

THE LAST FRIENDS OF WILLIE COYOTE

By Stephen Thor

<http://www.thelastfriendsofwilliecoyote.com/>

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

A car with it's headlights off drives fast. It swerves and SMASHES into a telephone pole. The car bursts into flames.

EXT. DESERT - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

Aerial view of a desert... cliffs, mountains, bolder formations. A distant large open pit comes into view. Dust clouds rise from the pit.

NARRATOR

The deserts of the American southwest. People come here for all sorts of reasons. Some come to work and live. Others retire along a lazy riverbank. A few come to sightsee or camp.

Most however are just passing through on their way to somewhere else, barely taking notice of what is going on outside of their own windshields.

Montage

People at work, recreational vehicles along a riverbank, cars on the interstate, desert terrain features.

NARRATOR

Everybody has their own reasons for being here, whether for work or love or adventure, or maybe to just get on with their lives in the best way they know how.

(MORE)

NARRATOR (cont'd)

One thing that they nearly all share
in though is that they are here
because they want to be here.

But then again, among the more remote
and rarely visited regions of these
beautiful cliffs and canyons, there
are also those...

(beat)

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A silhouette of a figure almost totally obscured by dense swirling dust stands next to an oddly shaped cactus. It's impossible to make out who or even what the figure is, other than it appears to be standing on two legs. The dust thickens to the point of zero visibility.

NARRATOR

... who have no choice.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A long and straight two lane paved road stretches through the desert. There are no vehicles in sight. An abandoned gas station sits alongside the highway with several other decrepit buildings around it. A weathered road sign identifies the 1980's-era ghost town as "HAMBLEM". A beat-up older compact car moving down the highway comes into view.

INT. CAR - DAY - TRAVELING

Three people in their late twenties and a dog are inside. MIKE drives, VAUGHN sits in the front passenger seat and a beauty named ELLA sits in the back seat. Ella's bare feet stick out of an open car window. The dog, a miniature dachshund named SID sits panting on Ella's lap.

Ella pours some water out of a bottle into a cup and gives it to Sid. The car slows and passes by the derelict gas station. In front of the station a faded sign on a bent pole reads "HAMBLEM'S GAS STATION" and "LAST GAS FOR 160 MILES". Mike glances at the gas gauge, which shows near-empty.

MIKE

This one is closed too Vaughn. Ok,
I'm starting to officially panic.

VAUGHN

We haven't even seen another car on
this road...

(MORE)

VAUGHN (cont'd)
 let alone an open gas station. No
 matter. I think we're getting pretty
 close anyways.

Vaughn pulls a peculiar map out. He partially unfolds it and
 looks at it. Ella examines her cell phone.

ELLA
 No signal on the cellie either.

Ella puts down her phone and looks out the window.

ELLA
 We did it. Yes we did. Stuck way out
 in the middle of the desert. So guys,
 this what you wanted right? But I do
 have to say that I'm personally not
 really looking forward to being
 stranded way out here in desert hell.

MIKE
 Nobody is stranded... at least not yet
 Ella. Hey, I thought the whole idea
 of this road trip was to get kinda
 lost, right? To find our souls and
 destiny in the wastelands of the deep
 desert? Was that not the general
 plan? No?

VAUGHN
 Yes it was Mike. And maybe find out
 what happened to my Uncle Joe.

Vaughn opens his wallet and looks at an old black and white
 photograph of a man leaning against a 1970's Impala car.

MIKE
 In any case, it is pretty peaceful in
 these parts. There's nothing to
 bother you out here. No traffic, no
 people, no --

ELLA
 (interrupting)
 -- Gas, no Quicky Marts, no radio, no
 anything. And Sid is getting hot!
 But hey... I still love my guys!

Ella smiles, reaches forward and grabs Vaughn and Mike,
 shaking them. They smile. Vaughn looks over at the gas gauge
 and then back to his map.

VAUGHN
 Here's the deal. If we keep going we
 will run out of gas.
 (MORE)

VAUGHN (cont'd)

If we turn around we will also run out of gas and it don't look like any road services hang out around here. But there is a mark right here on the map that looks like it might be --

Ella stands Sid up on his hind legs and baby-talks to him.

