

HOAG I hear ya old man.

Kevin has stumbled halfway up the hill and is in the midst of a heard of angus cattle; chewing cud and mooing casually to the full moon.

When all of a sudden a great gust of wind blows in and on its wings a Big Brahman Bull, and on the back of the Brahman, rides Harley.

Kevin drops his bag and readies his shovel in defense. The Brahman strides up to a nice looking Angus heifer and snorts affectionately. They nuzzle.

Harley dismounts.

KEVIN Who the fuck are you?

HARLEY Owen sent me.

KEVIN Owen? Whose Own? I don't know anyone named Owen.
Listen here Mister, I got a sick syphilitic son at home and if I don't get him/

HARLEY Look, I just gotta get by here, pick some mushrooms and get outta here.

Kevin puts an aggressive palm on Harley's chest.

KEVIN Do you know the slightest thing about mycology?

HARLEY Yeah. Owen taught me.

KEVIN Who the hell is this Owen guy anyway?

HARLEY Hey, listen man, I just, I just... we can come to some arrangement, let's... I've got a torch/

Harley reaches into his tote bag for his torch.

Kevin clobbers Harley across the head with his shovel, knocks him out cold, looks down at the unconscious body.

KEVIN Oh shit! Oh shit! Oh Shit!

He looks up at what were, casual-cud-chewing cattle. They've stopped chewing as casually and are now staring Kevin down. He can feel their eyes on him.

The Brahman finishes his canoodling and sniffs at the unconscious Harley.

BRAHMAN This better not be permanent. [nonsense language w/ subtitle]

KEVIN It's not, look, he's breathing, there's barely any blood.

BRAHMAN Owens' not gonna be happy.

KEVIN There's a stream down by the crossroads. Let me go grab some water and splash it on his face, he'll come to.

BRAHMAN No way bucko. You ain't leavin' here, minute I lose sight of you, you'll be gone.

KEVIN I gotta be here too. It was a misunderstanding, that's all, I needed mushrooms, he needed mushrooms.

BRAHMAN What did you need mushrooms for?

KEVIN My syphilitic son.

BRAHMAN Owen is not going to be happy. Come on man, the fate of the last remaining Lemurians rested on Harley here, if he dies just so your syphilitic son can be resurrected you've got a lot to answer for.

KEVIN I know, I'm sorry, I really, I am a weakling, I'm sure this is only temporary.

BRAHMAN Okay, here's what's were gonna do. I'm gonna call Owen and tell him what happened. When I get a response... well... your fate will be determined and until then you're gonna wait here. Here eat this.

The Brahman hands Kevin a hotdog/sausage sandwich.

BRAHMAN It'll help pass the time.

Kevin eats.

The will-o-the-wisp grows strong and we see Diego plowing the Earth by the old oak tree.

Daytime.

An itinerant worker named Hoag approaches; he stops and watches a farmer named Diego work. Diego feels the presence of another, stops his work, looks up and leans on his plow.

HOAG Name's Hoag.

DIEGO Your Mum a whore?

HOAG You look awful old for plowing that dirt.

DIEGO I'm stronger than you are. Wittier too. And I sure as shit didn't come from no whore mother. Good stock, well bred stock, we praise God, en we fear him. And he loves us. How say you?

HOAG I don't fear no one.

DIEGO You should.

DIEGO returns to plowing. The itinerant drops his pack, fumbles in his pocket for a pouch of tobacco, finds its, rolls one expertly and smokes.

HOAG You hoe like an old man.

DIEGO Experience.

HOAG How much you willin to pay me?

DIEGO You want money, you want a bed, you want food, you want weekends off, and I bet you still be stealin' from me the minute I turn my head.

HOAG My Mumma taught me not to steal.

DIEGO That whore Mum of yours huh?

HOAG Yeah.

Hoag drags on his cigarette. DIEGO plows.

DIEGO What else she teach you?

HOAG How to work.

DIEGO scoffs.

HOAG She taught me how to negotiate. She taught me what I'm worth. I ain't pickin' up that plow until I know it's worth my time.

DIEGO Sounds like the lesson of a whore mumma.

