

Heart-Shaped Box

by

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Based on the book by Joe Hill

30 - 10 - 2007

INT. JESSICA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

A woman, lying on a bed, fully dressed, at night.

She is staring at a suit, in a cupboard, lit by the cupboard light. A dark, old fashioned suit, with silver buttons.

The camera pulls back from the suit, to reveal an old man, standing by the bedrest, looking down at her.

He is wearing the same suit.

EXT. COMPOUND. NIGHT.

Georgia, a young punk beauty walking two German Shepherds through the field, towards a pen. She opens the door of the pen, the dogs bound inside.

GEORGIA

No howling tonight, now.

One of the dogs whines, turns its head towards an elaborate farmhouse compound, centre of the property.

There is the sound of music coming from it.

GEORGIA

There's enough howling down there...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO. NIGHT.

A guitar playing, bassy, lazy, dirty. Someone is laying down some tracks.

The camera tracks from the guitarist's fingers to find:

A stiff, worn noose hanging on the studio wall, next to a series of platinum and gold records.

An equally ancient foetus, in a jar -

A framed drawing of the Seven Dwarfs, done in a childish and creepy hand, signed by John Wayne Gracy.

A framed Rolling Stone cover with a band, Jude's Hammer, in full heavy metal gear -

An Iron Maiden - medieval torture rack - it's rusted spikes stuck with memo notes and post-its -

An ancient human skull, with a hole in the centre of the cranium, a collection of pens inside -

The camera once again finds the guitarist and we recognise him from the Rolling Stone poster.

Judas Coyne, ex heavy metal star. He is wearing thick earphones, lost in the sound.

By the mixing desk sits his assistant, Danny Wooten. He is passing his time away, as most engineers do, on the web.

DANNY

You gotta check this out, chief.

Danny can't hear him. Plays one more lick, takes off the headphones.

JUDE

You got that?

DANNY

Yeah. Perfect.

He plays it back.

DANNY

But you have to check out this here.

JUDE

Yeah -

DANNY

You believe in ghosts?

JUDE

No.

DANNY

Then why do you collect this occult shit?

JUDE

It goes with the music.

He looks round at the drawing of the Seven Dwarfs.

DANNY

John Wayne Gracy goes with the music.

JUDE

He was a fan. Did that on Death Row.

DANNY

Well, someone's selling one.

JUDE
What? Another Wayne Gracy drawing?

DANNY
No. A ghost. A spirit.

JUDE
How do you sell a ghost?

DANNY
Have a look -

As the music still plays, Jude walks over to the computer sitting on the mixing desk.

ON THE COMPUTER -

A site, up and running. In bold letters -

SCREEN
BUY MY FATHER'S GHOST -

JUDE
This is what I pay you for?

Danny scrolls through the site.

DANNY
Well, not exactly a ghost. Old guys suit, who died. Looks like he's your size.

Jude continues playing licks on the guitar as Danny scrolls through the site. He sees on the screen -

SCREEN
...HE DIED SIX WEEKS AGO. HIS SUIT HANGS IN MY DAUGHTER'S BEDROOM AND SHE SEES HIM ALL THE TIME...

DANNY
It'd go with your collection.

JUDE
This has to be a joke.

Danny reads.

DANNY
"I will sell my father's suit to the highest bidder. I believe his spirit is attached to it" -

Jude keeps playing, lost in the music.

DANNY
Highest bid is eighty bucks.

JUDE
Problem is I don't.

DANNY
Don't what?

JUDE
Believe it.

DANNY
Only one way to find out.

JUDE
What's that?

DANNY
Buy the suit.

A button on the screen.

SCREEN
YOURS NOW \$1000. CLICK NOW TO END THE
AUCTION IMMEDIATELY.

JUDE
Go for it.

DANNY
Thousand dollars?

JUDE
It's what I said.

He puts the headphones back on. Gets back into his riff, while
Danny hits return on the computer.

INT. JUDE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

Jude asleep, in an enormous bed, beside the tattooed body of
Georgia.

The phone rings. Only Jude wakes, answers it.

JUDE
Yeah?

INT. LOUISIANA FARMHOUSE. DAY.

Arlene, a woman in a nurse's uniform, by the phone. In the background, we can see an immobile patient on a bed.

ARLENE
Got the forms from Dr Newland.

JUDE (O.S.)
Arlene?

ARLENE
That's me.

JUDE (O.S.)
What is it now...

ARLENE
He won't allow me send them. You got to come here to sign.

INT. JUDE'S BEDROOM. DAY.

He sighs. Georgia shifts beside him

JUDE
Why not?

ARLENE (O.S.)
Guess there's some things you just can't do long distance...

EXT. JUDE'S COMPOUND. MORNING.

Georgia, dressed in a black T shirt and jeans, is throwing knives into a tree, with a target painted on the bark. She seems pretty expert at it. The two German Shepherds lolling in the grass. Jude from the house with a bag over his shoulder.

JUDE
Be gone two days, Georgia.

GEORGIA
That's where I'm from. Not my name.

Thunk. Another knife embeds itself in the tree.

JUDE

What did they call you in that pole-dancing place? Where you did those knife tricks?

GEORGIA

Morphine.

JUDE

I'm guessing that wasn't your name either.

GEORGIA

Ever have a girl from Virginia?

JUDE

Yeah. Called her Virginia.

He kisses her goodbye and walks between her and the tree. And suddenly a knife whizzes by his cheek. He stops. Sees the knife finds its home in the tree.

GEORGIA

And you're heading for Louisiana?

JUDE

Yep.

GEORGIA

The girl or the state?

