out-dated source code?

WHITE GIRL
What exactly do you mean by totalitarianism?

BRUGHA
Well, look at the root word... total.

RASHARD
It’s where everything is against the law.

BRUGHA
The government has ‘total’ control. Think about Hitler and the death camps...
WHITE GIRL
How do they get away with something like that? He killed something like 6 million people.

BRUGHA
Power.

WHITE GIRL
That will never happen here.

BRUGHA
No?
(half beat)
I had a high school coach for a history teacher. We used to watch the dinosaurs out the window rather than listen to him. It would make him so mad.

The class chuckles.

BRUGHA
He was old school, red head, football you bet, flat top. You guys have no idea what that was do you? He warned us, and this was nearly 50 year ago, that someday everything will be against the law.

RASHARD
How did he know that would happen?

BRUGHA
Well, the legislature is always making new laws... they think that’s their job and we’ve been a state for 170 years and a country for over 240 years.
(half beat)
How many laws have they written in this time? You go up in the library to the third floor. Turn left. Half that floor is the government documents. Maybe sixty rows what are they eight foot tall. Volumes and volumes.

RASHARD
Control freaks.
WHITE GIRL
No they’re not.

BRUGHA
Well, some of you might have noticed, I don’t hang out on the first or second floor there on that west side... I figure someday all those government documents will collapse the building.

The class chuckles.

BRUGHA
I’m just kidding, but over-taxation, over-criminalization and over-regulation is a major drawback to “democracy”. Eventually they all seem to devolve into these over-criminalized socialist states, basically what we have now.

WHITE GIRL
I don’t understand when will this happen?

RASHARD
We already there.

BRUGHA
Are we?

WHITE GIRL
So what will happen with like criminals and stuff?

BRUGHA
Well, in a totalitarian state, everyone would be a potential criminal.

RASHARD
Once they know who you are... they will be around for you.

BRUGHA
Well, I remember Coach Williams mentioning what this does to policeman.
He said you know how everything is pretty much up to judges (it used to be that way). He said the police would have all the power... and they do don’t they?

RASHARD
They can do whatever they wanna do.

WHITE GIRL
The police can do whatever they need to do to keep us safe.

RASHARD
No, they can do whatever they want to do to anybody they don’t like.

WHITE GIRL
Like you?
(half beat)
What about juries? The other day you said they are the last protection someone has.

BRUGHA
Yes. But think about it, if you’re on a jury in a country where EVERYTHING is against the law, how do you vote?

RASHARD
You vote guilty just like “the man” tells you.

BRUGHA
Well, conviction rates just keep increasing. So, I agree with this young man. I’m sorry I don’t know your name yet.

RASHARD
Rashard.

Good you just keep saying opposite of what she says and you will be right half the time.
BRUGHA
Coach William, he also said and that someday Russia will be free and the USA will be worlds tyranny.

WHITE GIRL
I don’t know if I agree.

RASHARD
I agree.

Brugha looks at the white girl to expound her ideas. The class is clearly interested in the debate...

WHITE GIRL
I just don’t. This sort of stuff doesn’t happen in my country.

RASHARD
You rich or your daddy friends with the police?

WHITE GIRL
No. He’s a county commissioner.

RASHARD
See!

BRUGHA
This is a good lesson in what is happening here. It’s largely self-interest. If you think you are best served by a large government then you vote a certain way. If you are outside of the government you probably vote the other way.

RASHARD
Half of us, it’s not our country anymore. It’s been stolen.

WHITE GIRL
Nothing’s been stolen; you and your buddies you are just a bunch of losers.

STUDENT
Who’s right professor?
BRUGHHA
I have no idea... but I’m having fun just listening. Technically, that’s not my job. It’s your job. But maybe it happens so slowly; you don’t even know it is happening. That is the idea... so they don’t risk counter-revolutions. Bolsheviks don’t care they just usurp all the power at the point of a gun “all power comes from the barrel of a gun” Who said that?

STUDENT
Mao.

BRUGHHA
That idea’s outdated... Mensheviks have the power now and say “all power comes from a ballot,” but of course they say that. They are the majority now. But arguably it could still go the other way and we might return to limited government.

WHITE GIRL
We are never going to agree.

BRUGHHA
It’s really something personal.
(half beat)
Everyone is affected in a different way. That’s why you are “forced” to take this class. It affects you personally and you can’t escape that.

RASHARD
My brother is in prison for smoking weed. They pulled him over, DWB, no reason.

WHITE GIRL
What’s that?

RASHARD
Driving while black.
(half beat)
They said he didn’t put on a turn signal. The lawyer contested the search; they lost the police dash cam but the judge still allowed it. Texas man.

WHITE GIRL
He had marijuana.

RASHARD
Handcuffed and in the back of the police car, my brother said he saw them planting it. A whole trunk full.

BRUGHA
I’m sorry that happened. Wrong place at the wrong time?

RASHARD
He said, that waited and waited until a photographer came around. Once they had a photograph for the newspaper, they take him to jail.

WHITE GIRL
Your brother’s a drug dealer.

RASHARD
My brother isn’t ambitious enough to be a drug dealer. He said he only had a bag with residue.

WHITE GIRL
He’s a criminal of course he is in prison.

RASHARD
They filled his trunk full. He out in 10 years.

WHITE GIRL
But he “had” marijuana!

RASHARD
Oh, man. Are you listening? (half beat)
It’s goanna happen to you someday white girl. When they get all us brothers’ locked up they will need something to do.

WHITE GIRL
Your last name is funny, what kind of name is that?

RASHARD
Pageotte. Haitian. My daddy escaped a dictator there and came here.

BRUGHA
Duvalier?

RASHARD
And now we have the same kind of crap here. Where am I gonna go now to be free?

BRUGHA
Russia?

Beat.

BRUGHA
Okay, now that is settled. I’m only joking. It’s never settled. It’s politics.

(half beat)
Which is?

STUDENTS
The struggle for who gets what when and how.

RASHARD
Yeah, who goes to prison.

WHITE GIRL
You need to be in prison.
Hey, hey...
RASHARD
I thought you had to actually do something to go to prison. Free speech right?

WHITE GIRL
I apologize.

RASHARD
Professor I read the average person commits three felonies per day. Is that true?

BRUGHA
There is a civil-liberties lawyer up in Boston, Harvey Silverglate he wrote a book "Three Felonies a Day," referring to the number of crimes he calculated the average American now commits because of vague and numerous laws. I guess I should add unwittingly. People don’t know they are breaking the law.

RASHARD
But they can get arrested if the cops want to. If the cops don’t like them.

BRUGHA
There is a lot of innocent activity potentially criminal. I think a lot of the time the police just look the other way; they are just like everyone else and follow the path of least resistance. Like electricity.

Beat.

BRUGHA
And there aren’t enough prison cells for everybody,

RASHARD
They got enough cells if you’re black though.
BRUGHA
Okay, not that my opinion matters. I was educated a long time ago and I wish things were like they used to be. But I think we do live in an over criminalized society where this huge volume of laws are dangerous for everyone, EXCLUDING the wealthy, the connected, professionals, lawyers, judges and police officers.

RASHARD
They get a pass.

WHITE GIRL
No they don’t.

BRUGHA
Everyone has to be careful, maybe that is one reason this class is required.

WHITE GIRL
What about the people that don’t go to college.

BRUGHA
Prison’s are full of them. Pretty much.
(half beat)
Well there you have it. We are learning lessons here at Tech right? “Stay away from these people in law enforcement.” We aren’t just an agricultural school, right?
(half beat)
Yeah, well tell that to the university president.

RASHARD
Walk with your head down and never make eye contact.

BRUGHA
I didn’t say that. But I wouldn’t sit down at a dinner table socially and tell them what you do for a living or your hobby or anything.
RASHARD
It’s probably against the law.

BRUGHA
This arbitrary power of the police and legal ambiguity of every human activity invites the sort of thing that can stamp a permanent criminal record on an otherwise squeaky clean slate of a harmless individual.

RASHARD
They can charge you with anything they want and it’ll probably stick.

WHITE GIRL
(to Rashard)
Horse shit!

BRUGHA
See, I knew agriculture would sneak in here someway or another.

Everyone chuckles.

WHITE GIRL
Oh! Professor I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to say that.

BRUGHA
I teach politics. It’s not like I’ve never hear that phrase before.
(half beat)
Well, it’s time. I guess you should all go home and watch Gilligan’s Island or whatever you all watch.
(half beat)
Thanks. Read chapter 3 and the Declaration of Independence before Thursday please.

The students file out of the classroom. Professor Brugha remains for a second or two incase there are questions.

WHITE GIRL
What are you some sort of athlete?
BLACK GIRLS
Hey!

RASHARD
What? Cause I’m black, I’m here because I’m an athlete?

WHITE GIRL
Well, are you?

RASHARD
I’m here on an academic scholarship.

They happen to look at the professor as an arbitrator or perhaps for his approval. Long beat.

BRUGHA
I’ve never seen anything like this in a classroom.
   (beat)
That’s not bad.
   (half beat)
Actually, I think the banter back and forth pretty much helps explain this all to the class. Man you two had them going.

The white girl contemplates and the extends her hand shake. They shake and agree to disagree.

INT. OFFICE – UNIVERSITY – DAY

Rashard comes to professor Brugha’s office.

RASHARD
You are right, man.

BRUGHA
I tell you what. I’m going to let you call me by my first name.

RASHARD
What’s that?

BRUGHA
Doctor.
RASHARD
(beat)
Oh, sorry.
(half beat)
Hey, that’s pretty funny.

BRUGHA
How do you know I’m right? I might just be puttin’ you on.

RASHARD
I been around a bit.

BRUGHA
How do you know my ideology?

RASHARD
What is your ideology?

BRUGHA
I was a conservative when I was a kid.

RASHARD
And what are you now?

BRUGHA
Between you and I? Libertarian.

RASHARD
I am too... but I’m a radical libertarian.

BRUGHA
And that means?

RASHARD
It means I’m gonna do something about it.

BRUGHA
You aren’t shy. I will give you that. You think you want to hold government office?

RASHARD
No maybe write.
(half beat)
You know, freedom propaganda.

BRUGHA
They will call you a subversive.

What’s that?

BRUGHA
Anti-government.

RASHARD
I’m that, for sure.

The professor gestures to close the door.

RASHARD
You want this closed?

Rashard closes the door.

Brugha hands some books to the young Rashard.

BRUGHA
And you know the Federalist papers we talked about...

RASHARD
Yes, they didn’t use their real names.

BRUGHA
That might be a good idea for you too.

RASHARD

BRUGHA
You have a blog on the internet?

RASHARD
No.

BRUGHA
Wordpress.
RASHARD
Thanks.

Rashard looks on the walls... and sees the dog show photos.

RASHARD
How many dogs you got man?

BRUGHA
A few.

RASHARD
Oh, I see; you don’t want to say. You can only have how many?

BRUGHA
Nine.

RASHARD
But you want more?

The professor is silent.

RASHARD
See people can’t even carry on a conversation when everything is against the law.

BRUGHA
An astute observation.

RASHARD
Yea, I grew up in South Oak Cliff, Dallas. Cops come around and it makes everyone cold and distant. Everyone is suspicious, thinking maybe you are a snitch.

