

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

START → DUKE, on high alert, stands in front of Nicky, a shotgun aimed right at her-- finger hovering over the trigger.

DUKE
Who are you? How'd you find me?

NICKY
My name's Nicky Shen, I was just at Hank's bar, he gave me this address--

DUKE
"Hank's bar."
(then)
You know he stole that place from me? He send you to take what's left?

NICKY
No, of course not. Here...

She reaches for her pocket-- it only amps Duke up even more.

DUKE
Hey! Keep the hands up.

NICKY
Just need to show you something, okay? It's in my pocket.

DUKE
Slow.

Nicky reaches into her pocket and pulls out a carved red panda figurine. Duke reacts as he recognizes it.

DUKE (CONT'D)
Where did you get that?

NICKY
Yin. I think you knew her.

On Duke-- a flicker. He knew Yin-- he still thinks about her every day. Hiding his emotion, he keeps the shotgun trained on Nicky, but lifts his finger away from the trigger.

DUKE
Met her long ago. She told me people were after her. Asked me to be on the lookout.

NICKY
Then-- thank you.
(off his look)
For protecting her all these years.

DUKE
You say you knew her. Prove it.

NICKY
Prove it?

DUKE
Tell me about her.
(then)
Only way I can be sure you're not
one of those people she warned about.

NICKY
I never met her. But I know she had
a good heart. She saved people...

And that's enough for Duke. He lowers the gun. A beat,
then--

DUKE
Sounds right.
(off Nicky's look)
She saved me. Years ago. I was
deep in the woods. Fell and hit my
head... woke up, bleeding,
disoriented. Lost, no food or water--

Duke pauses. The memory takes him back.

DUKE (CONT'D)
She found me, half-dead. Built a
fire-- melted snow in a tin for me
to drink. She fed me. I wanted to
repay her, I was so grateful... she
said I could repay her by keeping
her secret. By letting her disappear
back into those woods.
(then)
I've been alone for a long time, and
I don't have many friends.
(then)
I don't know if it's that, or cause
she saved me, or cause there was
just something special about her.
But, five years past-- and I've never
stopped thinking about that woman.

Off Nicky, realizing Duke's still haunted by his encounter
with her aunt...

← END

END OF SCENE