A MONTAGE --

Jude, driving through New York State towards a small airport...

Jude, exiting a small private plane, walking towards a black limo.

The limo bumping down a tiny dirt-track somewhere in Louisiana. Low rolling hills, Live Oaks, reaching their ivy covered branches to the ground. A small, shack-like farmhouse in the distance.

INT. DOG POUND. DAY.

Dogs, hundreds of them, behind cages. Snarling, playing, sleeping. Outside the cages stands Jude, with Arlene, sixty-nine, her voice all marbles and twang. She is dressed in some kind of nurse's uniform.

ARLENE

Guess they'll all have to go.

JUDE

I suppose.

ARLENE

Last few months I've been spoonin' him food. Soft stuff he doesn't have to chew. And vanilla custard. I never met a dyin' person yet didn't want some custard on the way out the door.

Jude walks out of the pound, onto the swampy Louisiana farmland. Walks with Arlene towards the rambling, broken-down farmhouse. The limo, with it's patient driver waiting outside.

JUDE

You sure? He never used to have a sweet tooth.

ARLENE

Who's takin' care of him?

JUDE

You are.

ARLENE

Well, I guess I'm sure then. Anyways, he won't eat custard no more.

They enter the farmhouse. On the ground floor, past the kitchen, is a livingroom decked out like a hospice. With a heart monitor beeping. An old, knotty man, utterly immobile, lying on a bed. Not a pretty sight, saliva coming out of his thin lips.

JUDE

What happens now?

ARLENE

Well, that's why you're here, isn't it? Dr Newland can poke a feeing tube in him and he'll go on another while longer. Or you can sign that form and we'll just let him be. He's not going to recover, at eighty-five and countin'. He's ready to let go. Are you?

The old man's eyes don't even see Jude. He walks from the room, into a small room that once was his bedroom. A broken down guitar. Small bed. Posters of Little Richard, Robert Johnson, Canned Heat on the walls. Jude takes the guitar. Begins to play a few random notes on it. He looks at the face of his immobile father, as he plays.

A SUDDEN SMASH-CUT -

To a child's guitar, smashing against the floor -

His father, screaming, swinging down with a hammer -

The hammer hitting a young boy's hand -

The young boy (Jude) bellowing in agony -

BACK TO SCENE -

Arlene, talking from the next room.

ARLENE

Guess you've been ready since the day
he broke your guitar hand with that
hammer.

Jude looks up at her, momentarily spooked.

JUDE

Why'd you say that now?

ARLENE

Came into my mind.

JUDE

Yeah, but why?

ARLENE

Remember fixin' the cast.

Jude puts down the guitar. We can see the scar of a childhood
break on his skin.

He walks back into the livingroom and looks at his inert father,
whose face, even comatose, looks fierce and unforgiving.

JUDE

No tube.

Arlene picks up some forms from a table, behind him. She hands
them to him, with a pen.

While he signs...

ARLENE

They waste away pretty quick without
being hooked to the feed bag. They
don't suffer none.

JUDE
You sure on that?

ARLENE
Why? Disappointed?

EXT. JUDE'S COMPOUND. MORNING.

The limo, driving through the electronic gates towards Jude's farm. A UPS truck is parked in the forecourt, the two dogs barking at the immobile driver inside. Jude gets out of the limo.

JUDE
Bon - Angus -

He tries to drag the dogs off, but they are snarling something wicked.

DELIVERYMAN
Ozzy Osborne has Pomeranians. I saw them on TV.

He pokes a long flat box out the window.

DELIVERYMAN
Cute little things. Like housecats.

Jude takes the package and signs.

JUDE
Ozzy is a Pomeranian.

He drags the dogs off as the UPS van backs out.

INT. JUDE'S KITCHEN. MORNING.

Georgia, dressed only in black panties and a skimpy tank top, is bending into the open fridge. She takes out a carton and drinks from it.

GEORGIA
Your godamn dogs woke me up.

JUDE
Guess they're not into sleeping till sundown.

She takes the packet from him and slices it open with a steak knife.

GEORGIA
What've you got?

There's a box inside the UPS box. Heart shaped.

GEORGIA
You got me a present hon? In a heart-shaped box?

She kisses him. Pries the lid open.

GEORGIA
You can be kinda sweet, when you want to -

Takes out a suit. Black and old-fashioned, inside a dry-cleaning bag. She holds it up against herself.

GEORGIA
Oh.

She is confused, for a moment.

GEORGIA
For you?

And Jude remembers. He surprises himself with an involuntary shiver.

JUDE
Dead man's suit.

GEORGIA
What?

JUDE
The ghost. I bought a ghost.

GEORGIA
Excuse me?

JUDE
Some woman thought her father was haunting her. That's his suit. She put it for sale on the internet. Says he comes with it.

GEORGIA
You believe he does?

JUDE
No.

GEORGIA
You believe in anything?

JUDE
Sex and rock 'n roll.

GEORGIA
Drugs?

JUDE
Not anymore.

GEORGIA
So why'd you buy it?

JUDE
For my collection.

But the way he says it is uneasy.

GEORGIA
The skull. The John Wayne Gracy
drawing of the seven dwarfs. You are
one sick mofo. Or you'd like the world
to think you are.

She holds it up against him.

GEORGIA
You gonna wear it? Your next concert?

JUDE
No.

He has said that a little too quickly.

GEORGIA
Maybe I will. I look good in drag.

She pulls it out of the dry-cleaning bag. Dark and sombre, with
large silver buttons.

GEORGIA
Got a Johnny Cash feel to it.

And there is a growl, by the open doorway. Angus, the German
Shepard.

GEORGIA
It is haunted.