BRUGHA
Did you know when East Germany fell they went through the secret police archives and found one in six were government informants.

RASHARD
Where I grew up, it’s about that.
 Really that’s incredible.

But with a little time you get to know who the snitches are.

There are people that I go to dog shows, I know their game. They lose and on the drive home they are calling the police about the animal abuse at the winners house.

Where you live at?

Out in the country.

How they know where you live?

The address is in the catalogue... they sell them a the the shows for $5.

Why would you list your real address?

No one does, I learned that the hard way.

How you know?

Ten years ago, I had a dog stolen. He was about to be a big time show dog. Really just a puppy, but one point away from being a champion. Kicked in the door to my house, when I was up here. Left the other dogs, a laptop and an expensive camera sitting right there.
RASHARD
Someone you know, from dog shows, did it.

BRUGHA
Sure they did. I drove around four states looking in everyone’s back yard.

RASHARD
You find the dog?

BRUGHA
I couldn’t find half their dogs, cause the catalogues were wrong.

RASHARD
They put down a bogus address?

BRUGHA
Well, the next dog show and I’m telling my friends that I theorize dog theft is really a problem. They said the catalogue isn’t correct because of the fear of theft. It is wrong, to throw off the government.
(half beat)
And I thought about.

RASHARD
And they were right; they didn’t want the government coming around?

BRUGHA
Pretty much. Everyone is terrorized and hiding their dogs.

RASHARD
You go to dog shows every weekend?

BRUGHA
Nearly.

RASHARD
I like dogs. I got a pit bull.

BRUGHA
You have an Am Staf?
RASHARD
What’s that?

BRUGHA
American Staffordshire Terrier.

RASHARD
I guess.

Professor Brugha points to obscure picture on the wall of his office. Brugha is posing with a judge and an Am Staf. There is a ribbon.

RASHARD
Oh, yeah. I got one. You got one too.

BRUGHA
He belonged to a lady. She fell and broke her hip... so I showed him for her.

RASHARD
And he won?

BRUGHA
He did. Nice dog.

RASHARD
Doctor?
(beat)
I could use a job. You hire me to look after your dogs on the weekend?

BRUGHA
I take them with me.

RASHARD
In your car?

BRUGHA
I have an RV.

RASHARD
Still you need some help?

BRUGHA
I think I have it under control.
RASHARD
Your back hurts.

BRUGHA
How do you know that?

RASHARD
Toating them dogs around on the weekend, you walk funny Mondays like your back hurts. And no offence you ain’t no spring chicken anymore. (half beat)
You need to hire me.

BRUGHA
You been looking for a job?

RASHARD
I’m a black male, whose going to hire me? And in this economy? Forget it. Socialism is the worst thing for us blacks.

BRUGHA
Someone needs to explain that to the voters, you think? You guys vote Democratic 90% of the time.

RASHARD
I tell everybody I know.

BRUGHA
They don’t listen, do they?

RASHARD
How you know?

BRUGHA
I’ve been teaching free markets and limited government for 35 years. Mostly in that same classroom...

RASHARD
And they don’t listen in there any better?
BRUGHA
No. They don’t.

RASHARD
Well you ain’t wasting your time on me. I understand. Maybe before I understood a little but I understand a lot now.

BRUGHA
I appreciate that.

RASHARD
Well, thanks for the books. I will bring them back.

BRUGHA
No need. Keep them.

RASHARD
Okay, see you in class.

Pageotte leaves… Brugha follows him out into the hallway.

BRUGHA
Rashard, you’re hired.

RASHARD
Really?

BRUGHA
Can you travel on the weekends?

RASHARD
Sure.

BRUGHA
We are going out of town Friday afternoon.

RASHARD
Thanks, I won’t let you down.

EXT. HOME & RV – RURAL AREA – DAY

Brugha teaches Rashard how to feed the dogs. Premium kibble, five large premium cans sardines, a dozen eggs and
cottage cheese. There bags of powdered calcium and probiotics. There is an large industrial kitchen mixer.

RASHARD
Sardines, that’s nasty.

BRUGHA
Have you ever tried to push fish oil tablets down 22 dog’s throats? Trust me, as well behaved as they are, it is exhausting. This is much easier.

RASHARD
Okay.

Brugha releases all his dogs. They don’t have to be told what to do, it is a routine solidly etched on each dog’s brain.

BRUGHA
Eat.

They eat and run around, defecate and begin to get on the RV.

BRUGHA
Dog show.

“Dog show” is the signal to load the RV. Some run to the RV.

Each dog finds his crate.

Rashard and Brugha load the RV – human and dog food, gallons of bottled water, towels. Much of what they need is already onboard. Brugha points everything out to Rashard.

BRUGHA
Shampoo, grooming equipment, medicines.

BRUGHA
Slacks, can you wear 34 x 34?

RASHARD
Exactly.
BRUGHA
A coat and shirts, ties and belts. Just wear your regular shoes.

One dog... an old retired show dog looks to a coveted crate. It seems reserved for the star. It is easy to reach without stooping over from the steps. It is nearest the door. He takes a few steps toward it.

BRUGHA
Don’t even think about it, old man. (half beat) Get in your crate. (to Rashard) He used to be the star and I needed him there in the front crate. He was in and out of there a lot.

RASHARD
Who is the star now?

Brugha points to a dog out in the yard who is defecating. The dog turns and smells his own feces.

BRUGHA
Don’t you eat that.

RASHARD
Real glamorous.

BRUGHA
He’s not the smartest dog out here, but he looks good in the ring.

Reluctantly and moping the old gray dog gets into a crate at the back of the RV. Each his crate has a label; this on says “old man”.

Leaving is all just about automatic.

One dog eats his dinner and runs directly to the RV.

BRUGHA
Did you poop?

The dog ducks his head in shame.
BRUGHA
Go poop.

Brugha points back to the yard.

BRUGHA
I know you have to poop. Stop pretending.

The dog returns to the yard and takes a squat.

BRUGHA
Okay, good boy. Dog show.

Done, the dog returns to the RV.

There are two pregnant bitches who are the last to load up. 
One jumps right on board. The other one is reluctant and 
seems to be begging to stay.

BRUGHA
You want to stay? 
(half beat) 
Are you having puppies?

Brugha takes out his smart phone... he looks at the calendar.

BRUGHA
Nope. You aren’t having puppies for 
another week. 
(half beat) 
Dog show.

The pregnant bitch abandons her protest and boards the RV.

Inside the RV there is one dog out and patiently waiting to 
enter a crate. The dog inside the crate is growling and 
won’t let the other inside.

BRUGHA
Share.

The dog inside the crate stops growling and the other dog 
enters the crate.

RASHARD
Two per a crate?
BRUGHA
Sometimes. They are sisters... same
whelping box, same crate for four years
now.

RASHARD
Still arguing?

BRUGHA
They don’t argue in the winter. It gets
cold and they are right in there
getting warm.

RASHARD
Funny.

BRUGHA
They’re dogs but they aren’t dumb.

Brugha makes sure everyone is onboard. He sits down in the
driver’s seat. He turns on the GPS, it is voice activated
and high dollar.

BRUGHA
First stop. Angus, Texas.
Second stop. Amarillo Civic Center.

The GPS maps out a path and the travel data – 1 h 46
min (123.7 mi) via I-27 N. The path leads to a small town
outside Amarillo.

BRUGHA
We are going to check in on my parents.
And then go to the show.

RASHARD
Your parents? They’re still around.

BRUGHA
Very funny.
(beat)
You drive right? I didn’t ask.

RASHARD
Yeah. Legal and all.
Brugha backs out of the drive missing the strategically planted trees by a few feet.

BRUGHA
This is a little tricky, backing out of here. I planted those trees to obscure the view from the highway.
(half beat)
We’ll get out there. Then I’ll let you drive.

RASHARD
Okay.

Later, Rashard is behind the wheel.

BRUGHA
Fifty-five okay?

RASHARD
Okay. We aren’t in any hurry?

BRUGHA
Well, I drive slow. You know what I mean?

RASHARD
You don’t want to wreck your RV, I understand.

BRUGHA
Not exactly. But yes, don’t wreck.

Rashard gives him an inquisitive stare.

BRUGHA
Over fifty years of work.

Rashard doesn’t understand.

BRUGHA
I bred my first champion when I was 14. Of course I had help. Can’t really afford to make a mistake. Each generation is better then the last... or that is the idea. Progress.
Rashard is listening but it is all so new to him.

BRUGHA
I hate to be an ass, but do you know what we just put in the back?
(beat)
Genetic quality. There are 22 dogs and 18 are AKC champions. 8 Grand champions. Two best in show winners.

RASHARD
It’s a lot of money. I get that.

BRUGHA
It’s the genetics. You can get money a lot of ways... but the genes. The correct genes.
(half beat)
Have you seen those “baby on board” signs?

RASHARD
Yeah.

BRUGHA
They make them “show dogs on board” also.

RASHARD
You have one?

BRUGHA
No, but I drive 55.

RASHARD
I’ll drive 55.

BRUGHA
We don’t have to be there until the 8 am. Why risk anything?

RASHARD
Oh, we will be there in an hour and forty-five minutes.
BRUGHA
Two and a half hours. If you get there any faster you get to walk home.  
(beat)
Use your mirrors, turn signal, and pull out there.

Rashard eases out into the highway.

BRUGHA
I’m sorry. That is the only lecture about safety you will hear.

RASHARD
It’s okay. I understand. Life, liberty and ‘property’.

BRUGHA
That’s right.  
(half beat)
Listen I guess if we are going to be partners. If something happens to me take care of the dogs... there is a compartment. There is a gas card, it takes diesel and there is a couple thousand in cash for emergencies. Understand?

Rashard is actually frightened by the responsibility and the money and the idea he is with a 68 year old man. He is very solemn. He nodes that he understands.

EXT STREETS OF ANGUS TEXAS - DUSK

They travel to the small town near Amarillo, Brugha’s hometown. Rashard, driving still, notices the city limits sign.

5,602 people

BRUGHA
Small town America. Ain’t it great.

That accounts for the way you are?

BRUGHA
Huh?
White.

BRUGHA
Oh, that might be because I’m old.

Or maybe because you’re actually white.
(half beat)
There aren’t any black people here?

BRUGHA
Nope. There are some Mexicans that live over there.

A nice new animal control truck drives. Rashard is curious. Brugha is frightened.

What?

BRUGHA
Yeah, they got one out here now. Full time.

What’s a little town like this need with dog catcher? They can’t have that many stray dogs.

BRUGHA
Twenty-one. They picked up 21 dogs last year.

Rashard looks strange.

BRUGHA
What? I read the city counsel meeting minutes.

Online?

BRUGHA
Yep.

And they have a full time dog catcher?

BRUGHA
It’s a vote.
Huh?

BRUGHA
They grow government. That is how they remain in office. It’s very organized. The politicians give people paychecks to live here and vote. If you don’t live and vote here they won’t hire you.

Man.

They pass a police station.

BRUGHA
They have something like 18 police officers.

What? That’s nuts. What are these people afraid of?

BRUGHA
You, mostly.

Okay fine, but six or seven police cars?

BRUGHA
Well, there are two ridding around burning the taxpayers gas.

Two, how do you know?

