

The Exile

Written By

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EXT. DESERT - DAY

CHEII NAICHEE, is walking through the desert. He is disheveled. He stops to take a drink from a CANTEEN and continues walking.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY/ DOWNTOWN SANTA FE - NIGHT

A crowd of people fill a gallery space. The sound of various conversations vibrate the room. Some patrons look at the various paintings on display, others enjoy the drinks and hors d' oeuvres.

NIZHONI MICHEALS, a Native American female in her late twenties, enters the room. She scans the place and begins her way around the room. Nizhoni walks up to a large painting and appears to examine its composition but glances the room in short bursts.

INT. ART GALLERY/ ADJACENT ROOM - NIGHT

CHEII NAICHEE, an artist in his late twenties, is wearing a BLACK SUIT, BLACK HEADBAND, BUDDY HOLLY SPECTACLES, TURQUISE NECKLACES. Cheii is adjusting his suit uncomfortably, twisting his neck around and finally unbuttons a couple of buttons from his dress shirt.

Chei is the only person in the room. The faint sounds of the guests can be heard in the next room. Chei stands in front of a large painting.

Cheii closes his eyes and releases a large exhale. He fumbles through his coat looking for something. He reaches into the inside pocket and pulls out a braid of SWEET GRASS. He lights it when suddenly the door bursts open. It is HARVEY DANIELS, a White male in his late thirties, wearing a SUIT and TIE. Chei waves the sweet grass producing smoke that dances.

HARVEY

There you are! What are you- Come on buddy, Janice and Tom O'Dull are here. Cheii?

Chei puts out the sweet grass with his fingers and puts it back into his inner coat pocket.

CHEII

Bless it well Harvey.

Chei mumbles to himself. Harvey contains his excitement. He sighs and places both hands on Cheii's shoulders.

HARVEY
 (Solemnly)
 Listen Cheii...buddy...ya know all those pieces. Your works!? Sold! Every last one of them! Do you know what that means?

CHEII
 That I'm Santa Fe's favorite Indian?

Harvey lets out a half mad burst of laughter while shaking Cheii's shoulders. Then he stops and sniffs the air. Cheii backs away from Harvey and again adjusts his suit.

HARVEY
 Is that some of that sweetened grass? Yea, yea bring it, bring it they'll love it, it'll add more... authenticity to the opening!

CHEII
 Harvey.

HARVEY
 Yea?

CHEII
 Give me a minute will ya?

HARVEY
 Oh yea, of course buddy, just uh.

Harvey walks towards the door then stops and turns his head slightly to his right.

HARVEY
 Let's not keep the O'dells waiting too long. This could be big.

Harvey leaves the room. Chei looks back up at the large painting.

CUT TO:

INT. ART GALLERY/ DOWNTOWN SANTA FE - NIGHT

Nizhoni scribbles notes on a LEGAL PAD. TWO WHITE WOMEN are standing next to her observing a painting.

WHITE WOMAN #1

I just love it, there's a majestic
primitiveness about it, oh dear its
already sold hmm I suppose I'll
settle with a print.

WHITE WOMAN #2

I'm overwhelmed with a dreadful
sadness. Terrible plight the lot of
them have suffered. Oh my J.T. Nez
is here!

Nizhoni looks past a group of NATIVE HIPSTERS taking selfies
in front of a Naichee piece, and sees J.T. (JIMMY)NEZ and his
ENTOURAGE arriving.

Jimmy T. Nez, a Native American artist in his 50's dons a
BLACK SUIT, BILLY JACK HAT, and a array of TURQUOISE BLING,
with a grin shakes hands with fellow artists as he makes his
way to the the wine.

Nizhoni spots Tom O'dell and speaking Harvey. Then a door
opens and Cheii enters the room. Cheii looks towards Harvey
and the O'Dell who are faced away discussing the artwork.
Harvey gestures with his head to come.

Cheii instead flanks left and heads towards Jimmy when NADIA
WALLOWWELL, female Native American Artist in her late 30's,
approaches Cheii.

NADIA

Stunning show Cheii, we must work
together. I'm about to get my 2nd
Grandmother Nudes series off the
ground. Stella will email you the
deets.

CHEII

(uninterested)
Yea uh sure Nadia.

A random GUY approaches Cheii to also congratulate.

GUY

Fuckin mind blowing Cheii.

CHEII

Thanks.

Cheii walks past the Guy.

GUY

(distant)

(MORE)

GUY (CONT'D)

We gotta finish the Wino Trail man!

Jimmy Nez sees Cheii.

CHEII

Hey Injun, who letchu in here!

JIMMY

(chuckling)

How the hell are ya kid! Goddamn I needa fire my agent, sure hell of a turn out kid er, I mean Mr. Naichee.

CHEII

Thanks, means alot coming from you. How was Moscow?