She waves the suit at the dog, like a bullfighter with a cape.
He begins to snap and howl.

JUDE
Cut it out.

She waves it at him. Then, suddenly -

GEORGIA
Jesus -

She throws the suit to the floor.

GEORGIA
Shit. Godamn pin.

A bright drop of blood falls on the tiled floor.

JUDE
See what you get?

GEORGIA
That hurts --

She flips him bird and heads for the bathroom.

Jude looks at the suit, on the tiled floor. He bends to pick it up. Feels down the buttons. Finds no pin.

He looks at the spot of blood on the floor. Gets a dishcloth. Wipes it clean.

Looks at the suit, on the floor. The dogs by the door, still barking at her prank.

JUDE
Walk...

He takes a much-chewed ball from the counter, bounces it on the floor and throws it through the door. The dogs chase, and Jude follows.

EXT. JUDE'S COMPOUND. DAY.

The ball falls in the grass. The dogs lope out the kitchen door. Then stop. Jude walks out of the kitchen door, reaches the ball, picks it up again.

JUDE
Come on guys, fetch -

He loves these dogs. But they are not responding. They are staring, at point, towards the open kitchen door from which he came.

Jude turns.

POV - KITCHEN

There is a streak of sunlight coming through the window.

The sunlight illuminates a pair of dark suited legs, the rest of the body in shadow.

JUDE

Danny?

The sun clouds over, the kitchen goes back into gloom.

Jude turns back to the ball.

JUDE

Go, go, go -

He throws it. The dogs chase.

INT. KITCHEN. LATER.

Danny, making coffee by the counter. Jude enters.

DANNY

Got to see your pa?

JUDE

But he didn't see me.

DANNY

Beat me till I bleed. You wrote that about him, didn't you?

JUDE

His beatin' days are over.

He looks round the kitchen. Eerie in the afternoon sunlight, with the dust wheeling round in it.

JUDE

Where's the suit?

DANNY

What suit?

JUDE

Suit you bought online --

He looks around the kitchen, suddenly stressed. Then goes to the door adjoining the hallway.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY.

An old Shaker chair, by the stairs. The suit is draped across it, as if it always belonged there. A streak of late afternoon sunlight streaming across it.

DANNY

That suit?

JUDE

You tidy it away there?

DANNY

Nope.

Jude takes the suit by the hanger and goes upstairs.

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Jude enters with the suit. Georgia, dressed now, is in the bathroom, sucking her thumb. Jude puts the suit in his closet. Talks to Georgia through the open door.

JUDE

You move that suit from the kitchen?

GEORGIA

Uh hu.

It sounds like a yes. He shrugs and walks to the bathroom. Turns her face towards him, takes her thumb out of her mouth.

The tip is swollen and has a white-looking sore in it.

JUDE

Ought to put something on that. Before it festers and rots. There's not much work for pole dancers with disfigurements.

GEORGIA

You're a sympathetic son of bitch, you know that?

JUDE

You want sympathy, go fuck James Taylor.

GEORGIA
You got his number?

He puts her damaged thumb in his mouth. She works round his lips with it, playfully. Puts her leg between his.

ON THE BED -

Their bodies fall onto the mattress. He takes her thumb from his mouth and kisses her lips.

ON THE SUIT -

In the closet, a shaft of sunlight falling on it. The buttons gleam against the black cloth.

The sunlight hits the space above the collar. Two patches on the wallpaper gleam like eyes.

ON THE BED -

Georgia raises her arms as Jude pulls off her T shirt. She has beautiful kinky tattoos all over her back.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Jude wakes, suddenly, with a start. Georgia beside him in the bed, like an innocent girl in her sleep.

He can see the buttons of the suit, gleaming in the closet.

And then he hears it. A voice, downstairs.

Dim, indistinct, but definitely a voice.

He strokes Georgia's face. She stirs, but doesn't wake.

He clambers out, quietly, so as not to wake her.

He reaches out for the Dobro guitar leaning against the wall.

He opens the bedroom door and almost leaps back at a figure on the wall opposite. But he realises it is his own shadow.

He walks down the stairs, quietly. The voice grows into a loud whisper. He kicks open the door to Danny's office. And then he almost sighs with relief. The voice is coming from a radio, which Danny has left on.

A weatherman talking.

WEATHERMAN

...cool and dry as the front pushes
the warm air south. The dead pull the
living down. Some light precipitation
later...

ON JUDE.

Did he hear that right? He walks towards the radio, Dobro in his
hand, like a weapon.

WEATHERMAN

...thunder in the east. Pull the
living down. Down into the cold. Down
into the hole. You will di--

And he pulls the plug from the radio. The voice, of course,
stops.

Silence descends. But not the right kind of silence. He can see
his breath in the air, even though it is still late summer.

He walks back out the door, and is heading back for the stairs,
when we see clearly what he has just glimpsed.

THE OLD MAN, SITTING IN THE SHAKER CHAIR -

To the left of the stairs. His eyes closed. But the suit he is
wearing is unmistakable. The silver buttons gleam in the
moonlight. He has a fedora hat, on his knees.

JUDE TRIES TO CONTROL HIS BREATHING.

THE MAN, HEAD STILL BOWED, PLACES THE FEDORA ON HIS CROWN -

His fingers are ancient, knotty, purple-veined.

Jude says softly to himself.

JUDE

Hey, you came...

Jude raises his eyes, unwillingly. Over the hands, the buttons
gleaming on the lapels, towards the bowed head under the fedora
hat.

JUDE

Look just like my daddy...

Then the old man's head begins to rise.

And Jude's pretended attitude seems fatuous. His hand begins to shake.