BRUGHA
Safety. Backup for the other...

A lot of crime?

BRUGHA
No. There hasn’t been a murder here since 1879. But, the bank got robbed once in the ’70s. (beat) This city is captured. Five people doing the job of one.
And these people want to pay for all this?

BRUGHA
I don’t know what the tax rate is but its basically organized crime.

You know, everyone’s attention is on the federal government. But THIS is the real problem.

BRUGHA
Oh, these people feel safe, let them. They evidently want to pay the taxes.

You never hear anyone complain?

BRUGHA
Well, this guy he lives next to my parents. He complains about the government owning all these buildings - “being in the real estate business.

(half beat)
When a business closes, they buy the building.

Yep.

BRUGHA
Turn here.

Rashard turns down a residential street.

BRUGHA
Second house on the right. Just park in the street.

(half beat)
Okay. This is it.

(half beat)
Home sweet home.

INT. HOUSE - DUSK

Brugha’s parents are in their 90s and hardly mobile. They are sitting in the front room watching TV.

BRUGHA
Hey, I’m here.
FATHER
It’s the dog show already?

BRUGHA
Yep. Second week in September.

FATHER
Momma, tomorrow we are going to the dog show.

MOTHER
What? Tomorrow? We have to go to the doctor.

BRUGHA
It’s Saturday.

MOTHER
Oh, maybe not then.

Rashard enters the room.

Brugh’s mother and father freeze up.

BRUGHA
This is Rashard. My very best student. He actually reads the textbook. And he’s helping me with the dogs.

FATHER
Well, great. Nice to have you.

Nice to meet you too. (half beat)
You want me to get the dogs out?

BRUGHA
They won’t listen to you; I don’t think. You will have to get them out and take them to the back yard one by one.

Okay. I can do that.
They gate is over there. You have the key, dad?

Brughia’s father produces a key to the lock on the gate.

Rashard exits.

Brughia sits with his mother and father.

So how are things?

Good good. Hey, I need to get you to do something for me. The dog.

Rex?

I need to take him and have him put down.

What? Where is he?

He’s in the back yard.

Why?

He old and I don’t want him to suffer.

Dad, he’s four. He was a puppy when you got out of the hospital that time.

Brughia walks to the back door and lets the dog in.

The dog is happy to be inside. Runs around and then to Brughia to be petted.
BRUGHA
He’s underweight, dad.

FATHER
So, you think he’s okay?

BRUGHA
I’m just gonna feed him and... yeah he’s fine. And, I’m gonna clip his nails too.

FATHER
Do that please, they just cut into my skin every time.

His father has scratched on his arms. Brugha clips the dogs nails, very quickly.

Brugha goes to a canister by the back door. It used to contain dog food. It is empty.

BRUGHA
You’re out of dog food?

Brugha walks out to the RV with the canister. He fills it with dog food and returns to the house.

Brugha puts food into the bowl on the back porch. Rex eats like he hasn’t eaten in a week.

Brugha return to the front room, television.

BRUGHA
You have to feed this breed up. Their metabolism. They get run down easily.
(to mom)
So what’s for dinner?

MOM
Cookies.

BRUGHA
Okay. That’s good. You guys eating well?

FATHER
Sure. Of course.
BRUGHA
What are you eating for breakfast these days?

FATHER
McDonalds. Pancakes and sausage.

BRUGHA
Everyday?

FATHER
I don’t want your mom to have to cook.

BRUGHA
I understand. Oh, try the Sausage, Egg and Cheese McGriddle.

FATHER
Too much.

BRUGHA
What?

FATHER
I eat a Sausage McMuffin and you mother has Pancakes.

BRUGHA

The father isn’t interested.

BRUGHA
Okay, what about lunch?

FATHER
Meals-on-Wheels.

BRUGHA
Same old deal?

FATHER
No they went up from $3 to $4.
BRUGHA
You still go pick the meals up?

FATHER
No your mom told them to deliver them.

BRUGHA
But you are getting them?

MOTHER
Yes, we are getting them.

Mom get up from her chair. She has painful arthritis in a hip and Parkinson’s disease. She is using a walker to get around. Slowly, she makes for the kitchen.

BRUGHA
How is the Parkinson’s, mom.

MOTHER
Same.

BRUGHA
And your hip?

MOTHER
The same.

BRUGHA
You are on painkillers?

MOTHER
No.

BRUGHA
Why not?

MOTHER
They think I’m going to get addicted.

BRUGHA
But you asked them right?

MOTHER
Asked them what?
BRUGHA
I’m going to help, mom.
(half beat)
So what is for dinner? You want me to make it?

MOTHER
No need. I’ll do it.

She opens the kitchen cabinets. And there are only cookie mixes. She brings one down and sits on a stool in the kitchen.

Brugha surveys the cabinets and refrigerator. There is NOTHING in the kitchen not associated with baking cookies.

BRUGHA
Mom, I’m going to go get a pizza.

MOTHER
You don’t like cookies? You used to like cookies.

BRUGHA
Are they enough?

MOTHER
Oh, I don’t eat like I used to. A few cookies and I’m full. Your father too.

BRUGHA
He wouldn’t tell you though.

MOTHER
He seems okay.

BRUGHA
Yeah, but with me and Rashard. I don’t want to have to do all this work.

MOTHER
How about a few cookies before you go to bed?

Rashard exits the kitchen back to the living room.
BRUGHA
Dad, does she feed you cookies every night.

FATHER
No. On Tuesdays milk shakes are half price after five.

Rashard gets in his father’s truck.

He returns with two large pizza boxes.

Rashard eats an entire pizza in the RV and in the back yard. Working with the dogs and eating at the same time.

BRUGHA
When you’re done, get the bicycle out.
And run the show dogs. Get a lead and get on the bike… around the block.

RASHARD
Which ones?

BRUGHA
The first five crates.

RASHARD
How far?

BRUGHA
Oh, the Ridgebacks? About eight times around the block.
(half beat)
The IGs three times. Dachsunds and Bostons twice.

Inside the house, the parents might be a bit under nourished; they really appreciate the pizza.

INT. RV - NIGHT

Rashard and Brugha are inside the RV. Brugha pulls out the couch into a bed. Rashard lays down.

RASHARD
Your parents they maybe they need to live in assisted living?
BRUGHA
Probably.

RASHARD
I’m exhausted. Good night.

BRUGHA
In the morning, we’ll drive over to the civic center. The dog show.
(half beat)
You never been to a dog show. You excited?

Rashard is asleep.

Brugha returns to the house and sleeps in his childhood bed.

INT. RV – DARK – VERY EARLY MORNING

Brugha opens the gate of the house. And lets all the dogs out of the RV. They, again, orderly go to the open gate. They urinate and return to the RV. The males urinate five times on five different items and then return to the RV.

Rashard wakes up and walks out. He did all that work the night before but this appears so easy.

BRUGHA
They pee after they sleep. They poop after they eat.
(half beat)
You knew that right?

RASHARD
I see.
(half beat)
You never hired any help?

BRUGHA
Nope. Not until now. Never.

RASHARD
You did all this work?
BRUGHA
Yes.

RASHARD
Amazing. I’m nineteen and I’m taxed.

BRUGHA
You’re being paid well.

Oh, I know. It’s not that.
(half beat)
It’s a lot of work.

BRUGHA
No one said it was going to be easy.

RASHARD
I didn’t know you were doing this much work. I can respect that.
(half beat)
You need to find some help for your mom and dad?

BRUGHA
I tried to get them to do that. They refuse hired help.
(half beat)
And besides who out here would do that?
They really dislike about everyone, except on Sunday.

BRUGHA
Sort of negative?

RASHARD
My gramps, he negative too. He’s 65.

BRUGHA
Yeah, I don’t want to be grumpy.

RASHARD
I don’t see that happening actually.

INT. AMARILLO CIVIC CENTER - EARLY

Rashard has brought the five dog crates into the building.
BRUGHA
Give them a bath, blow dry them and then back in their crate.

Rashard watches everyone else and mirrors them preparing their dogs.

Drinking coffee, waiting for the judging to begin, Brugha is standing with other exhibitors.

EXHIBITOR
You generally aren’t standing around.

BRUGHA
Hired help.

EXHIBITOR
Good for you.

BRUGHA
I’m generally struggling to get the dogs ready. Today with Rashard... this coffee is great.

EXHIBITOR
This is your home dog show?

BRUGHA
It was when I was a kid.
(half beat)
I live down by Lubbock now days.

Brugha’s parents come into the exhibit hall. They find chairs by ring #1 and they wave to their son and wait.

BRUGHA
My parents. They drove me all over the place to dog shows. I was a kid.

EXHIBITOR
So you know this show?

BRUGHA
I’ve been very lucky here. Even as a kid I would lose everywhere, but here.
(half beat)
This show used to be held in the 4-H barn. They tore that down. Then a different agricultural center. That’s gone now too. And then at the college gym… and now it’s here.

EXHIBITOR
It’s nice.

BRUGHA
I remember they use to have wrestling Friday night in the 4-H barn. The urinals were just a trough in the concrete floor and they would get stopped up. The urine would run out of the bathroom door out into the exhibit hall. We’ve really come a long way here. This place actually smells like disinfectant.

Brugha is watching Rashard from a distance. He bathes the dogs. Puts them on a grooming table and does what everyone else does. He even gets out the clips and cuts the whiskers of the dogs. He takes them outside to pee.

By the time the competition begins, the dogs are very ready.

Brugha goes to each ring and collects the arm band.

BRUGHA
Here put this on.

Brugha puts a rubber band on Rashard’s left arm and under it a number.

BRUGHA
Don’t worry. It’s just in case.
(half beat)
Here’s the schedule.

Brugha hands him the schedule.

BRUGHA
Here is how they are judged.

Brugha hands him a chart.
BRUGHA
If I’m not out of ring 3 by 9:30 then you take Star into ring 18.

RASHARD
And what?

BRUGHA
Show him, of course. Puppy class; there are two others.

RASHARD
How do I do that?

BRUGHA
Watch me at 8:00. It’s not hard. He’s a young dog but, he knows what to do; you just walk them around.

Brugha exhibits a dog in ring #1 and wins BOB. Rashard watches.

Brugha exhibits another dog in ring #2. Brugha keeps looking at his watch and then down to ring #18. Brugha is standing inside the ring and mentions to Rashard, who is standing outside the ring.

BRUGHA
You better get Star out and get over there. He shows in five minutes and I don’t know if I’ll be done here.
(half beat)
If they call his number, you walk right in there like you know what you’re doing. He’s in the puppy class.

Brugha exhibits in ring #2 a dog and wins BOS.

Brugha rushes to put up his dog into the crate. He runs to ring 18.

He arrives and Rashard has just entered the ring with Star. Rashard looks a bit nervous. But as he exhibits the dog he grows in confidence. He wins the class (best male puppy).
Rashard exits the ring very happy. His first experience is positive.

BRUGHA
That’s great.

Brugha takes the ribbon and puts it in Rashard’s coat’s inside breast pocket.

BRUGHA
You might need this ribbon later, so you put them in here.

RASHARD
Here you go.

Rashard tries to hand Brugha the lead.

BRUGHA
No, that only confuses the judge. (half beat)
Once you start with a dog you stick with it, especially if you win.