JIMMY

(shaking head)

They love it, boy I tell ya, almost as much as those Germans. I still can't wrap my head around their Pow Wows.

CHEII

Glad to hear your doing well Jimmy.

Jimmy looks at Cheii's artwork.

JIMMY

(contemplative)

Yea...but your work though...shit! It fascinates the hell out of the White folks but scares the hell out of me personally.

CHEII

You're shittin me! You Jimmy?

JIMMY

Warriors battling Hummingbird drones...it's like dreams I've had.

Jimmy slams his glass of wine. Cheii looks over Jimmy's shoulders and meets Nizhoni's eyes. Just then a MAN steps in line of sight and begins talking to her. Jimmy puts his hands on Cheii's left shoulder.

JIMMY

To get Washichus this interested in your stuff, now that's quite the feat on its own. Now I'm not

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

complaining, it's provided me with
a living, but I'm sure as hell
tired of painting Indians on
horseback.

Jimmy laughs hysterically and scoops another glass of wine
of the tray of a passing server.

JIMMY

Go on kid, go talk to her.

CHEII

Yea..well Jimmy take care of
yourself tonight okay?

Cheii walks towards Nizhoni when he sees GEORGE SMILEY,
Native American artist in his late 30's, wearing a HAWAIIAIN
SHIRT, STRAW COWBOY HAT. George is looking to the ground as
he speeds by Cheii.

CHEII

Hi George.

GEORGE

Can't talk Cheii, dropped my damn
revolver someplace.

CHEII

Bye George.

Cheii walks up to the Man and Nizhoni. Nizhoni is a captive
audience. The Man is showing her pictures on his phone.

MAN

I wanted to emphasize a spiritual
consciousness by uses these lines
sacred to my people. And uh one
second I got a text.

NIZHONI

Mr. Naichee! Are we ready for our
interview.

The Man turns and sees Cheii and smiles.

MAN

Good stuff, Mr. Naichee.

CHEII

Yes Miss..?

NIZHONI

Excuse us.

Cheii and Nizhoni walk away from the man.

NIZHONI

Nizhoni Micheals, please to meet
you Mr. Naichee.

CHEII

Likewise, are you from ART VOICE?
Reviewing the opening?

Before Nizhoni can respond, Harvey interrupts.

HARVEY

Hi, I'm sorry to interrupt. But Mr.
Naichee must attend to some
business. Come Cheii..please.

CHEII

Adieu Miss Micheals.

Nizhoni watches as Cheii is shuttled to Tom O'Dell and his
entourage. Hands are shaken and backs are pat. Cheii pulls
out his corn pollen pouch and sprinkles corn pollen on his
V.I.P. guests.

Nizhoni raise an eyebrow and slowly takes two steps back and
turns towards the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ART GALLERY/ DOWNTOWN SANTA FE - NIGHT

Nizhoni walks onto the side walk and stops to view George
Smiley still searching. Just then.

HARVEY

Miss Micheals!

Nizhoni turns towards Harvey.

HARVEY

Mr. Naichee wanted me to give you
this card. It has the location of
his estates. Would tomorrow at noon
be fine for the interview?

NIZHONI

Thank you, that works just fine.

CUT TO:

INT. NAICHEE ESTATE/ BOARDROOM - AFTERNOON

Cheii is sitting "Indian Style" on top of the TABLE in the rather small boardroom. His eyes are closed while listening to TRIBAL SONGS on a CASSETTE PLAYER.

Harvey enters the room. Cheii opens his eyes.

HARVEY

There he is! This city's most talked about artist this side of the Rio Grande. Well last night was a success Cheii and uh..

Cheii still has his large headphones on blaring the tribal music. Harvey smiles and waits for Cheii. Cheii gets on the table walks to the head of the table, turns off the cassette player and takes the head phones off. He sits.

CHEII

(extends hands towards Harvey)

You were saying Harvey?

Harvey walks from the entrance of the door to sit next to Cheii.

HARVEY

Okay I'll get to it, you know and I know that last night added more fuel to your shooting star or rocket, yada yada okay okay, but Cheii Tom O'Dell...Tom O'Dell, now he's big time.

CHEII

Big time?

HARVEY

(nodding head slowly)

Big time. Now we almost have this deal locked in, I just have draw up the papers, you that boring stuff. Speaking of bigtime, Miss Publicity is here, I mean Miss Micheals.

Cheii straightens up and stands to prepare himself.

CHEII

Goddammit Harvey, ya couldn't let me know ahead of time?

HARVEY

Well you were uh...I didn't want to

(MORE)

HARVEY (CONT'D)
interrupt your meditation?

CHEII
Well bring her up.

Harvey smiles.

HARVEY
Right away sir.