What Jude can see of his face looks nothing like his father.

ON THE BRIM OF THE OLD MAN'S HAT -

Tilting upwards, uncovering his eyes.

ON JUDE -

Who, for some reason, really doesn't want to look into those eyes.

HE FORCES HIMSELF TO MOVE -

Up the stairs.

As he walks past, his leg brushes across the old man's knee.

ON THE OLD MAN'S EYES, APPEARING UNDER THE BRIM OF HIS HAT -

And we don't want to look at them either.

But Jude is already past him.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Jude enters. Trying to control his panic. Georgia shifts, still asleep, from the bed. There is another sound now, of barking dogs.

Jude goes to the window. Sees the dogs, barking at him, from their pens, across the yard.

INT. BEDROOM. MORNING.

Georgia asleep on the bed. Her face is pale, and sweaty. Jude is kneeling beside her, in a robe and slippers. He has a band-aid in his hand and a bottle of disinfectant.

He turns Georgia's hand, gently, so as not to wake her.

JUDE

Not good -

Her finger is swollen and white now, the tiny wound festering and oozing pus. He dabs disinfectant on the band-aid and gently wraps it round her finger.

She shifts in her sleep. His hand touches her brow, stilling her. And we see how much he cares for her, even though she can't.

INT. OFFICE. MORNING.

Danny, on the phone. Jude stands at the open door, the dogs behind him.

DANNY
What's wrong, Chief? You look like hell.

JUDE
That suit -

DANNY
Yeah?

He mock shivers.

DANNY
That was the heating people. I have them coming over. This place is a godamn tomb.

JUDE
I want to call her.

DANNY
Who?

JUDE
The woman who sold us the suit.

DANNY
What???

JUDE
What we ordered. It came. I want to call her. Find her number, will you?

He walks abruptly back out. The dogs follow him.

EXT. YARD. MORNING.

Jude walks to where the ball lies in the grass. He throws it again.

JUDE
Fetch godammit -

And Angus runs. Picks the ball in his mouth. Then drops it again. He is looking towards the office door. Jude turns, sees Danny standing there, gesturing, a cordless phone in his hand.

DANNY

Thanks so much. Can you hold a moment for Mr Coyne?

He hands the receiver to Jude. He mouths.

DANNY

Name's Jessica Craddock. Down in Florida.

Jude repeats the name to himself. Florida? A hint of a question mark there, as if it reminds him of something. He takes the receiver. Danny presses the button to take it off hold.

JUDE

Jessica. Hello. Judas Coyne

JESSICA (ON PHONE)

How do you like your suit, Mr. Coyne?

Jude listens to the southern lilt of her voice. Then, he gets right to the point.

JUDE

What did he look like? Your father?

INT. PRICE HOUSE. FLORIDA. SAME.

A kitchen window, facing a wide Florida lawn. There are numerous lawn sprinklers sprinkler water on it.

We pull focus from the sprinklers to a woman's face. Lines, a Florida tan. She drops her voice.

JESSICA

Blue eyes. Crew cut. You could have called him handsome, before he lost all that weight. So, it worked. He came with the suit.

INT. OFFICE. JUDE'S. SAME.

She is playing with him. His face shows this.

JUDE

I'm sending it right back.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Doesn't mean he'll come with it. No
refunds. No exchanges.

Danny stares at Jude.

JESSICA (O.S.)
He was a hypnotist, you know. Cured me
of my smoking habit. Cured my sister
too.

Jude now has trouble breathing.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Is it cold there? It'll get a lot
colder before he's through.

JUDE
What are you out for? More money? You
won't get it.

INT. PRICE HOUSE. FLORIDA. SAME.

The sprinklers, still hissing away. Jessica gets to the point.

JESSICA
She came back home to kill herself,
you asshole. Slashed her wrists in the
bathtub. He found her. You threw her
away like garbage.

JUDE (O.S.)
Florida...

JESSICA
No. Anna May. But she told me you
liked your sick pet-names. Florida.

INT. JUDE'S OFFICE. SAME.

Danny repeats the word.

DANNY
Florida???

JESSICA (O.S.)
Before he died, he said he wished he
could pay you a visit. And guess what,
I found the perfect way for him to do
that.

JUDE

You think you can frighten me?

JESSICA

When the dead come back, it's because of unfinished business. And guess what, Mr. Coyne? You're his unfinished business. There'll be no end to it, you ugly no talent piece of white trash.

Danny is glued, but tries to pretend he's not.

JUDE

Why did I have to buy it? Why didn't you just send it to me?

JESSICA (O.S.)

You had to want it. You had to pay. And boy, are you goin' to.

JUDE

How did you know I'd buy it?

JESSICA (O.S.)

Anna told me about your sick little collection... You dirty oh cult pervert shit. I figured you couldn't help yourself.

JUDE

The other bids -

JESSICA (O.S.)

There were no other bids. How many sick occult fetishists you think there are out there? I set you up, you dumb patsy, you have some fun ahead of you.

JUDE

She didn't kill herself because of me. If I had you as a sister, I'd slash my wrists too.

JESSICA (O.S.)

You're gonna die and it'll be his cold hand over your mouth.

JUDE

Think up a new line. I know a few angry souls myself.

(MORE)

JUDE (cont'd)
 They drive Harleys, live in trailers,
 cook crystal meth, abuse their
 children and shoot their wives. You
 call 'em scumbags. I call 'em fans. I
 could find a few to pay you a visit
 down in FLO - RID - A

INT. PRICE HOUSE. FLORIDA. SAME.

Jessica screaming into the phone.