RASHARD
But I saw where they switched.

BRUGHA
That’s different. (half beat)
Okay, what is the next time he’s in?

RASHARD
After all these dogs. (half beat)
Winners dog.

BRUGHA
He will be the first in line. They line them up by class. In order.

Got it. (half beat)
You sure?

BRUGHA
You won.
(half beat)
The judge likes the dog. Go for it.

RASHARD
Okay, I will.

BRUGHA
Winner’s dog means point.

RASHARD
How many?

BRUGHA
Three.

RASHARD
Is that good?

BRUGHA
Three is a major. A major win.

Brugha’s parents finally arrive; they have followed him to ring #18 and sit. The trip from ring #1 exhausts them. They sit.

Brugha stands and watches nervously. Rashard and Star win Winners Dog.

BRUGHA
Congratulations.

RASHARD
Thanks.

BRUGHA
Okay, what’s next?

RASHARD
Females.

BRUGHA
Right.
   (half beat)
Then?

RASHARD
Best of Breed.
BRUGHA
You are a quick learner.
(half beat)
Listen, I’m going to get out of your hair. You need some more bait?

RASHARD
Yeah, I’m out.

BRUGHA
You did a great job.

RASHARD
Thanks.

Brugha hands him some bait and goes to sit down. Brugha seems a bit tired.

FATHER
You can retire and just hand the dogs off to your boy. It looks like he can get it done.

BRUGHA
Rashard? Yeah, my feet hurt.

Brugha is looking old maybe a little defeated. Of course there is also a nervous edge to him as he sits ringside. His parents are on one side and a nice lady is on the other side observing.

LADY
That your puppy?

BRUGHA
Yes.

LADY
He’s nice.

BRUGHA
Who do you have handling him?

BRUGHA
One of my students. I hired him to help out and I was busy in another ring.
LADY
He’s doing well.

BRUGHA
Quick learner.

LADY
First dog show?

BRUGHA
Yep.

Best of Breed is called and Brugha realizes he didn’t tell him the correct order. Brugha stands up; he might be thinking of signaling

BRUGHA
I didn’t tell him about the order for BOB.

LADY
I think he has it. He’s been talking to the steward.

But Rashard has befriended the ring steward, who seems to be instructing him. Everything goes smoothly. Rashard enters the line in the correct order.

Rashard and Star actually astounds everyone and beats the champions for BOB.

Rashard exits the ring with his large rosette and is beaming happily.

RASHARD
The guys said five points.

BRUGHA
The ring steward.

Several competitors walk past and say “congratulations”. Rashard politely responds “thank you”.

RASHARD
I guess.
BRUGHA
Three for winners dog and two more for BOB.

RASHARD
Go tell him you want your photo taken.

BRUGHA
And then wait right here until the photographer shows up. It will be about 30 mins.

RASHARD
I have to urinate.

BRUGHA
I imagine so.

RASHARD
Oh, man this is great. Right?

BRUGHA
You’re a natural.

RASHARD
You think?

LADY
You are! Congratulations.

RASHARD
Thank you ma’am.

BRUGHA
Okay, go pee. I’ll be here with your dog.

Rashard walks away about two inches off the ground.

Brugha father stops him half way to the bathroom and congratulates him.

INT. RV - NIGHT

Brugha is in his bed trying to sleep. Rashard is on the pull out couch. Rashard can’t sleep.
RASHARD
That black man in the toy group.

BRUGHA
Aaron?

RASHARD
When he walks, you can’t hear his shoes... I can’t tell if it’s the leather soles or he just walks softly.

BRUGHA
That’s him. As a handler you want to like disappear and for it to be all about the dog.

RASHARD
He won.

BRUGHA
He did.

RASHARD
He’s the only black man in there.

BRUGHA
Well you.

RASHARD
There isn’t any racism?

BRUGHA
Theoretically, it doesn’t matter who is on the other end of the lead.

RASHARD
I like it.

BRUGHA
Of course you do, you won.
(half beat)
Wait until you drive 12 hours and lose. Both days you lose.
(half beat)
Talk to me then.
RASHARD
I don’t care.
(half beat)
I understand what’s going on. Competition and the best genes are rewarded. But its opinion of course.

BRUGHA
Okay, are we sleeping now?

RASHARD
Sorry.

INT. HOME - LUBBOCK - DAY

Later, Brugha is sleeping Rashard enters the room and turns on the light.

BRUGHA
She’s having the puppies? Okay. I’m awake.

Brugha gets up and they go stand over the whelping box.

BRUGHA
Okay, you never know when a puppy will be Best in Show. So we do everything.

RASHARD
Like what?

BRUGHA
Everything. CPR, tie their umbilical cord before you cut it. I will show you in about… two more minutes.
(half beat)
And they need to nurse immediately. If they miss they’re in trouble. We don’t wait until they’re all born and then let nature take it’s place.
(half beat)
We ties these strings around them to ID them. Then we weigh them. Every four or five hours, then later. Make sure they are gaining weight.
RASHARD
What are their odds?

BRUGHA
As a rule?
(half beat)
If they make three days, they’ll make it.

Beat.

BRUGHA
Okay, here you go.
(half beat)
(half beat)
Take this string and tie off her cord.
(half beat)
Get those scissors. About half-an-inch.
(half beat)
Towel her off. Tie this string around her neck, loosely.

RASHARD
Okay.

BRUGHA
Put her on a tit. Mom will want to lick the puppy but she needs to eat. You might have to hold her there.

BRUGHA
I have to teach school tomorrow. You got this? I’ll give you one of the puppies, if you will stay up. Plus your regular pay. I just can’t. I used to be able to but I guess I’m getting old.

RASHARD
Really, you would do that for me?
Okay. I got this.

BRUGHA
She’ll have another one in 45 mins or an hour. If she doesn’t come get me up.
Brugha and Rashard raise two litters. Rashard spends hours and hours as the puppies grow. He weighs and measures them. In the end, Rashard is lead training them at eight weeks.

They travel to several dog shows. Rashard exceeds all expectations and wins rather often. Rashard gets more and more responsibility and shows two of the dogs, not just star. He wins BOS and then BOB. He is in a group. Then he gets pulled out and then he gets a Group Four. He is more and more excited and confident. He is becoming especially attached to this particular dog “Star”.

There are five shipping crates loaded and ready to go.

BRUGHA
You know where the airport is?
(half beat)
You sure you don’t want me to go with you?

RASHARD
No, I got this.

Brugha looks inside each shipping crate. On the outside of each crate is a zip lock of food and an envelope.

BRUGHA
France. CDG
Italy. FCO
Russia. SVO
New York. LGA
Los Angeles. LAX
(half beat)
Their health certificate. Their shot records. Pedigree. Everything is inside. When they leave, text or email
them so they know they are in the air.
Send them the waybill number.

   RASHARD
Great. Got it.
   (half beat)
You sure we are keeping the winner?

   BRUGHA
It’s too late to change now. But it
really doesn’t matter.
   (half beat)
I tell you what, I will gamble $100
inside of two years they will all be
champions.

   RASHARD
Including Maxine?

   BRUGHA
The one we’re keeping?

   RASHARD
I’m not gambling against any of them.

   BRUGHA
I see. What’s her name again?
   (half beat)
She’ll finish in seven or eight shows.

EXT. DOG SHOW PARKING LOT - DUSK

There are two exercise pens set up, each containing an
Italian Greyhound. Brugha shakes hands with another
exhibitor. Brugha signals for Rashard to pick his bitch up
and put him in the other pen.

   BRUGHA
Number #1 bitch and the Number #1 dog.

   RASHARD
This is going to be a lock! The
ultimate litter.
It doesn’t always work. It’s an outcross. You breed cross, cross and outcross.

RASHARD
This lady with Dalmatians told me that.

BRUGHA
But the odds are good.

RASHARD
That’s why we are doing it.

BRUGHA
I have high expectations.

Brugha phone rings he answers. He listens.

BRUGHA
My mother fell. She broke her hip. When these dogs get untangled, we should probably leave.

Brugha and Rashard leave a dog show in Nebraska and return home.

EXT. HOME - ANGUS -DAY

Brugha has returned to his hometown. It is the end of summer – the beginning of the fall.

Rashard puts some dogs are in the garage and some in a wood shop. A few are in a greenhouse. Temporary housing.

BRUGHA
(to his father)
You need a ride to the hospital?

Brugha and his father go to a café. The dogcatcher’s truck drives by. Brugha’s father sits up nervously and mentions...

BRUGHA
That dogcatcher’s a thief.
FATHER
He broke into the school and stole about twenty laptops.

BRUGHA
What? When?

FATHER
I don’t know 10 years ago; he was a kid.
(half beat)
A criminal record and the city hired him. They’re practically cops.

BRUGHA
Juvenile gets thrown out, dad.

FATHER
You better watch your dogs around here.
(half beat)
The most dangerous place in this city is standing between him and a TV camera.

BRUGHA
He’s seized people’s dogs? Here?

FATHER
All the time. Big hero. He calls the Amarillo TV stations and gets them out here. They make a big production of it.

BRUGHA
I’m about to find a place out in the country. A farmhouse or something.

EXT. HOME – ANGUS – FRIDAY NIGHT – DUSK

The high school football team is playing at the stadium. The sun is setting and the stadium lights begin to light up that part of the horizon. We hear the crowd and band in the distance.

Rashard is walking a dog or two out of the woodworking shop a block away from the home. Rashard as angry a man as he has been, it’s relaxing for him to exercise the dogs. We
can see he talks to them. Brugha lets three dogs out of the house into the back yard.

Brugha returns to the television. He and his father are watching a baseball game.

    FATHER
    I sure miss your mom.

    BRUGHA
    She’s okay. Give her a week or so to heal up and she’ll be right back here telling you what to do.

    FATHER
    I sure hope so.

    BRUGHA
    We will get up early and get over there to see her.

    FATHER
    Can we bring her some pancakes?

    BRUGHA
    Sure.

Animal control visits for the house for the first time. The dog catcher stops because he sees four dogs in the back yard.

The dogcatcher looks at the RV in the drive. Quietly he opens the door of the RV. The dogcatcher enters without a warrant or probable cause. He uses his flashlight and sees about a dozen empty crates, a dog bath, five bags of dog food. He exits the RV and he places a GPS tracking device under the RV.

The dogcatcher knocks on the front door of the home.

    BRUGHA
    Howdy.

    DOGCATCHER
    I noticed you have some dogs in the back yard.
BRUGHA
Yeah, I’m just visiting my dad.

They step outside and around to the side of the yard. Rashard runs to hid his dogs.

DOGcatcher
It’s legal to have more than three dogs.

BRUGHA
I’m just here checking up on my parents. My mom fell and broke her hip. She’s in the hospital but my dad, well you know my dad.

DOGcatcher
I see him around town.

BRUGHA
Great then you understand.

DOGcatcher
Well you can’t have this many dogs out in the open. Someone sees them, and there’ll be a complaint.

BRUGHA
So you didn’t have a complaint.

DOGcatcher
No, I just drove by.

BRUGHA
Okay. That’s good.

DOGcatcher
When are you leaving?

BRUGHA
Right now. I’m going back to Lubbock.

DOGcatcher
You live in Lubbock?
BRUGHA
I teach at the college. Live just outside of there yeah.