ELLA

-- Did you hear that, Sid the weanie wonderdog? We're screwed. Yes we are. Oh save us superdog Sid, save your mama, save us all...

As Ella baby-talks to the dog, Vaughn and Mike turn around in their seats and look back at her, rolling their eyes. A blur trailing dust silently zips past the car and speeds forward down the road, unseen by the car's occupants. After a second the blur is gone from sight, leaving a quickly-diminishing dust trail. Mike turns back around and drives on. As Vaughn turns back around, he glances through the rear window and freezes. His eyes open wide.

VAUGHN

Oh Shit!

A low ROAR is heard which very quickly gets much louder.

Seen through the windshield, the tip of a large red rocket comes into view and passes closely directly overhead the car. The tip of the rocket has white paint transfer scrapes on it. A large black block letter "A" is painted on the body of the rocket as it rapidly overtakes the car, very quickly followed by "C", "M" and "E". Blinding smoke suddenly fills the car, which SHAKES violently. An ear-splitting ROAR of the rocket's exhaust blast is heard as it passes over the car. The car's windshield cracks in multiple places.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The car is on fire and streams heavy smoke as it CAREENS out of control. It slides off the roadway into the desert and comes to a dusty and smoky halt. The roar of the departing rocket wanes down. There is no movement or sound from the car. The fire on the car goes out except for a tire.

EXT. DESERT SKY - DAY

An aerial view shows the rocket below continuing to move down the straight roadway, closely following the blur that had passed the car.

Ahead of the rocket is a very tight right curve and guardrail with a deep, mile-wide canyon beyond it.

INT. ROCKET'S COCKPIT - DAY

The ROAR of the rocket is again heard. The rocket's vibrating flight control dash has blinking lights, digital instrument read-outs, a speaker and a flight direction joystick. A gloved three-fingered hand grasps the joystick. The hand jerks the joystick to the right, which is immediately followed by a violent bump and a very brief CRASHING sound. The dash speaker emits a loud continuous electronic warning ALARM and voice: PULL UP!... PULL UP!... PULL UP!

EXT. CANYON - DAY

The rocket flies over the canyon and loses altitude.

It's electronic warning voice continues and fades: PULL UP... Pull Up... pull up... (o.s.)

BACK TO CAR:

Three doors open at the same time. Ella, Vaughn and Mike quickly exit the car. They cough and yell. Ella carries a choking Sid. Smoke pours from inside of the car. They run a short distance away and stand together in a shocked state, hacking and rubbing their eyes. An explosion in the distance is heard.

VAUGHN

What the hell man!

MIKE

You gotta be kidding me!

ELLA

It's some kind of a big joke...
right?!

They start laughing so hard they have to hold onto each other to keep their balance. Mike recovers enough to retrieve a fire extinguisher from the car and puts the tire fire out. A large smoke plume rises in the b.g. from the area of the canyon.

VAUGHN

What in good God's name was that
anyways?!

ELLA
 (sarcastically)
 Duh... a big red rocket maybe?

At the same time, they turn around and look at the rising smoke plume in the distance. They walk towards it.

EXT. CURVE/GUARDRAIL - DAY (LATER)

The guardrail has a gap in it. A tail fin from the rocket is stuck in it. The guardrail has a previous repair near the gap. Ella, Vaughn and Mike look across the canyon. On the steep far canyon wall are two blackened spots, one of which has the back section of the still-smoking rocket stuck in it.

VAUGHN
 Somebody around here made a big mistake. You just know there's going to be some serious kind of hell to pay for this.

ELLA
 Let's climb over there and take a look at it!

VAUGHN/MIKE
No!

MIKE
 We better get back to the car. It's going to be dark pretty soon.

They turn around and walk back towards their car.

BACK TO CAR - DUSK (LATER)

ELLA
 So now what?

VAUGHN
 The spare is ok but we still need gas. And the odds of getting any from somebody driving along is pretty low, considering we've not seen even one living soul on this road the whole day. Maybe we shouldn't have driven around those "ROAD CLOSED" signs.

ELLA
 You think? No!