JESSICA
 You're gonna die alone, you hear me?
 With a ghost in your coffin -

She slams the phone down. Walks to the window. Stands quietly,
 staring at the hissing sprinklers on the summer lawn.

INT. BEDROOM. SAME.

Georgia, turning in her sleep. She reaches her hand across the
 bed to touch Jude.

GEORGIA
 Baby -

But her hand comes to rest on the suit. Lying where Jude lay. As
 if it had slept there all night. She leaps back, suddenly awake.

GEORGIA
 Not funny -- not funny at all -

INT. JUDE'S OFFICE. SAME.

Jude, with the telephone to his ear. The dial tone. Danny
 staring at him.

DANNY
 You want to tell me what's going on?

JUDE
 Anna. Anna McDermott.

DANNY
 Florida --

JUDE
 She cut her wrists. The woman I was
 talking to was her sister.

Danny leans back.

DANNY
Oh shit. Oh, man.

On the radio, Trent Reznor is singing.

NINE INCH NAILS
I hurt myself today
To see if I still feel...

JUDE
Did you turn that on?

DANNY
It's just the radio, Chief.

JUDE
I met her backstage at a Trent Reznor
show.

The 9 Inch Nails song continues, echoing eerily in the room.

NINE INCH NAILS
What have I become?
My sweetest friend
Everyone I know
Goes away in the end...

Danny doesn't get it yet.

DANNY
She was one hell of a sweet kid. Her
and her questions. She asked me once
if I had a favorite place to watch the
rain. What kind of a question is that?

NINE INCH NAILS
My empire of dirt
I will let you down
I will make you hurt

Jude suddenly pulls the radio, plug and all from the desk.

DANNY
You want me to call the police?

JUDE
What good would that do?

DANNY
I heard some messed up shit here.

JUDE
What did you hear?

DANNY
Whatever you say I heard.

Jude smiles.

JUDE
No. That's not how I'm gonna handle
this. But find anything she left
around here, will you?

He walks out of the office.

INT. HALLWAY. DAY.

Georgia is halfway down the stairs, looking like death. Jude enters.

GEORGIA
Get rid of it.

He looks at her, shivering, as if with fever. Vampire white skin.

JUDE
You sick?

GEORGIA
I'm fine. Picture of health. Get rid
of it. The dead man's suit. Didn't you
notice how it smelled when you took it
out of the closet?

JUDE
It isn't in the closet?

GEORGIA
No. Was in the bed, next to me when I
woke up. Smelled like a dead dog. Did
you forget to put it back? I swear
you'd forget your dick if it wasn't
attached. Must all that dope you
smoked in the seventies.

JUDE
You should go back to bed baby. You
don't look well.

GEORGIA
No. The bed smells like it too. It's
all over the sheets.

He goes up the stairs and takes her by the arm.

JUDE

So. We'll get new sheets.

She turns and follows him. Then Jude freezes.

The dead man is sitting in the Shaker chair. His head lowered, as if in some kind of reverie. His hat on his lap.

A shaft of sunlight hits his legs, and we can see the chair through it, as if the sunlight bits are not there.

GEORGIA

That mightn't do it. Have to fumigate the whole room.

Jude's heart is thumping. He realizes she hasn't seen the ghost yet. He moves his body to her other side, to block off her view.

JUDE

We'll do that. Open the windows. Burn incense.

His knee brushes off the space the ghost's leg occupies.

GEORGIA

Incense? When did you ever burn incense? That hippy dippy shit?

And the ghost's head is rising now, as if in response to the touch of Jude's knee.

His eyes coming into view, to stare at Jude. The eyes Jude couldn't bring himself to look at. Where his eyeballs should be there are black scribbles, as if done by a child with a magic marker.

Jude's hand closes tight on Georgia's elbow. He tries to push her up the stairs.

GEORGIA

Hey - you're hurting -

She turns towards him. The ghost is behind them now.

JUDE

Keep walking -

GEORGIA

I'm not going back in there -

And he realizes she can't see the ghost.

JUDE

Please - just do it Georgia - I need
to show you something -

He turns, as he pushes her up the stairs. Sees the ghost rising from the chair. Placing the hat on his head. Bringing the same hand down with something gold and flashing dangling from it.

Jude gets Georgia to the top. And the ghost is following him up the stairs. He walks slowly, through the streams of sunlight coming through the open windows. Where the sunlight hits his body it disappears, reappears when it hits the shade. He dangles a little curved razor from a chain attached to a ring in his fingers. He flips it a semi-circle so it disappears in the light, then catches it again.

Jude grabs Georgia and kicks the bedroom doorway open with his foot, shoving her through.

GEORGIA

What are you doing, Jude?

JUDE

Shut up.

INT. BEDROOM. DAY.

Georgia tumbles in. Jude comes behind her, slams the door shut.

The suit is still on the bed.

This throws Jude. He opens the door a crack, sees nothing out there.

Then the tiny razor arcs towards him, catching his face in its reflection.

He slams the door shut again, as if to break the ghost's hand. But of course, there is nothing there.

Turns. Sees Georgia staring at him.

GEORGIA

What kind of shit are you on?

JUDE

Marybeth, I couldn't be more sober.

GEORGIA

Thought I was Georgia -

JUDE

Georgia.

GEORGIA

Oh, the hell. Give me what you're taking. I could use some.

JUDE

I got off all my shit years ago. I told you.

GEORGIA

You saw something in the hall --

JUDE

And you didn't -

GEORGIA

No...

JUDE

An old man sitting in the Shaker chair. We walked right by him. I don't know if you can see him.

GEORGIA

That's insane.

JUDE

What's that smell?