DOGCATCHER
Okay, have a safe trip home.

Brugha and Rashard pack up and leave. But the dog catcher suspects more than the four dogs he has seen. He parks a few blocks away and watches though binoculars.

The animal control officer makes a suspicious phone call.

ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER
(into cell phone)
Pure-bred Italian Greyhounds. It looks like a dozen or more. That much? What about the others? Four Dachshunds, four Rhodesian Ridgebacks, four Boston Terriers. High dollar stud dogs. Intact; they’re show dogs.
(beat)
Great. You have a deal.
(beat)
Tomorrow sometime.

Brugha and Rashard load up the dogs and are about to drive back to Lubbock.

Brugha sits in the driver’s seat and starts the RV’s engine.

DOGCATCHER
(into police radio)
I’ve got a traffic stop. Possible animal abuse case.

The policemen at the football game make a face; they would much rather watch the game than make a traffic stop.

Brugha is about to engage the transmission. Rashard sees something in the distance.

RASHARD
Wait.
(half beat)
That asshole is right over there.
BRUGHA
What? where?

RASHARD
Right over there. The dogcatcher.

BRUGHA
He was watching? He knows the dogs are in here. We’re fucked.

RASHARD
Not necessarily.

Rashard pulls out his cell phone he dials 911. And in a rural Texas accent….

RASHARD
This Buford T. Justice. I’m out at the football game. There’s a black man. He’s about 6’8” and wearing “black”, all black, head to toe.
(beat)
He’s got duck tape, rope and a big hunting knife. He just crawled into a van marked “cheerleaders”.
(beat)
Okay, thank you ma’am.

Rashard hangs up the cell phone.

RASHARD
Now watch.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - NIGHT

A policeman standing at the rail hears the dispatch and turns rapidly toward the parking lot. Outside the stadium, to cop pulls his gun. He runs across the parking lot with the gun pointed toward the sky.

A second cop on the other side of the field does the same, runs through the parking lot.

The first cop trips on a parking stop, falls face first into the gravel parking lot and the gun goes off. The
bullet strikes the gas tank on a school bus. It explodes and burns.

SECOND COP
(into the radio)
Shots fired, shots fired.
(half beat)
They’ve fire bombed a bus out here.

The first cop looks around to see if there are any witnesses. He doesn’t see anyone. He plans on denying it was his bullet that caused the fire.

In about ten seconds, a man runs from the police station and climbs into a police car.

Down the street to the left a cop leaves his house and gets into a police car and throws on the emergency lights. Sirens blare in the distance. Down the street to the right, the same thing happens with another police car.

The fire station lights up. The doors open and a volunteer pulls up and starts the fire engine. He is joined by another volunteer and they start out for the stadium.

Volunteer firemen and off duty cops leave the stands and are out in the parking lot. The off duty cops have all pulled their weapons once out in the parking lot. The volunteer fireman are waiting on the fire engine to arrive.

Brugha and Rashard look out at the smoke rising from the stadium area.

BRUGH
What?

Rashard turns on the radio and finds the football game on the radio.

RADIO GUY
Well, they’ve stopped the game. Apparently one of the school buses used to transport students to the game is on fire. Several law enforcement officers have left the stands to investigate. We can hear the fire truck on the way? No word on when the game will resume, but
there is a thick cloud of smoke
obscuring the west end of the field.

BRUGHA
A bus is on fire?

RASHARD
Wow.

BRUGHA
What did you do?

RASHARD
Nothing... you just heard me.

BRUGHA
Sounds like they are burning the town
down.

RASHARD
Looking for a black man.

They both glare at the dogcatcher.

RASHARD
He wants to be a hero. He won’t miss
whatever is going out out there.

The dogcatcher leaves for the stadium.

RASHARD
Okay, you can go now. Ya, think?

They zoom off in the RV and are out of the small town in
less than a minute.

Rashard pitches his phone out the window into the ditch. He
reaches into his bag and pulls out another one.

BRUGHA
How many phones do you have?

RASHARD
I keep two or three.

Brugha looks perplexed.
RASHARD
Doctor Brugha, I’m a revolutionary.

There isn’t any argument. Brugha just accepts it; laughs it off.

EXT. KENNEL – RURAL LUBBOCK AREA – NIGHT

BRUGHA
Can I hire you to watch the dogs at least until I get my mom and dad situated.

RASHARD
Of course. No problem.

BRUGHA
Okay, I’m going back to my parents but I’ll call you.

Brugha leaves the RV and Rashard at the kennel. He returns to Angus in a small car.

EXT. KENNEL – RURAL LUBBOCK AREA – DAY

Rashard is out working with the dogs. He sees a guy creeping around the kennel property with a camera.

Rashard runs inside and brings back a deer rifle but the truck the guy is in is pulling out of the drive out onto the highway. Rashard points the rifle at the back of the driver’s head. At the last moment before it enters the highways, Rashard points the rifle at the license plate and pulls the trigger.

Rashard calls Brugha and wakes him up.

RASHARD
Doc, there is a guy out here taking pictures of the dogs.

BRUGHA
Who was it?

I have no idea. Drives a piece of shit truck. A maroon truck. I put a bullet hole in the license plate.
BRUGHA
Get the dogs out of there.

RASHARD
Where you want me to take them?

BRUGHA
I guess bring them back up here until I find another place.
(half beat)
Uh, bring them here when it gets dark, drop them off and tomorrow I’ll rent a space at the storage place for the RV.
(half beat)
How did they know to come out there?

RASHARD
I guess they followed me.

BRUGHA
Ok, it doesn’t matter.
(half beat)
Can you do that for me?

RASHARD
Grace under pressure.

BRUGHA
That’s the spirit. Thanks.

Rashard does the “dog show” command to round up the dogs, who have previously resisted his commands to get in or out of the RV. But now in an emergency, they fall in line and the RV is almost out of there.

One shy dog hides under the RV and Rashard has to get on his knees to persuade her out. Rashard spots the magnetic GPS device and removes it.

The shy dog is collected and Rashard leaves.

INT. TRUCK STOP – DAY

Rashard stops by the truck stop. He buys fuel for the RV.
RASHARD
Howdy, how far you going?

TRUCKER
New York.

RASHARD
Have safe trip.

He puts the GPS on the truck.

EXT. STORAGE YARD - ANGUS - MORNING

They park the RV at the storage unit and get into Brugha’s small car.

BRUGHA
A GPS unit?

RASHARD
I thought maybe it was just a thief taking pictures.

BRUGHA
A bit sophisticated for that.

RASHARD
The government.
(half beat)
I sent it on a truck to New York.

BRUGHA
That was smart. It will buy us some time.

RASHARD
What are you going to do?

BRUGHA
I have an interview at the community college tomorrow.

RASHARD
There is seriously less prestige.

BRUGHA
Yes.
RASHARD
And really uninspired students.

BRUGHA
Maybe.
(half beat)
My parents… and the dogs. I will need to find a place around here. Work around here.
(half beat)
You better get back to school. Take this car.

RASHARD
You sure?

BRUGHA
Dad, has some cars they don’t need.

EXT. HOME - ANGUS - MORNING TO NIGHT

Brugha gets up at 4 am and exercises and feeds the dogs. At 8 am he goes to a job interview.

At lunch, he exercises the dogs again. Several police cars drive by. They are looking for a terrorist or whatever from the football game and all the police are on duty. Remember the small town has 18 policemen and now they are all on extra duty (overtime).

In the afternoon the dogs are exercised again.

Brugha looks exhausted.

FATHER
I’m worried about you working yourself to death. That’s all I need now is for you to go down. What about your student, can’t we hire him?

BRUGHA
Rashard is in school in Lubbock and can’t help.

By 7 pm professor Brugha cooks a meal for his father and shortly after is exhausted and in bed.
EXT. HOME – ANGUS – DAY

Brugha gets a phone call and he is hired.

Brugha goes through the motions, at 4 am he begins caring for the dogs and then goes to the community college for the first day of classes.

In the middle of the day, police barge into the wood shop without a warrant. Brugha’s Father is terrorized. The police with the dogcatcher search the home, the greenhouse and the garage. Soon there are 10 police cars and even more city trucks, code inspectors, dump trucks and even a fire truck arrives. Obviously many of the police and city vehicles have been seized (all different makes) many have odd colors. The home becomes a “crime scene”.

**DOGcatcher**

We’re going to seize these animals.

Brugha’s 90-year-old father begs to wait.

**Father**

Can’t you please wait until my son gets home, he went to work.

**Dogcatcher**

No. No. That’s not going to happen.

The police and dogcatcher cart off the dogs.

The dogcatcher hands out masks to the police who are hauling the dogs out to a cattle trailer. The police look at the dogcatcher strangely (like they don’t need the mask), but then the dogcatcher gestures to the gathering photo journalists - newspapers and television. The police don the masks and it makes for a more compelling photographs.

Media tries to get film of the inside the buildings - crates and conditions.

A policeman agrees to let a journalist inside.

**Dogcatcher**

Stop that guy!

(half beat)
Don’t let them photograph anything; they have to stay outside. I’ll photograph everything.

The photographers are kept out.

The police load them up on a city owned cattle trailer. Why would a city own cattle trailer? It was seized.

They take the dogs to a run down facility. The city dog shelter is about 8 x 8. The newborn puppies are inside but the other dogs are placed in a makeshift enclosure made of two baseball backstops. With a tarp thrown over the top.

It is under the eve of a roof, if it rains the water will run in there. Dirt is thrown up a foot high all around the outside to keep them from digging out. But it will keep the water from escaping.

EXT. HOME - ANGUS - AFTERNOON

The dogs are gone when he gets home. He notices the dogs in the garage are gone. He enters the house.

BRUGHA
Dad, you moved the dogs?

Father is sitting in his chair with a defeated look on his face.

FATHER
Did you get my phone message?

BRUGHA
I didn’t even check.

FATHER
They came and got your dogs.
(half beat)
There is some sort of hearing in three days.

Brugha is shocked.

BRUGHA
The dogs in your woodshop?
FATHER
Yes.

BRUGHA
In the greenhouse?

FATHER
Every dog, except mine.

BRUGHA
You want me to take you up to the hospital?

FATHER
We better go tell your mother.

BRUGHA
Let’s go.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY – AFTERNOON

Brugha calls the newspaper reporters and the TV station.

BRUGHA
What do you mean the story is already written? You didn’t contact me. How can you write half the truth? You have a responsibility.
(beat)
Advertisers. Views? That is horse shit. These are expensive show dogs and were in excellent condition.
(beat)
I don’t care what that dickhead told you, he’s a thief and lies.
(beat)
A puppy mill story? This isn’t a puppy mill. I raise champion show dogs some of the best in the country.
(beat)
You don’t care? Well, you report this, “fuck you, you nazi bitch.”

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM – AFTERNOON

The news comes on and the coverage is typical.
NEWS READER
Angus police discovered a puppy mill inside the city limits. Police have discovered what has been described as a puppy mill in a residential area of Angus and seized 32 dogs. The dogs were found Saturday in a house at 531 N. Doris Ave when law enforcement agents noticed under nourished dogs in the back yard.

(half beat)
Inside the house, a greenhouse, a wood shop and a garage, officers found 20 dogs ranging from “several days old to fully grown adults.”