MIKE

Earlier you said we were getting close. Close to what exactly?

Vaughn pulls an old compass and his map out. He unfolds the map on the ground and examines it while holding the compass next to it. Mike shines a flashlight on the map.

MIKE

I've never seen a map like that before. Where'd you get it?

VAUGHN

My Uncle Joe gave it to me just before he disappeared somewhere out here back in the early eighties. I was only four at the time. All I know is he went to this part of the desert back then and never came back. He was never seen or heard from again. I was hoping that his map might somehow lead me to him... or at least find out what happened to him.

VAUGHN'S MEMORY FLASHBACK:

INT. RESIDENCE/ATTIC - DAY (SILENT)

A man holding the map and a four year old boy sit on the floor. The man appears to be explaining something about the map to the boy and points to a spot on it.

BACK TO PRESENT/SCENE

Mike looks over Vaughn's shoulder at the map.

MIKE

What's those notes on the side mean?

VAUGHN

I don't know exactly. But right here is a mark which looks like it's at least a couple of miles or so west from here. Maybe it's a ranch or someplace where we can get some gas and maybe a ride back. Unless anybody has a better idea, I say we take off now and try to find it. We'll bring the flashlights and some water with us. Ok with you guys?

Ella and Mike nod ok.

FADE TO:

SUPERIMPOSE: "HAMBLEM - 1981"

EXT. DESERT - DAY

A Chevy Impala is parked across from Hamble's gas station, which is in full operation... cars getting gas, a person buys a coke from a machine. Cars go by on the highway.

The Impala's driver (UNCLE JOE) wears a mechanic style workshirt with the name "JOE" embroidered on it. Uncle Joe straps two jato rockets to the top of the Impala. He becomes distracted by a faint noise and looks at a nearby brushy rise that has several small rocks tumbling from it. The rise has a metal marker next to it with the numbers "4504" printed on it.

UNCLE JOE
(to himself)
What was that? An animal or something?

Uncle Joe gazes at the rise for a moment, shrugs and finishes his work. He gets into the Impala, pulls onto the highway and drives down the road towards the curve/guardrail seen earlier. The jato rockets IGNITE. The Impala lunges forward on the highway headed towards the curve. The Impala reaches the curve and SMASHES through the guardrail and flies through the canyon towards the opposite cliff wall.

UNCLE JOE (O.S)
Our Father, who art in heaven...

FADE TO BLACK:

The sound of a crash is heard.

SUPERIMPOSE: "LOS ANGELES - CALIFORNIA"

ADD:

SUPERIMPOSE: "2002"

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

Of the downtown skyscraper district, focusing in on a tall and modern building. A plaque which reads "BADDE TOWERS" is on one of the building's columns. A helicopter sits on the roof.

INT. "BADDE TOWERS"/TOP FLOOR/MR. BADDES'S OFFICE - DAY

A brass nameplate with "MR. BADDE" and "PRESIDENT" written on it sits on a mahogany desk. A detailed model of a large desert community development sits on a table. The model shows shopping centers and thousands of homes. Looking at the model is MR. BADDE, an expensively dressed and important-looking man. With Mr. Badde is L.J., who is Mr. Badde's top henchman.

L.J.

How did you do it? This is all classified government land. For crying out loud, it's a military air base... over a million acres of it. Not to mention the air space over it is restricted. You already own it?

MR. BADDE

In a day or so. It does help that I have political friends. And that the government is downsizing and were willing to close the base and sell it to me personally at a sham private auction. As far as anybody knows it just went to the highest bidder.

L.J.

So all of this is just about a community development? I know you better than that. You only go after the big money. What's really up?

MR. BADDE

You're right. The development is just a cover. What I'm really after is the forty million metric tons of platinum ore around it. Limitless wealth. However, I do have one real problem remaining that could throw a monkey wrench into the whole deal.

L.J.

What's that, Mr. Badde?

MR. BADDE

The damm conservationists. Those crystal-clutching, granola crunching wackos are claiming that any development there will disrupt animal life indigenous to that area. Fortunately they haven't found anything yet other than common rabbits and coyotes, but it's only a matter of time before they do. I can't have that.