GEORGIA

I told you. The suit.

He walks past her, past the suit, opens the windows. And we hear the sound of dogs barking.

GEORGIA

Christ, those dogs. Noise woke me up. Then that godawful smell. Must be a dead rat in the pocket.

Jude pats down the pockets of the suit. He feels something there, puts his hand inside.

GEORGIA

You found something?

JUDE

No...

But he is lying. He lifts the suit, holding it at arms length, between him and her and extracts what he has found. We get a glimpse of a photograph. He slips it in his pocket.

GEORGIA

Is this all a joke Jude? Because if it is, it sucks.

He sighs. Tries to reassure her.

JUDE

A joke, yeah. Someone sells me a suit. Tells me it's haunted. I believe them.

He walks rapidly to the door. Pulls it open.

JUDE

But there's nothing there...

The empty corridor. It very emptiness seems eerie.

EXT. HALLWAY. DAY.

Jude, standing there in the sunlit hallway, the suit in his hand. He walks slowly down the stairs. Comes to where the Shaker chair sits. Turns. Sees nothing there.

Walks through to the studio door. Pulls the heavy door open.

INT. STUDIO. DAY.

Rows of guitars, dobros, stringed instruments. Jude hangs the suit on a rack above them.

Then he takes from his pocket what he extracted from the suit.

We see it now, and see why he didn't want Georgia to see it. It is a photograph.

Of Jude, and a beautiful girl, Anna (Florida) sitting by the front porch, Jude with a Dobro on his knee. And Jude's eyes have been scribbled over with black pencil.

Jude shivers, and his eye involuntarily goes to his occult collection, by the wall. The noose, the foetus, the torture-rack.

Among his collection is an old gold-embossed medieval book. He takes it up, opens it.

We see the title. Witchcraft, Spirits and Familiars Of Alle Kindes.

He opens it. Sees woodcut illustrations of witches, demons, the dead.

Turns the page. Sees a portrait of a dog, at point, all his hairs bristling, facing a wraith.

EXT. FIELDS. EVENING.

Jude, walking with the dogs. The compound, from this vantage, looks beautiful and peaceful.

He bends to Angus, ruffles his hair.

JUDE

You believe in ghosts?

The dog slobber on his hand.

JUDE

In your dreams, huh?

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT. DREAM.

Jude, asleep with Georgia. He is tossing in his sleep. And we know immediately what is happening. The ghost is in his dreams.

EXT. FIELD. DAY.

Craddock, in his suit, walking across a scrubby, rock-strewn field. He is dangling the blade over the ground, watching it swing as he moves.

With him are two young girls, Jessica and Anna.

ANNA

What does the pendulum do, Daddy?

CRADDOCK

Finds water, darlin'.

He stops at a rock. The blade begins to swing wildly.

Anna stares at the blade.

We see her feet, on the rock below the blade. A liquid is seeping from the rock, round her feet. But it is blood, not water.

CRADDOCK

See?

And suddenly a geyser of blood spouts into the air, from the rock, spraying her face. She screams.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Jude sits bolt upward in the bed. His tossing has awoken Georgia.

GEORGIA
Can't you let me sleep?

JUDE
Sorry.

She touches his forehead. He is sweating.

GEORGIA
You're all wet baby.

She looks at him, fully awake now.

GEORGIA
Had a dream?

He nods.

GEORGIA
Tell me.

JUDE
Just a dream.

GEORGIA
No. Tell me what you haven't told me.
About the suit.

Jude takes a deep breath.

JUDE
I was set up. The woman who sold me it
knew what she was doing. Her sister
was a fan who committed suicide. She
blames me for it.

GEORGIA
You're crazy.

JUDE
Maybe. But I talked to her today and
Danny was there. So maybe he's crazy
too. She wants to get even with me. So
she sent me the suit.

GEORGIA
Burn it. Take it outside and burn it.

JUDE
We can't. It's evidence.

GEORGIA
Of what? Assault with a deadly spirit?

JUDE
Harassment. Stalking.

GEORGIA
So am I going to get to see it?

He looks at her, in the darkness.

JUDE
Believe me, you don't want to.

GEORGIA
I saw a ghost once when I was a kid.

JUDE
Yeah?

GEORGIA
It had black scrawls for eyes.

Jude stares at her. Doesn't know what to say.

GEORGIA
I can't believe the dead want to hurt us. Don't they need our help? To talk?

JUDE
He didn't come for talk.

INT. OFFICE. MORNING.

Jude enters the office, a cup of coffee in his hand.

JUDE
Danny -

But there is no-one there. Danny's swivel chair is rocking slightly, as if he left it suddenly.

There are photographs and letters scattered all over the floor, by an open filing cabinet.

JUDE
What are you on, Danny -

He picks up the photographs. All of them are the girl from the polaroid, Florida.

He picks up the envelopes. All of them are addressed to Jude, in a girlish hand. None of them have been opened.

Jude looks at them, wretchedly. Then he realises Danny's computer in playing the Nine Inch Nails song.

NINE INCH NAILS
The old familiar sting
Try to kill it all away
But I remember everything

He grabs the mouse, taps the sound off. Then he looks again at the photograph in his hand. Turns it over. There is a name written there, in the same black marker. Craddock James McDermott.

He looks from the scrawled name to the computer. He can't stop himself. He sits down. Brings up Goggle.

Types in CRADDOCK, JAMES MCDERMOTT - DEAD.

A link comes up to an obituary in the PENSACOLA NEWS JOURNAL.

Jude hits on the link - and there he is.

Dressed in the same suit. The same close-cropped white hair.

The obituary beneath it. Jude taps slowly through it.