(half beat)
Officers found numerous animals being kept in small cages, obviously for breeding purposes. They were being fed and watered but it was a money-making proposition, which is illegal. You can’t run a puppy mill anywhere in the state.

DOGCATCHER
The animals were in horrible condition. Officers assisting in the rescue had to wear masks.

REPORTER
The owner claimed he has been exhibiting the dogs at dog shows.

DOGCATCHER
That is a lie. We found no evidence of this and frankly the idea is ludicrous. The only thing we found are receipts from shipping puppies on various airlines. You know when you put a puppy on a plane it is dangerous and unfortunately it tells me the owners were in it for the money.

REPORTER
Where are we now?
**DOGcatcher**
The case remains under investigation and no arrests have been made.

**News Reader**
Investigators have been told another 20 to 40 puppies are at another site in Wichita, he said, but those pups have not yet been found.

(half beat)
We tried to contact the owner and his response to us, was “Expletive deleted, you expletive deleted Nazi.”

We see Brugha with his mother and father in the hospital room.

**Mother**
Lies.

**Brugha**
The truth means nothing to them mom, they are journalists... that woman told me it was about the ratings and the advertisers.

**Mother**
She told you that?

**Brugha**
Flat out.

**Father**
I wish you would have recorded that.

**Brugha**
It wouldn’t do any good, who would listen?

(half beat)
It’s all a drama played out to keep you watching.

**Father**
You didn’t have that many dogs.
BRUGHA
Rosie had 12 puppies. Angel has 6. Sounds really bad.

MOTHER
They can’t count puppies.

BRUGHA
Two litters and you’re a puppy mill.

FATHER
How of those puppies will be champions?

BRUGHA
Half probably.

MOTHER
What will happen now?

Long beat.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - ANGUS - NIGHT

The middle of the night comes and Brugha sneaks out of the house in the middle of the night. It is pouring rain. And Brugha finds the really crappy shelter where they have taken the dogs. The dogs are in a single enclosure in eight inches of water. None can lay down. There are four dog houses for the dogs. Brugha finds a shovel and cuts a hole in the dirt so the water will drain out of the enclosure.

The dogs are in worse conditions under the care of the city.

There is a city owned shack with room for two dogs (the mothers and puppies). Brugha enters and looks at the litter. One litter has 12 puppies. There are six in the other litter, the litter Rashard whelped.

EXT. JP COURT - ANGUS - DAY

Brugha and his lawyer are talking outside before the hearing.

LAWYER
Doctor Brugha if you protest generally there are criminal charges. If you just
sit there an say nothing then you might escape charges.

BRUGHA
What about returning the property?

LAWYER
We can try but as your lawyer I need to tell you, just sign the dogs over and they most of the time they let it slide. Especially when they don’t have any real evidence.

BRUGHA
It was on TV.

LAWYER
These cases always are.

BRUGHA
They’ll charge me no matter what. I teach at the University.

LAWYER
But if you let them have the dogs, they won’t not press charges.

BRUGHA
The government just wants the dogs?

LAWYER
And the publicity. Elections you know.

BRUGHA
It’s a small town.

LAWYER
5000 people and 18 cops.

BRUGHA
And they’re all looking to get famous.

LAWYER
They are trying to hire a second animal and want to build a half-million dollar animal reclaim center.

(half beat)
There is the election looming and add the judge has hundreds of emails to punish the dog breeder.

BRUGHA
He feels pressure. Basically left wing “animal right advocates” outnumber freedom-loving people.
(half beat)
The city has all the dogs out in the heat. There is a tarp.

LAWYER
Food and water?

BRUGHA
Yes.
(half beat)
I went out there in the rain. Water is coming off the roof into their pen. All the dogs were in about eight inches of water. Soaking wet and in eight inches of rain water. They were miserable.

LAWYER
Okay but I don’t know if he is gonna wanna hear that. He’ll say well that has nothing to do with how you cared for the dogs.

INT. JP COURT - ANGUS - DAY

The JUSTICE OF THE PEACE is flipping through some photos.

At this point, we can speculate that the dogcatcher has taken the dogs out to a puppy mill and photographed them in cages.

BRUGHA
Those pictures.

JP
What about ‘em?

BRUGHA
They are fakes, doctored.
JP
Are you saying those aren’t your dogs?

BRUGHA
The cages... they’ve never been in cages.

JP
You were operating a puppy mill.

BRUGHA
Who told you that? There is no such thing as a "puppy mill". "Puppy mill" is not a legally defined term, it is slang invented by the “animal rights” extremists to denigrate any and all breeders -- small or large, elite, standard or substandard. It's the "N-word" for breeders and equally insulting as far as I’m concerned.

JP
You teach the first amendment? If the media wants to call you that

BRUGHA
You’re a judge in an agricultural area, and you are doing the work of the animal “rights” movement, people who want to end all animal ownership.

JP
Why did one of the dogs have missing teeth?

BRUGHA
Show me a 70 year-old man who isn’t wearing dentures. Same thing your honor.

JP
Most 70 year-old men don’t have broken teeth still in their head.

BRUGHA
This vet report said ‘missing’ teeth.
JP
Given the conditions these animals were found in, if you yourself were kept under those conditions would you consider that cruel and unusual?

BRUGHA
Of course not. Best cared for dog you’ve ever met.

JP
No place to go to the bathroom?

BRUGHA
They can hold it. They are trained to hold it. I let them out to go to the bathroom.

JP
This police report says they dogs were found in cages.

BRUGHA
Crates. Listen, I am a sentient person. They are not sentient.

JP
Does that give them the entitlement to greater or lesser care than sentient beings?

BRUGHA
Less. They sleep in their crates. They aren’t writing novels or ridding roller coasters.

JP
Well, I’m granting custody of the animals seized to the City of Angus.

BRUGHA
I have a question. You announced your decision about three seconds after I said animals do not enjoy the same rights as humans; you said they are
equal?

JP
No sir you did not say that. I asked you if they are entitled to the same or lesser care from sentient beings that have control of them since they are not sentient.

BRUGHA
With all due respect. You are judging them and you are pretending like they have the same rights and the same level of care as humans.

JP
So?

BRUGHA
The radical left. That’s an argument of theirs.

JP
I don’t think you will find me in amongst them.

BRUGHA
You just used the same logic.

JP
No I used the logic that a sentient being can think and reason and they are not ambulatory and able to provide. Since they are not, if you are going to have ownership you have a higher degree of care required for them than you would to yourself, because you are able to care for yourself.

BRUGHA
You’re giving ammunition to the left.

JP
Oh, that’s horse hockey.
BRUGHA
You just said an animal deserves more care than a human.

JP
If you are going to own an animal you are responsible for them.

BRUGHA
You’re controlled by the left. Good luck next election.

JP
Every loser I rule against says wait ‘till the next election. And nothing ever happens.

BRUGHA
Wait till people figure out that what is happening to me can easily happen to them.

JP
I’m really not that worried.

BRUGHA
Elections. You need to be worried.

JP
I will admit I’ve had thousands of emails demanding I shut you down. But I’m a judge of course I can see pictures and make up my mind.

BRUGHA
My dogs were in crates or exercise pens. I let them out three or more times a day.

JP
You kept them locked up most of the day.

BRUGHA
They were all show dogs. They are used to being in their crate. They like sleeping all day.
JP
That’s not something in your favor, sir.

BRUGHA
Dogs in the wild, what would they do? They’d dig a hole about the size of a crate and they would sleep in there 18 hours a day. So what is the difference?

JP
I think most people know better than that.

BRUGHA
The pictures are fake. Where are their plastic travel crates? They put them in cages with the wire bottom.

JP
It looks to me like you have them in pens for the purpose of breeding them. I doubt you ever let them out.

(half beat)
I’m going to rule the dogs be seized, spayed and neutered, and adopted out by the City of Angus.

BRUGHA
The city is going to sell my lifework for $285 profit. Some of those dogs are worth 100 times that.

JP
If that is the case then you should have taken better care of them.

BRUGHA
It’s not about the money. It is about the genes. It’s a genetic contest. I’ve been breeding winning bloodlines for 50 years and now...

JP
Times have changed.

(half beat)
You aren’t allowed to breed dogs anymore.

BRUGHA
Who said that? What law?

JP
The law says you can’t have more than 9 breeding dogs.

BRUGHA
I don’t; last year I has two litters. These are show dogs... more are retired and most too old to breed.

JP
Your arguments, I just don’t see any evidence. No, you Neanderthal. YOU prove that I’m a breeder with nine breeding dogs. It’s not my burden to prove anything.

BRUGHA
I don’t have to prove anything. You prove I breed nine litters. (half beat)
But since you brought it up, these liars, they seized all my records. The dogs health and breeding records. Their registration papers.

JP
Is that true?

DOGCATCHER
No sir, we only rescued the dogs.

JP
Okay, we don’t have your papers.

BRUGHA
Why did you say “we”? He’s a thief and your helping him. You don’t have the authority to steal my life’s work.

JP
I think you’re a criminal.
BRUGHA
You don’t have the authority to say something like that.

JP
We’ll see.

BRUGHA
Do you know the difference between civil and criminal law?

JP
I’m not a lawyer but I know crook when I see one.

BRUGHA
You’re the crook. This is just a legalized theft. Nationwide police seize more property than thieves steal. And I would like everyone to know that it’s probably doubly true in this corrupt little town.

JP
Okay, talk to me not the journalists.

BRUGHA
I am talking to you. You are a judge; it’s your job to protect the citizens from this oppression.

JP
I’m here to protect people from criminals.

BRUGHA
This isn’t a criminal court. It’s a civil procedure.

JP
You’re right. I and I think we are done with the civil part. The dogs are the property of the City of Angus, until they’re dispose of them.
BRUGHA
I beg you not to spayed or neuter the dogs. They are my property and you’ve been lied to.

JP
Do you understand that keeping dogs in these conditions can be considered criminal?

BRUGHA
You’re the “criminal” and I have my rights. You can’t make breeding dogs against the law. It’s unconstitutional.

JP
I can legally seize all property used in the commission of a crime. I can seize your parent’s home, the other property. You should be happy I’m only taking the dogs.

BRUGHA
You don’t have to do this. You can walk away. No harm done.

JP
I have been harassed the last week; people that want you put out of business. And now it’s over.

BRUGHA
Freedom loving people will reelect you. Tell the socialists to jump in the lake, this city is still free.

JP
Socialists?

BRUGHA
You’re taking from productive people and you are giving my property to unproductive people who will sell the fruit of my labor. What else would you call that?
JP
I don’t know anything about that... but we are done here.

The judge gets up to leave.

BRUGHA
Not for me but for the Republic stop seizing property like this; you’re going to cause a revolution. You have no idea what you’re doing. People will learn to hate you because they see you as nothing but a thief. It’s just a matter of time.

JP
I know exactly what I’m doing. I have a stack of emails from all over the country about these poor dogs.

The judge leaves.

The judge nods to the police in the room.

Brugha leaves. In the parking lot there are about 10 or 15 police officers just standing around. Brugha is arrested for animal abuse.

Brugha is put into the back of a police car.

LAWYER
It’s bogus but I tried to tell you.

BRUGHA
You did.