Mr. Badde puts his arm around L.J.

MR. BADDE

That's where you come in.
Your job is to make sure they don't
find anything else. I don't want any
living thing bigger than a scorpion
left in there. Comb every square foot
of that place and eradicate everything
that's alive.

Mr. Badde pulls L.J. to him, nose to nose.

MR. BADDE

And I mean every living thing... four
legs or two.

L.J. gives Mr. Badde a puzzled look.

MR. BADDE

Here's the deal... a freak species of
coyotes live there whose only habitat
is indigenous to that area. These
pests need to be flushed out and
exterminated before those damn cactus
hugging do-gooders or anyone else
knows that they were ever there.

L.J.

I understand sir. But we can't just
fumble around in there now. The whole
place is off-limits... to everyone.
It's like a big area 51 or something.

MR. BADDE

That's already been taken care of. My
friends in Washington have arranged
for me a special private access
hunting and heavy range permit. And I
have been assured that the base will
not intervene. As far as anybody else
knows, you are merely hunters and big
weapon enthusiasts eliminating pests
and firing big guns. And L.J.?

L.J.

Yes boss?

Mr. Badde walks up to L.J. and straightens his tie.

MR. BADDE

You do know what a coyote looks like,
don't you? But you'll be looking for
a type that's different from your
average coyote.

(MORE)

MR. BADDE (cont'd)
 Every last single one of them needs
 to... shall we say... go away.

L.J.
 But if you're going to own the land in
 a few days anyway why do you want them
 gone at all? And why right now? What
 do you have against them?

Mr. Badde gets a blank look on his face.

MR. BADDE
 I have my reasons. Personal reasons.

PRIOR SCENE FLASH:

Of the car driving at night without its lights on that swerved
 and hit a power pole and burst into flames.

BACK TO SCENE/MR. BADDE

Mr. Badde gives L.J. an envelope and escorts him to the door.

MR. BADDE
 Goodbye, Mr. Johnson. And good
 hunting.

PRIOR SCENE FLASH:

Of the distant open pit with dust rising from it.

INT. OPEN PIT TUNNEL - NIGHT

A bare dangling lightbulb dimly illuminates the tunnel and the
 back of a figure seated at a simple desk studying a crude
 split blueprint. The blueprint shows the round open pit. At
 the top of the pit is a boulder propped up by a stick. The
 boulder sits on a round path which spirals down and around the
 interior of the pit and leads down to the tunnel entrance.

Arrows are drawn at the entrance and exit of the tunnel where
 the boulder would enter and exit through the tunnel to a road
 which goes by the outside of the pit. On the road an "X" is
 painted. On the "X" is a stick drawing of the ROADRUNNER.

WILLIE COYOTE anxiously concentrates on his blueprint. Willie
 grabs the blueprint, gets up abruptly and strides through the
 tunnel out to the large bottom floor of the pit. The pit is
 brightly lit up from large industrial lights. Construction
 equipment and bulldozers are strewn around the area. Willie
 puts his hands on his hips and surveys his work.

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Ella and Vaughn walk in silence. Mike walks behind them.

MIKE'S MEMORY FLASHBACK:

INT. RESIDENCE/MIKE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mike is sixteen years old. MIKE'S DAD looks at a school report card that has his name "MIKE BRANDON" written on it. On the card are several "F's". Mike's angry dad yells at him.

MIKE'S DAD

You'll never be anybody! You'll never do anything! Anything!

BACK TO PRESENT/MIKE

Mike hangs his head slightly down as he walks. Ella carries Sid as she walks.

ELLA'S MEMORY FLASHBACK:

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

A ten year old Ella uses a vhs movie camera to film and direct her friends who are acting and reading their lines from sheets of paper. One of Ella's friends holds a fishing pole with a small plastic fighter jet model attached to the fishing line.

ELLA'S MOM watches them, shaking her head.

ELLA'S MOM

That's enough of that for today Ella. Play at something else.

ELLA

But why can't I make a movie? I want to make a real movie when I get older. And I want to fly a jet like you said my dad did before he died. I want --

ELLA'S MOM

-- You are a very bright and gifted child. But let's just forget about movies and jets. You're going to be a biologist just like your step... just like your dad and that is that.

BACK TO PRESENT/SCENE

The group comes to a tall and stout fence topped with barbed wire and stop. Mike puts his flashlight down on a mound next to the fence and looks it over.

MIKE
Hello... what is this now?

ELLA
(sarcastically)
Ahh... yes... what are the words that you Americans use in this country... yes... a fence? Hello! Mcfly! Tish tish!

Ella makes a slapping motion in the air towards Mike. He smiles.

MIKE
So this is private property? Who would put up a big fence like this way out here? Is this the border?

VAUGHN
No way. The border is way off from here. One thing for sure though... this ain't no rancher's fence. Well, we've been walking all night and we're not going to turn back now. Here we go...

Vaughn walks up to the fence and grabs onto it.

MIKE
I don't like it. Fences are put up for a reason. As a matter of fact, this one is talking to me right now.

ELLA
Scare-dee cat alert! Just as I always suspected... a nervous Nellie. Fences talk to you? So what is this one saying to you?

MIKE
Well Ella, it says we don't belong in there. It says stay out. It says that if you want to come in here, you've got to have permission to... which we don't. It says don't go any further, unless you want to have all of your asses collectively kicked.

VAUGHN
Look Mike, we won't go in if you don't want to. But don't you remember? We left home together to see something... to do something. And whatever that might be, it's not on this side of the fence.

(MORE)

VAUGHN (cont'd)
 Did we come this far to turn back now
 and go home empty handed? Besides, we
 need gas.

ELLA
 Forget what the fence is telling you.
 What do you say... Fencetalker?

Ella and Vaughn look at Mike, who gets a determined look on his face.

MIKE'S MEMORY FLASH:

MIKE'S DAD (O.S.)
 You'll never be anybody! You'll never
 do anything! Anything!

BACK TO PRESENT/MIKE:

MIKE
 Who wants to grow old always wondering
 what if. Ok. Let's do it.

They high-five each other, yelling "Yah"! Mike cups his hands as Ella steps into them, climbs the fence and jumps down.

FREEZE FRAME:

Of Ella's feet the instant they touch the ground.

RESUME NORMAL ACTION:

A nearby fence ground sensor under the dirt is revealed. A wire from it is tracked as it snakes underneath the ground.

A telephone RINGS (o.s.)

Mike cups his hands and Vaughn steps in them and lifts himself up holding Sid. Vaughn hands Sid down to Ella and reaches down to pull up Mike. Vaughn and Mike jump down. Vaughn reaches through the fence to retrieve his flashlight. Unseen by the trio, the flashlight's beam reflects off of a sign hanging on the fence:

"U.S. GOVERNMENT PROPERTY - NO TRESPASSING - DEADLY FORCE AUTHORIZED". Vaughn picks up his flashlight and they continue to trudge on in the night.

EXT. OPEN PIT - DAY (DAWN)

Hundreds of obscure figures stand on the upper rim of the pit. An outside ground level tunnel leads into the inner pit.

A road with a big white "X" painted in the middle of it runs alongside the outside of the pit. A steep and curved mesa is on the other side of the road across from the pit tunnel.

SERIES OF SHOTS - WILLIE ATTEMPTS TO CATCH ROADRUNNER (1)

- A) A blur in the distance moves at great speed down the road towards the pit. The blur gives off a turbine sound.
- B) Willie cups his ear and quickly climbs up the inner steps of the pit towards the top.
- C) A military fighter jet STREAKS low in a deep, twisty canyon towards the pit.
- D) The blur on the road continues towards the pit. It's turbine sound builds.
- E) Willie continues to quickly climb up the inner pit steps.
- F) The jet SCREAMS out of the canyon and turns to fly parallel towards the open pit. "RECON" and a clear-covered camera is on the jet's side.
- G) The jet's pilot flips a cockpit switch labeled "RECORD". A light blinks beneath the camera's cover.

EXT. OPEN PIT UPPER RIM - DAY

Willie reaches the top of the pit's rim. On the pit's inner circular downward path sits a large round boulder propped by a stick. The stick has a rope attached to it. Willie lights the fuses of many dynamite sticks inserted in holes in the boulder. Willie looks down at the road outside the pit and sees the approaching blur on the road getting closer.

Willie grabs the rope from the side and attempts to pull the stick from underneath the HISSING boulder but the stick doesn't budge. Willie then tries to pull the stick out from the other side of the boulder but the stick still does not budge. He becomes frustrated and tries to pull the stick out while he stands in front of the boulder. The stick jerks away and the boulder runs over Willie, flattening him. The boulder rolls around and down the pit's inner road.

EXT. OPEN PIT AREA - DAY

Ella, Vaughn and Mike are walking towards the pit. They hear the turbine sound and look towards the oncoming blur.

VAUGHN
What in hell is that? Get down!

They drop and hide behind a bush.

SERIES OF SHOTS - WILLIE ATTEMPTS TO CATCH ROADRUNNER (2)

- A) The blur on the roadway travels closer to the pit, it's turbine sound still building.
- B) The pilot inside the recon jet smiles.
- C) The boulder continues to spiral down and around the pit's inner road.
- D) Willie recovers and runs down the outside of the pit towards the "X" on the road. He slips and rolls down.
- E) The blur rapidly approaches the "X" on the road, it's turbine sound building ever louder.
- F) The boulder continues to spiral down the pit's inner road.
- G) The figures standing on top of the pit's upper rim watch.
- H) Willie rolls to the bottom of the pit, gets up and runs towards the "X" on the road.
- I) The boulder reaches the bottom of the inner pit and enters the tunnel leading outside. A scraping sound is heard as the boulder bounces off of the tunnel's walls. The boulder exits out of the other end of the tunnel and heads towards the painted "X" on the road.
- J) The blur has almost reached the "X" on the road, it's turbine sound SCREAMS.
- K) Ella, Vaughn and Mike have their mouths open in disbelief.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE OPEN PIT - DAY

Just as the boulder reaches and about to cross over the "X" on the road, the blur stops instantly just before it.

It is the ROADRUNNER.

The boulder rolls across the "X" as the Roadrunner watches it roll by. The Roadrunner darts her tongue out at the boulder a few times. The Roadrunner takes off at a rapid pace as before, but now only its legs are in a blur while it gives off it's turbine sound. The rolling boulder crosses the roadway and goes up the curved wall of the mesa on the other side of the road and disappears out of frame.

Willie screeches to a halt. He has a look of bewilderment on his face. He takes off running down the road to chase the Roadrunner, his arms outstretched in front of him. His legs are going so fast they are blurred to the point so that it looks like he has many legs. Willie has his own go-fast turbine sound. As he approaches the "X" on the road, a WHISTLING sound is heard and a growing round shadow appears on the road. Willie looks up with apprehension.

The boulder comes down directly on top of Willie as he crosses the "X", completely FLATTENING him from out of view. After a moment, Willie's hands and arms emerge from under the boulder as he begins to extricate himself. The hissing dynamite in the boulder EXPLODES, leaving the blackened and smoking Willie lying in a crater. Willie gets up and walks swiftly away. His hands are clenched to his sides. Smoke rises from his sooty hide.

EXT. OPEN PIT'S UPPER RIM - DAY

The obscure figures move about with a great deal of noise and celebration.

INT/EXT. RECON JET - DAY

The pilot of the recon jet slaps his knees. The jet's camera blinks under it's cover. The cockpit camera image screen shows live and freeze-frame images of Willie walking away, the departing Roadrunner and the figures on the top of the pit's rim. The image screen passes over but fails to lock on an obscure figure off in the distance standing on a ridge. The image screen shifts and locks onto Ella, Vaughn and Mike behind the bush. Several pictures are taken of them as they look up at the jet. The jet veers off and away. Painted on the jet's tail is a cartoon figure of Willie Coyote. Lettered underneath the figure is "WILLIE'S WEASELS".

BACK TO ELLA/VAUGHN/MIKE

Ella, Vaughn and Mike are lying on the ground. They laugh very hard. Ella holds her stomach. Sid barks and licks Ella's face. They help each other up and catch their breath.

ELLA

Oh... My... Lord! I can't take it!

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