OBITUARY
...was a wide receiver for be
Longhorns in 1965 and enlisted in the
service on graduation, in the army's
psyops division. It was there that he
discovered his calling, when he was
introduced to the essentials of
hypnosis...

Suddenly the computer pings. Danny has been sent an email.

Jude opens it. Sent from CRADDOCK JAMES
MCDERMOTT@BOX.CLOSET.NET.

Jude opens it. And reads:

COMPUTER EMAIL
DEAR JUDE,

WE WILL RIDE AT NIGHTFALL WE WILL RIDE TO THE HOLE I
AM DEAD YOU WILL DIE ANYONE WHO GETS TOO CLOSE WILL
BE INFECTED WE WILL BE IN THE DEATH HOLE TOGETHER AND
THE GRAVE DIRT WILL FALL ON TOP OF US LALALA THE DEAD
PULL THE LIVING DOWN --

Jude whacks the computer buttons to turn it off, but more of the obituary comes up, in larger print.

OBITUARY

...Craddock's interest in spiritualism led him to experiment with "dowsing", the old technique of discovering water sources with the use of a rod or a pendulum...

Now pictures of Craddock come up, holding a dowsing rod, swinging a small golden razor blade, the golden razor blade dangled over a finished well --

And Jude stands up to get away from it all and sees Danny, through the window, sitting in his car outside.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

Jude emerges, trying to calm himself. He walks towards Danny, sitting in the car. Raps with his knuckles on the steamed up window.

JUDE

What are you doing in the car, Danny?

Danny jumps as if the car has hit a truck. He pushes the button that lets the window down.

DANNY

I think I should go home.

He can't look at Jude.

JUDE

Did you see him?

DANNY

I think I should go home now, really.

Jude talks with unnatural patience.

JUDE

Did you see the dead man, Danny?

DANNY

I think I have a stomach flu. That's all.

Danny wipes his sweating forehead with his hand. It clutches a letter-opener.

JUDE

Don't you lie, Danny. I want to know what you saw.

Danny turns his face slowly to Jude. He speaks through chattering teeth.

DANNY

His eyes were black marks. He looked right at me. I wish he didn't look right at me.

JUDE

He can't hurt you, Danny.

DANNY

You don't know that. You don't know.

JUDE

He's not real...

DANNY

I was looking for her letters, like you told me. Remember those letters?

JUDE

Kind of.

DANNY

No you don't. Cause you never opened them. And there he was, standing there, swinging that thing.

Jude reaches his hand in to touch Danny's shoulder. Danny slashes at him with the letter opener. Jude pulls back his hand just in time.

JUDE

Danny????

DANNY

Your eyes are just like his.

Danny wrenches the car into reverse. Jude hops away, to stop his foot being crushed. Danny stops then, staring at the steering wheel.

DANNY
I'm not coming back.

JUDE
Okay.

DANNY
I'd help you if I could. I just can't.

And he reverses the car, spins in a half circle and heads up the drive.

Jude stands there, watching him go.

Then he hears the sound of another car engine turning on and off. He walks around the house, and sees Georgia, at the wheel of their large SUV. She's trying vainly to start it.

GEORGIA
Godamn this thing -

JUDE
What's wrong now?

GEORGIA
Battery's gone.

JUDE
Can't be. Danny just had it serviced.

GEORGIA
So where's Danny?

She tries again, then bangs the wheel in frustration.

GEORGIA
The bedroom stinks. The house is freezing. I just need to get to town, for an hour or two.

He grips her hand, through the open window. She gasps in pain, his hand on her damaged finger.

GEORGIA
You know that hurts? From that pin, in that suit you bought?

JUDE
Take the dogs for a walk -

GEORGIA
Do I look like a dog walking kind of
girl?

She gets out of the car. Slams the door.

GEORGIA
Where's Danny?

JUDE
He had some kind of flu. Had to take
off.

She shivers and looks as if she could break down crying.

GEORGIA
This is getting too weird, honey -

He holds her.

JUDE
Get some fresh air. Take the dogs.
I'll check out the car.

GEORGIA
You'll get rid of that suit?

JUDE
Yes. I promise.

EXT. FIELDS. DAY.

Georgia, walking the dogs through the mist-filled fields.

EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

Jude, working on the SUV, with the bonnet up. He seems to know his engines. He has a trickle charger, attached by two jump leads to the battery. The engine is revving, sending out clouds of exhaust.

Then the engine, inexplicably, dies.

He rubs the jump-leads, but gets no spark.

He removes the jump-leads, slams down the bonnet.

The sound echoes like a gunshot through the fields.

The cloud of exhaust from the engine drifts over the fields, through the shafts of sunlight.

Through the shafts of sunlight, he glimpses a dark suit, the flash of silver buttons.

JUDE

(TO HIMSELF)

You tryin' to close of all the exits,
old man?

Then the sun goes in and the image, if it was ever there, dissipates.

He lifts the trickle charger and jump-leads, walks over towards a small outdoor garage. Lifts open the door.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

The sunlight spills through the gloom and illuminates a '65 MUSTANG, beautifully restored.

JUDE

(TO HIMSELF)

Maybe you've still got spark...

Jude walks through and sits in the driver's seat. Takes a key from behind the rear-view mirror. Then sees something from the past there, beside the key. A ready rolled joint.

He takes the joint, lights it, inhales.

JUDE

See, I did inhale...

The sensation is a relief, after all the paranoia. He looks round at the fittings of the car, all now gleaming unnaturally.

EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

Georgia, walking back to the house with the two dogs. She has decided on something.