LAWYER
And I can tell you if you appeal, they’ll ship your dogs out of the state. They have an agreement, if there is a serious legal issue they move the dogs over the state line.

BRUGHA
Even if I win, the dogs are lost?
LAWYER
Yes. They’ve always been lost. The fix is in. It always is. I tried to tell you.

BRUGHA
You did. I know.

LAWYER
Listen, they are going to take you over to the jail. In the morning, I’ll bail you out.

The media go nuts filming the arrest. Newspaper and TV coverage almost knock over a police officer to get over to the police car and film it.

BRUGHA
Come to the jail; I want to talk to you.

The reporter just looks at Brugha like he’s crazy.

INT. JAIL - DAY

The TV news comes on in the tank. We see Brugha’s mug shot. Brugha is on a bunk waiting.

OFFENDER
Hey man look, you’re on the news.

BRUGHA
Yep. That’s me.

OFFENDER
What you do?

BRUGHA
I owned a lot of dogs.

OFFENDER
What did you do run out of money and couldn’t feed them?

BRUGHA
They said that?
(half beat)
Bull shit. They’re just making that up.

OFFENDER
Why?

BRUGHA
They want the dogs. They want power.
(half beat)
What are you in here for? They make up stuff about you to didn’t they?

OFFENDER
No, I pretty much did what they said.

BRUGHA
They passed a law a year ago, you can only have 9 dogs.

OFFENDER
How many dogs you have?

BRUGHA
Twenty-two

OFFENDER
They said over 40.

BRUGHA
A Rhodesian Ridgeback, she had 12 puppies. And an Iggie had 6 puppies.

OFFENDER
I know the media lies.

BRUGHA
Government too.

OFFENDER
I figured. You don’t look like an abuser.
(half beat)
Say you made money off them?

BRUGHA
No not really, it was pretty much a break-even situation. I went to dog
shows all over, about every weekend. Fuel, entry fees, veterinarian expenses. It adds up.

OFFENDER
They made coal mining against the law. My cousin, they put him in jail because there was an accident. I’m not from here. I used to work in Kentucky.

BRUGHA
Coal mining? That’s basically against the law too.

OFFENDER
If they don’t like you, it’s against the law. Used to be you had to hurt someone or steal. Now you go if they don’t like you.

BRUGHA
Hey, you know what’s going on don’t you.

OFFENDER
Well, I know this country is fucked.

BRUGHA
Tell me about it.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

No chairs. If you want to watch TV you have to stand. Brugha stands up to watch the baseball game.

A “send us money and we’ll save the dogs” commercial comes on TV. It is one of those horrendous commercials for an unnamed “humane society”

BRUGHA
That’s a scam. They don’t even have shelters.
(half beat)
They’ve been showing those photos for 15 years; the same commercial. Some of the photos are from Korea. The others are rare and valuabe.
(half beat)
Valuable?
(half beat)
They make millions; you know cause they spend millions running that commercial 200 times a day.
(half beat)
The photos are intended to shock and horrify you into giving money.
(half beat)
Any photo can be photo-shopped into looking really bad. You need to be skeptical. If you didn’t see it with your own eyes take it with a grain of salt.

The offender pretty much have a devious mind they seem to understand the dog rescue charity scam. They wish they’d thought of the con.

However, a large violent or perhaps just demented criminal. Hits Brugha in the back of the head and beats him badly. After a time, the inmates pull the brute off the much older man.

Clearly several ribs are broken.

INT. JAIL – ARRAIGNMENT – MORNING

The arraignment is done by television. A judge sets bail for the young man sitting next to Brugha.

BRUGHA
Gee, $25,000 bail. What did you do?

YOUNG MAN
They said I stabbed a guy.

An older guy on the other side of Brugha whispers to him.

OTHER MAN
That guy, homosexual rape and he did stab him.

BRUGHA
No?
JUDGE
Brugha. Four counts of animal abuse.
Bail is set at $40,000.

BRUGHA
What?

JUDGE
You heard me.

OTHER MAN
Don’t worry. You can get out on $4,000.

BRUGHA
This guy raped another man and stabbed him and has less bail than me?

OTHER MAN
That’s crazy man.

EXT. JAIL - AFTERNOON

Brugha is released. Outside, he walks holding his side. Rashard is there waiting on Brugha. He is in Brugha’s truck.

RASHARD
What happened to you?

BRUGHA
Huh. What do you think?

Brugha laughs a bit but the broken ribs are painful.

RASHARD
Oh, man you should see a doctor.

BRUGHA
You talk to the lawyer?

RASHARD
No.

BRUGHA
He bailed me out.
RASHARD
I bailed you out.

BRUGHA
With what?

RASHARD
The $4,000 in the RV.

BRUGHA
Okay, that’s good.
(half beat)
How’s my dad?

RASHARD
I took him up to the hospital. We need to go get him at 4:00.

BRUGHA
Thanks.

EXT. COURT ROOM - DAY

Several weeks later, there is a pre-trial hearing. The lawyer tries to get the evidence thrown out on illegal search.

JUDGE
The 4th amendment doesn’t apply to in animal cases, “because they and be easily moved”. I rule against the motion. Trial is set… six weeks from today.

LAWYER
Your honor, we need the dogs for independent vet examinations. The prosecution has refused to make them available.

PROSECUTOR
I spoke to both animal control officers there in Angus and they say the dogs are in their new homes and that information is confidential. There are so many animals needing rescue it is in the government interest not to alienate
the help they receive from people adopting these animals.

LAWYER
Your honour, this is a criminal proceeding and we don’t have access to the evidence?

PROSECUTOR
The court doesn’t need to take the dogs from their new homes and that doing so would terrorize the new owners so they might never adopt again. The state is arguing there are so many abused dogs we must have the public’s help adopting.

JUDGE
I’m going to rule in favor of the state.

EXT. COURT ROOM - DAY

At the criminal trial, the animal control officer has manufactured evidence – photos puppy mill photos.

The lawyer objects to the photos.

The judge overrules the objection. They are shown to the jury.

CUT TO RURAL PUPPY MILL - DAY

We cut away from the trial and courtroom out to a rural puppy mill. There is a barn in a rural location. The dogs weren’t neutered or spayed. They were handed over (sold) to a puppy mill by the dogcatcher.

RETURN TO COURT ROOM

Rashard attends the trial.

The photos are the correct dogs and Brugha produces their show photos... but the prosecutor shows the jury the photos from the puppy mill the dogs are currently held in.
BRUGHA
(direct examination)
I don’t want you to have to regret this. I don’t want you to be able to says, first, they made coal mining against the law and I wasn’t a coal miner so I said nothing. Then they made dog breeding against the law and I wasn’t a dog breeder, so I said nothing. I don’t want you to say, and then they came for me when everything was against the law, and there wasn’t anyone there to stand up to them. I did nothing wrong.

Closing arguments to the jury.

LAWYER
There are four very flimsy counts of animal abuse. A missing tooth, an old pregnant bitch (actually only 7 years old) but the prosecutor claimed she was over 12 years old. The original report says it was a missing tooth and then it suddenly changed to a “painful” cavity. Where is this mysterious tooth, we can’t find? And one dog is actually 13… and frail. Basically these people have criminalized getting old. A dog supposedly had a scratch on her eye. You heard Dr. Brugha testify the corneal abrasion happened 10 years ago when the dog was a puppy. Vote not guilty.

Later at the sentencing.

JUDGE
The defendant will rise. Brugha I sentence you to 10 years in prison, suspended. But you will do 8 years of felony probation. I’m going to sentence you to 30 days in jail and 160 hours of community service.

Leaving the court room.
BRUGHA
Can you take care of my parents until I get out?

RASHARD
Sure not a problem.

Shackled and being loaded into a sheriff’s van, professor Brugha sees the dog catcher leaving in a brand-new Ford F-250, a $58k truck.

EXT. JAIL - DAY

Brugha gets in another jail fight. Moved to hospital and then solitary. No books or newspaper. No visitors.

Brugha gets out of jail and returns to the house.

INT. HOME - ANGUS - DAY

Rashard is dutifully taking care of his parents.

Brugha looks in the kitchen.

RASHARD
Soul food.

Brugha looks on the back porch.

RASHARD
Smoker.

Rashard is smoking a big ham. Mom and Dad are very happy.

BRUGHA
How much do I owe you?

RASHARD
Nothing.

BRUGHA
But you need paid.

RASHARD
Your dad said I can live here, rent free.
BRUGHA
Oh, that’s good. Of course.

RASHARD
I enrolled at the community college.

BRUGHA
You moved from Lubbock?

RASHARD
Sure.

(half beat)

I can always go back.

(half beat)

Uh, I want to show you something.

Rashard shows Brugha his phone. It is a picture of one of the newborn puppies. Now eight weeks old.

RASHARD
Eight weeks old. I’m supposed to go buy her tomorrow.

BRUGHA
He told you were lives?

RASHARD
No, I’m supposed meet him at the big box store.

BRUGHA
Typical.

RASHARD
I have this.

Rashard shows him a GPS

Is that what I think it is?

RASHARD
Yes.

BRUGHA
Where’d you get it?
RASHARD

Internet.

BRUGHA

I see.

EXT. HOME ANGUS – COLD WINTER NIGHT

Around 2 am, Professor Brugha sneaks out of the house and is about to burn the F-250 parked in front of the dogcatcher’s home. He soaks it in gasoline but he hears a failure bark. It’s his best bitch (Allie), she was breed the day his mom fell.

Rashard has followed Brugha on the bicycle and is watching from a distance.

BRUGHA

Allie, is that you? You should have had your puppies.

Brugha looks up and at the back of the yard. There is a shack with a hole cut in the door.

The bitch is excited to see Brugha and she wants to show him something.

BRUGHA

Your puppies?

Brugha enters the backyard and with a flashlight he sticks his head into the shed. He find the puppies in a box in an unheated shack.

It is almost winter and the temperatures are plunging.

Brugha takes large cardboard box, a blanket and puts them over the top of the litter box. It’s done to keep the cold out. The hole in the shed is open.

Brugha enters the shack. He takes off his shirt, finds some nails. Brugha nails it to the opening, making a makeshift doggie door to keep the wind out.

Rashard confronts him out in the street in the middle of the night.
RASHARD
You didn’t burn his truck? I would have.

BRUGHA
The puppies are there. They would have known who took them and they would have known who burned the truck. More problems I don’t need.

RASHARD
Allie’s puppies are there?

BRUGHA
In that shed.

RASHARD
They okay?

BRUGHA
Look fine.

EXT. BIG BOX STORE - DAY

Rashard meets a man out in the parking lot.

Rashard buys the puppy and attaches the GPS to the man’s car.

PROBATION MONTAGUE

Brugha attends his parole orientation.
Brugha cleans bathrooms at homeless shelter.
Brugha sits through behaviors modification classes.

END PROBATION MONTAGUE

EXT. RURAL PUPPY MILL - NIGHT

Rashard and Brugha find the puppy mill by using the GPS transmitter. They have Brugha’s small car only. They park out near the road and walk through mesquite to get to the barn. There is a guard dog from the house and he comes out to confront them.

They run, enter the barn, and shut the door.
They find several of Brugha’s dogs. They’re in horrible cages and their feet are hurting from the wire in the cage bottoms.