CUT TO:

EXT. NAICHEE ESTATE/ BALCONY PATIO - DAY

Cheii is sitting reading the NEW YORK TIMES. Harvey leads Nizhoni out to the patio. Nizhoni sits across from Cheii as she takes out a LEGAL PAD from her SATCHEL BAG.

CHEII
Harvey?

Cheii whispers something into Harveys ears. Nizhoni looks on with slight amusement.

HARVEY
Miss Micheals may I get you
something to drink?

NIZHONI
Water please.

Silence as Nizhoni and Cheii look at each other and then around. Harvey returns with Nizhoni's water and hands Cheii a POUCH.

CHEII
I just want to start this
interview, Miss Micheals, in a good
way. So that we may both leave with
nothing but good hearts.

Cheii stands and puts his hands in the pouch and extends his hands towards Nizhoni. He makes a line with YELLOW CORN POLLEN across Nizhoni's cheeks and nose. Nizhoni shows a little confusion but goes along with it. Cheii hands the pouch over to Harvey.

CHEII
That'll be all Harvey.

Harvey slightly bows and leaves. Nizhoni waits until Harvey is gone. She then looks around at the building.

NIZHONI

Wow, do all Santa Fe artist's live like this?

CHEII

Not all, just those that..your not here to review the show?

NIZHONI

Oh I'm here to review. Okay Cheii I'm going to tell you straight. I'm a writer, I'm a journalist. Art and artist's is not my focus right now.

CHEII

Well then why are you here?

NIZHONI

Can I ask you one question?

(BEAT)

Do you know what's going on right now on your home reservation?

Cheii gets up and walks over to the balcony barrier and looks out.

NIZHONI

Why haven't you kept in contact with your people, your family?

CHEII

Okay, who sent you over here? Who sent you all this way just to what? Guilt trip me? My People?

NIZHONI

Your brother CHEii

(BEAT)

And I'm not here to guilt trip you. There are things happening right now that...If you only knew what it took just for me to get here.

CHEII

I tried, I tried to bring attention to alot of things but no.

(BEAT)

the tribe basically said get the hell out and don't come back.

NIZHONI

You know the tribal government

(MORE)

NIZHONI (CONT'D)

doesn't always represent the people. You know that CHEii. The real leaders, through visions, they say you must return.

Nizhoni gets up and walks over to CHEii.

NIZHONI

The O'Dell's Cheii, they are bad people and are doing bad things on your reservation. Minerals extraction, they are apart of it!

CHEII

What do you want me to do?

NIZHONI

That's your decision, I'm just here to deliver a message and give you this.

Nizhoni hands Cheii a TAN colored FOLDER.

NIZHONI

No one knows of these photographs so be careful. I have to go.

Nizhoni makes her way towards the door then pauses and looks over her shoulder.

NIZHONI

The people are ready whether you decide to come or not. There gathering at the stronghold.
(BEAT)
Y'know there are times when you have to kill the artist to save the Indian.

Nizhoni leaves Cheii turns back to look at the landscape, visibly in deep thought and worried.

CUT TO:

INT. NAICHEE ESTATE/ LARGER BOARDROOM - EVENING

Cheii is sitting alone in a larger boardroom. He stares at the folder. Finally he opens it to view the photographs. Cheii closes the folder gets up and looks out the window.

CUT TO.

INT. NAICHEE ESTATE/ BOARDROOM - DAY

Cheii is leaning against the table as Harvey walks in cautiously.

CHEII
(to himself)
I'm going back.

HARVEY
What's that buddy? Cause it kinds sounded like.

CHEII
I'm going back!

Harvey is shocked by Cheii's outburst but nonetheless he raises his voice.

HARVEY
What do you mean? Wha, going back? You can't do that, I'm sorry Cheii but you can't just walk away..What did she say to you? I should've ran her credentials, shit!

Harvey walks up to Cheii and puts his hands on Cheii's shoulders. He laughs nervously.

HARVEY
This deal is the biggest one in my career, it's the biggest one in yours. Cheii the O'Dells,
(BEAT)
The O'Dells..Cheii, they are the ticket to an international.

Cheii steps back from Harvey and shouts.

CHEII
Well the goddamn O'Dells can look for another Indian in this town to buy off! All while they eat the souls on the reservation! I'm done Harvey!

Cheii unties an EAGLE FEATHER from his shoulder and places it in the hair of HARVEY.

CHEII
You like this racket so much, you do it!

Cheii leaves the room. Harvey stands there in a state of shock. He sits to absorb what just happened and holds his

head with his hands.

CUT TO.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Cheii is walking along the highway. He wears a BACKPACK and CANTEEN. He extends his hands out with his thumbs up. Then a vehicle stops some ways ahead of Cheii.

Through the rearview mirror Cheii is seen hurrying towards the waiting vehicle. Nizhonis eyes are seen in the rearview mirror.

THE END

FADE TO BLACK.