HOAG Your Mum beat you? Is zat it?

DIEGO The fact yours didn't is the problem. Reason you got lip, isn't it?

HOAG She taught me how to read, taught me how to write.

DIEGO And where she learn all those skills? Fancy whore school?

HOAG She weren't no slouch. She went to university.

DIEGO almost keels over.

DIEGO And look how good that did for her. Made a no good, deadbeat wanderer for a son huh? How you spend your days? Tell me? What is it you do, you drink?

HOAG Sometimes.

DIEGO Yeah, sometimes... you like to drink?

HOAG Depends on the company.

DIEGO leans on his plow, pulls a flask from his pocket, opens it, takes a hit and throws it to Hoag. Hoag lets it fall at his feet.

DIEGO goes back to plowing.

DIEGO I don't give no work to no one I can't drink with.

Beat.

HOAG I haven't decided if I want the job yet.

DIEGO You're here aren't ya?

DIEGO You see this? [*DIEGO gestures around.*] You see all this? It's all mine. If you walked to the edge of what we can see and stood on that hill and looked out yaknow what'd ya'd see, more of my property. You're gettin' low on options if you're lookin' to get a better price for ya work.

HOAG What'd ya mother do?

DIEGO Aye?

HOAG She knit? Sow? Take ya to the tennis on the weekends?

DIEGO She did as she was told she did.

DIEGO spits and resumes his digging.

HOAG When I was young, maybe I don't know, five or six, my Mum got sick right?

DIEGO Ya want sympathy, towns a weeks walk/

HOAG She knew she was gonna die but she stayed around and fought for twenty years.

DIEGO She wanna medal for it? Zat it? Medal for doin her fuckin job?

Beat.

HOAG I want a hundred and fifty a week plus room and board and Sunday's off.

DIEGO Fifteen a week and ya pay for food. Ya can sleep in the shearer's quarters at a discounted rate. Ya get Sunday morning's off but only if ya go to church.

HOAG We could go back and forth till the sun goes down or I could keep walkin'.

DIEGO Ya better make tracks then, if ya still on my property by nightfall that's trespassing.

Hoag stands still.

DIEGO You think you come along here spoutin' this shit like I ain't never heard it before. How old you think I am?

HOAG Old enough to die if I smacked you around the ears hard enough.

DIEGO Don't you be threatenin' me.

HOAG No threat. My honest truth. I smash that head of yours hard enough. You'll be gone. Lights out. Luckily My Momma taught me something's about a man and there are easier ways to get at him than knockin' his lights out.

Hoag takes a long drag of his cigarette.

HOAG I'll take eighty a week plus room and food.

DIEGO I ain't feedin' you for free you hear?

HOAG All those cows yours?

DIEGO They are?

HOAG All those spring lamb yours?

DIEGO They're the best lambs this side of the Dividing Range. They win prizes.

HOAG Then you got no problem adding employee meals to your operating budget and you claim that at tax time. Once that happens, I get to eat your prize-winning lamb and it don't cost you a cent.

DIEGO You think you know a thing or two about taxes do ya?

HOAG I know how to read em, write em, pay em.

DIEGO I reckon I'm a take you to old Voase's.

HOAG Whose he?

DIEGO He does my books and he bein' doing my books since his Daddy been doing my Daddy's books and neither of em ever told me about no employee meal claim.

HOAG You offset it like you would that plow. It's an operating expense.

DIEGO Either you know what you're talking about or angling to get a free meal outta me.

HOAG Both. If I be sellin' that prize winnin' lamb, how am I gonna do that if I ain't never taste it.

DIEGO You ain't ever will. Staff eat mutton.

HOAG You livin' in the past old man. You want us to preach your product we gotta know how good it is.

DIEGO You won't be talking to no one but this here plow and maybe that whore mother a yours on Sunday's.

HOAG She's dead.

DIEGO bows his head.

DIEGO Seventy and we'll talk to Voase about the meals.

HOAG And the board. It's the same thing.

DIEGO You angling for Voase's job?

HOAG You offering it?

DIEGO Not to some son of a whore farmhand.

Hoag walks towards the mountains in the distance.