RASHARD
We need to get them out of here now.

BRUGHA
I’m not sure. Too many… how are we going to get them in the car?

RASHARD
We’ll manage.

BRUGHA
No, lets come back in the RV.

RASHARD
Do right when you can; do wrong when you must, but never ever hesitate.

BRUGHA
You remember that. Good for you.
(half beat)
We’ll have to have a plan.

Brugha releases a bitch in season. They escape the guard dog, who is distracted and chases the bitch out into a field.

EXT. SMALL CAR - NIGHT

In front of the house in Angus, there is a debate about what to do.

BRUGHA
We need to tell the authorities.

RASHARD
They won’t reverse your conviction.

BRUGHA
They might.

RASHARD
The dogs really will be castrated and nothing really will be done.
BRUGHHA
You think he will get away with it?

RASHARD
He can always say he was deceived. That he rescued them out and they fooled him like everyone else.

Beat

RASHARD
Knock that Rottweiler out and take back the dogs. Come on, it would be a rescue.

There’s a very long beat.

BRUGHHA
I’m afraid you’re right.

RASHARD
Yep, the authorities will only cover up for each other.

BRUGHHA
I have an idea…

RASHARD
You better have more than one.

EXT. ANGUS CEMETERY - DAY

Brugha’s father dies and there is a burial.

Standing graveside, Rashard gestures to the funeral’s police escort. They are all eyeballing Brugha like hawks.

RASHARD
These mother-fuckers killed your father.

Brugha doesn’t buy the argument.

BRUGHHA
Please, he was 90 and has always had heart problems.
Even while it is happening to him, Brugha is moderate and reasonable.

Rashard is actually what he said he was, a radical libertarian.

RASHARD
Tonight I’m going to burn every one of their 18 police cars.

BRUGHA
No, no. Don’t do that. You’ll upset my plan.
(half beat)
I have my brother’s birth certificate.

RASHARD
Yeah?

BRUGHA
Mom’s moving into assisted living center, with some of her church buddies.

RASHARD
We’re leaving?

BRUGHA
I’m leaving. You’re finishing school.

RASHARD
No way, some of the dogs are mine. You gave Star to me.

INT. RV - ANGUS - DAY

Brugha has a new driver’s license.

RASHARD
How’d you get this?

BRUGHA
I dug through some records and found his brother’s birth certificate. I went to the DPS to get a new driver’s license.
RASHARD
So what’s the plan?

BRUGHA
California.

RASHARD
Let’s go.

BRUGHA
Nope. I can’t let you do that.

RASHARD
Why?

BRUGHA
I’m your teacher. I’m supposed to keep you out of trouble.

RASHARD
Dog shows in California?
(half beat)
How many dogs can you have in Ca.

BRUGHA
Less.

RASHARD
I don’t mind having too many dogs.

BRUGHA
You need to get your degree?

RASHARD
Ahha...

BRUGHA
All revolutionaries have degrees.

RASHARD
They don’t have colleges in California?

BRUGHA
Sure. Of course.
(half beat)
But no sense making you a criminal as well.

RASHARD
Non-unique. Everything is against the law... everywhere. So what does it matter where citizens are criminals.

BRUGHA
I’m a criminal.

RASHARD
I just ain’t been caught yet.

There is a long beat.

Brugha shows Rashard rather a lot has been added to the RV’s compartment.

BRUGHA
I’ve cashed out my retirement savings. Everything is in here. The house in Lubbock sold. The car sold.

RASHARD
You cashed out your retirement? (half beat) You aren’t kidding are you.

BRUGHA
We’re a corporation now, Pet Hotels of California. If something happens to me... it doesn’t mean you’re going with me, but well, you’re the CFO. All the information bank accounts, legal papers are here.

Brilliant.

From his phone, Brugha shows Rashard an abandoned motel in Salton Sea California.

BRUGHA
I’ve negotiated to buy this motel. We close on it in a week.

Brugha shows him on the GPS.
RASHARD
Salton Sea?

BRUGHA
Lowest income area in California.

RASHARD
What about Watts and Compton?

BRUGHA
Lower.

RASHARD
White people, colored?

BRUGHA
White.

RASHARD
Near enough to Los Angeles...

BRUGHA
But still in the sticks.

RASHARD
Like meth dealers.

Bragha doesn’t understand.

RASHARD
Near a population to sell your product but just remote enough to get away with cooking it.

BRUGHA
I guess.
(half beat)
Maybe we can rent out the rooms in the front to people and put the dogs on the back side.

RASHARD
Big fancy sign, “Hotel for Dogs”

BRUGHA
That’s the idea.
RASHARD
You selling this house?

BRUGHA
Mom’s selling it tomorrow.

RASHARD
Tomorrow night, we’re gonna go get the dogs and light out?

BRUGHA
I’m going. You’re not going.

EXT. RURAL PUPPY MILL – NIGHT

They take the RV, in the night, back to the puppy mill. They park in the drive.

BRUGHA
I need to make one last appeal, let me do it.

RASHARD
I’m not just gonna sit here. Star must be in there.

BRUGHA
You see him last time?
(half beat)
I’ll bring him back. You wait here.

RASHARD
No.

Rashard refuses.

RASHARD
This is the highlight of my freedom fight. This is my bus ride. I’m sitting at the lunch counter.

BRUGHA
You’ll get lynched if we get caught.

Rashard is energetic. Smiles.
RASHARD
I’m going.

BRUGHA
If anything happens just...

RASHARD
Carry on?

They exit the RV and put the guard dog to sleep with cold pills in inch long sections of hotdogs.

They sit outside a fence, waiting for the guard dog to sleep. Just inside the fence the guard dog wait for them. Slowly he dips his head until finally he sleeps.

BRUGHA
This is crazy.

RASHARD
No, not really.

BRUGHA
Yes, I’m a teacher and I’ve gotten you involved.

RASHARD
I’ve learned a lot.
(half beat)
Man you took down that justice of the peace.

BRUGHA
And then he promptly took my dogs.

RASHARD
We about to take them back, Doc.

BRUGHA
Most people would say I’m teaching you the wrong thing.

RASHARD
Most people are sheep.
BRUGH
What would the government say about this?

RASHARD
Fuck the government. Doc, they got no legitimacy.

The guard dog sleeps.

They gasoline soak an 18-wheeler parked there at the barn in gasoline.

BRUGH
The plan is to torch it on the way out.

RASHARD
Right. I got that.

They enter the barn and release Brugha’s dogs. They are all very trained.

Brugha takes dogs but leaves one or two old dogs.

BRUGH
Sorry guys, I’m gonna call the sheriff tomorrow. They will come for you. You’ll get your ball cut off but... I’m sorry.

They follow Brugha out to the RV, parked out near the road. They run into their crates expecting travel to a dog show.

Brugha reaches the RV with most of the dogs. But Rashard isn’t there with him.

Brugha recants and returns to get the old dogs.

The dogs in the barn are making too much noise. Barking.

There is a farmhouse near the barn and the lights come on.

The human guard comes out of the farmhouse with a weapon and it appears willing to use deadly force to protect the puppy mill. This human guard is a brute.
BRUGHA
Rashard, come on.

RASHARD
I’m looking for Star.

BRUGHA
He might not be here.

RASHARD
He’s here.

BRUGHA
Look people get attached to certain dogs. I know he was your first show dog.

RASHARD
And my first champion.

BRUGHA
So? You have to be real.

RASHARD
You gave him to me.

BRUGHA
Okay, cruise through here again all the way to the back, but come on. I’m taking these guys to the RV.

And Rashard turns and continues to look in all the pens. Brugha leaves to take the older dogs out to the RV. Rashard finds “Star” in the very back in the last pens to be searched.

The human guard arrives, and there is a monumental fight between the puppy mill guard and Rashard. The guard is disarmed but is about to choke Rashard to death.

Brugha returns to the barn just in time. Brugha hits the guard over the head with an iron pipe. Brugha has saved Rashard’s life but clearly has killed the guard.

Pool of blood.
RASHARD
He’s dead.

BRUGHA
I didn’t mean to do that.

RASHARD
Thank god you did.

BRUGHA
We gotta get out of here.

They forget to torch the 18-wheeler on the way out. Rashard is concentrating on Star. And Brugha just killed a guy. And they want the heck out of there.

Everyone makes it to the RV and they are on the road. Brugha is ghost white and silent.

RASHARD
Yahoo! We did it.
(half beat)
Star, buddy nothing but steak. Round steak but still steak from now on!!!
And any pure breed Ridgeback bitch you want!

Rashard is giddy with adrenaline.

Escape to California might be easy at this time, the highway is right there in front of them, but Brugha turns the RV down the road to the dogcatcher’s home.

RASHARD
You gonna get her?

BRUGHA
And the puppies.

RASHARD
You never know when a puppy will be a Best in Show winner.

Brugha smiles. Rashard has been learning.
RASHARD
Park over there.

BRUGHA
Better you stay here and keep them quiet.
(half beat)
If they start barking...

RASHARD
Okay.

Brugha enters the back yard to get the Allie and the puppies.

Rashard is supposed to wait in the RV a few blocks down the street. Rashard doesn't wait he rides the bike up to the house.

When Brugha is in the back yard, he takes a can of gasoline and douses the F-250.

The dogcatcher comes out and is about to shoot Brugha. Bragha has the whelping box in his hands and is caught dead to rights. The dogcatcher laughs.

Well surprise, surprise, surprise. This couldn’t have worked out better.

And the dogcatcher is about to pull the trigger.

Rashard happens to look over into the back yard to check on Brugha before torching the truck. He sees the professor in trouble and with a cheap 22 pistol, he shoots the dogcatcher in the back of the head.

The lights come on in the neighborhood. The gunshot has alarmed everyone. The police will be there in a matter of a minute. The professor only now notices the home security cameras on the side of the house.

The puppies are in the box; the mother is following along dutifully. Brugha points to the pick of the litter.

BRUGHA
This is the show dog. Leave the bike and go. I’ll catch up.
Professor takes the gun and Rashard takes the puppies and he runs toward the RV.

Police lights are seen down the street.

Rashard hesitates.

    BRUGHA
    You know what to do? Take the RV. Go, don’t wait on me.

Rashard torches the truck on the way to the RV.

The professor enters the house and un hooks the security camera DVR unit. Brugha is about to take the DVR with him to the RV, but he pitches it on the hood of the burning truck.

Brugha pitches the gun on the roof and it slides down into the rain gutter.

Rashard speeds up and runs faster as the police approach. The puppies, the mother dog following and Rashard – they all reach the RV.

Brugha tries to flee on the bike but it doesn’t appear he will make it. Finally, the police arrive. Even more police arrive; they stop Brugha.

Rashard has reached the RV and he escapes unnoticed.

EXT. RURAL PUPPY MILL - DAY

Later, professor Brugha is brought in jail garb and chains to the site of the puppy mill.

It is abandoned and fairly clean; they have hay in the barn. Cattle are grazing nearby.

The investigators clearly don’t believe Brugha’s story.

EXT. SALTON SEA - DAY

Rashard, flips a stitch and a huge neon “Salton Sea Motel for Dogs” sign flickers on.
Rashard has been animated (alive) the entire movie but now his expression is clearly scarred.

FADE OUT: