

The Man and the Cow

Sound.

Sound is everywhere. We can hear it, but we can't feel it.

We feel the pain of a dying child, the bruises from a punch to the stomach, the blood flooding through our bodies.

But we cannot feel the sound they make—even though we hear them.

The only sound humans seem able to feel... is the silence that follows the chaos we create.

That's why we kill.

We kill for our own peace, fully aware of the pain that will follow.

Or maybe... we just forgot the pain that came the first time.

The sun lights up the sky on a peaceful day.

Once again, John walks through the sizzling valley, searching for the most wanted criminal in the county.

Of course, he'll get paid for this job.

But John has a much more personal reason for tracking this creature.

From the dusty horizon of the West, a cow appears—watching John from a distance. Standing tall on her atrocious human legs.

John isn't impressed by his enemy's entrance.

He walks toward her, now getting a better look at the abysmal face of his opponent.

It's a gigantic man with the head of a cow and the yellow eyes of a snake—Showing no emotion or human-like trait other than its body.

Its form is so revolting... yet so beautiful,
that no pronoun, no word, could truly define this entity.

It was like a great shadow, yet more menacing.

Like the darkness in the pit of ethereal death—

With the only source of light being the reflection from its demonic horns.

The cow stands there—undisturbed. In silence.

From the bottom of his heart, John knows what must be done.
He has been searching for this entity for the past three years.
This is where the hunt ends.

Both of them are standstill, hushed, with a silent wind blowing through their hair.
But this peaceful silence is about to be interrupted—with rage.

“I wish my family was still here to see this,”
John says through clenched teeth, trembling with anger.

“They wouldn’t be proud,”
whispers the cow.

John screams.
He pulls out his gun and fires wildly at the face from his nightmares.

But nothing happens.

The creature watches, emotionless, as the man empties bullet after bullet in a desperate attempt to kill him.
He shoots, again and again, until the gun clicks dry.

Finally realizing what’s happening, John lets himself fall to the ground, sobbing, clutching his pistol as if it were a dying child.

“You killed my family... You’re a murderer,”
John says through tears.

The cow mocks him—
Imitating the cries of John’s son,
Just as he had cried the night he was brutally killed—
With an axe between the eyes, stuck in the skull.

“No, John. You did it,”
the cow replies,
with the voice of a child in tears.

John recognizes the voice.
It’s his son.
Screaming. Crying.

All he needed was one day.
One day of silence.
But that day became eternity—
After he painted his hands red with the blood of his family.

The voices grow louder.
Birds are singing.
John is crying.

And yet...
Everything feels like silence now.

The cow approaches and sits beside him, slowly, to watch the sunset.
John does the same.

They sit together,
As if it's both the first and last time they'll ever see it.

"You think I killed them?" asks John.

The cow replies...

"Who else could it be? I'm not even real."

No other words were needed.

Now alone, John watches the sun go down one last time,
as the cow disappears with it—
leaving the sky, as the monster leaves the mind.

The sky glows faintly.
The valley holds its breath.

Now this...
This is real silence.

No one is crying.
No birds are singing.
The only thing alive...
Is John.

646 words