GEORGIA

You dogs find me that suit now -

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

Jude puts the key in the dash, turns it on. Presses the accelerator with his boot. The engine roars into life. The garage fills with exhaust smoke.

JUDE

There you go...

The radio turns on. A commercial comes on. The sound is raspy, filled with static, but we can distinguish some words.

COMMERCIAL

You won't find offers like ours
anywhere in the tristate area. Come in
and get behind the wheel for your next
ride and take it for a spin on the
nightroad. We'll drive into the hole
together -

On Jude, tired, exhausted, sick of it all.

JUDE

How about I shut you up?

He turns the dial to find a music station. The Beatles sing
I AM A WALRUS.

Behind him, a gust of window blows through. The wind slowly
blows the garage doors closed.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Georgia opens the kitchen door. The dogs are straining at the
lead, hairs bristling.

GEORGIA

Go on boys, fetch -

She lets them go. They run through the kitchen, through the
halls. Then they throw themselves, snarling, at the weighty door
of Jude's studio.

GEORGIA

I got it -

She opens the door, walks inside. The dogs stay, snapping, by
the entrance.

INT. STUDIO. DAY.

The suit, hanging from the rail, like a malignant part of Jude's
collection. Georgia grabs it from the rail, walks it past the
snarling dogs.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

One the car radio. The Beatles singing. Though the words have changed.

RADIO
I am the walrus -
I am the dead man -

JUDE
That the best you can do?

RADIO
Goo goo go juub -

Jude looks through the windscreen. And there he is, refracted, in the smoke filling up the garage. Craddock, standing full figure in front of him.

JUDE
You are the dead man?

Craddock says nothing.

Jude shoves the car into gear. Hits the gas pedal. But the car doesn't move.

ON THE CAR'S EXHAUST -

Filling up the garage with smoke.

INT. KITCHEN. DAY.

Georgia carries it at arms length through the kitchen. Grabs a squeegee of lighter fluid for a barbecue.

GEORGIA
Gonna burn in hell.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

The exhaust of the car still going. A Hollyroller is bellowing on the radio.

RADIO
If there is one word that can change
your life, my friends - that word is
HolyeverlastingJesus! We'll ride the
glory road together! Hallelujah!

Jude, still hitting the gas. Still the car doesn't move. The dead man is moving slowly towards him, through the gathering clouds of exhaust.

JUDE

Have you been messing with my wires,
dead man?

He hits the gas again.

JUDE

You want to ride that glory road?

He roars the accelerator again. The garage fills with smoke.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

Georgia throws the suit down in the dirt. Squirts lighter fuel all over it. The dogs snarl as she lights and throws a match. It bursts into flame.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

Smoke pouring out of the exhaust now. Jude is being overwhelmed by the fumes.

The dead man, seen through the windscreen, shimmering in the clouds of exhaust. Suddenly he bursts into flame.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

The flame, consuming the suit. The dogs glimpsed, barking, through the smoke and flame.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

Smoke pouring from the dead man's sleeves, his collar, his ears. His eyes still staring at Jude.

JUDE

Hey - you're burning, dead man.

The dead man nods, as smoke oozes from every pore.

Jude hits the pedal. The exhaust roars. More smoke pours from the dead man's nose, mouth, ears. Part of his skin melts. It is as if Jude's boot on the pedal is causing it.

JUDE

Not the dead man any more. Burning
man.

Jude stares at him, through addled eyes.

JUDE

We're going to hell together, is that
it?

The dead man nods. His eyes explode with flame and smoke.

And there is another sound, in the background now. The distant,
frenzied barking of dogs.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

Georgias empties the lighter-fuel entirely on the burning suit.

GEORGIA

How do you like that, you stinking
cadaver -

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

And now the dead man is beside Jude, flames and smoke crackling
from the cinder block that was his body.

Jude can hardly breathe in the smoke that is thick in the
garage.

RADIO

This suicide has been brought to you
courtesy of Orange Moxie. If you
haven't tried a Moxie it's time to
find out Mickey Mantle says it's the
bees knees.

JUDE

What you want, isn't it? Suicide?

The dead man nods.

JUDE

But you're not getting it. Not from
me.

EXT. YARD. DAY.

The last threads of the suit smoking. Georgia scatters them with her boot.

GEORGIA
Good work, guys.

The dogs are still barking, but from somewhere else now. She turns, sees them snarling at the door of the small garage. Exhaust is pouring from the crack beneath the door.

INT. GARAGE. DAY.

Jude looks at the ghost through eyes that are sinking.

JUDE
I'm going to sell your suit on. To
some other poor bastard.

The ghost smiles, and sadly shakes his head. The radio speaks for him.

RADIO
No refunds. No exchanges.

Jude shoves the gear stick into reverse, with the last of his energy.

JUDE
Says nothing about resale...

He hits the gas pedal.

HIS POV OF THE GHOST -

Fading, with Jude's consciousness.

Then, behind them, we see sunlight flooding in. The echoing sound of the garage door lifting.

EXT/INT. GARAGE. DAY.

Georgia, her hand over her mouth, by the opening door. And suddenly the Mustang screeches past her, in reverse, out of the clouds of exhaust.

Jude alone at the wheel, barely conscious. The Mustang traces a wild, reverse arc, and the rear bumper hits the side of the parked Volvo.

Jude's head snaps backwards, hits the headrest. Georgia runs towards him.

GEORGIA

Were you trying to kill yourself in there?

Jude raises his head. Takes in great gulps of air. Then he dry retches. He replies, with difficulty.

JUDE

No. Something was tryint to kill me.

GEORGIA

Talk some sense honey, please...

JUDE

I'm talking sense. I know what to do with that suit.

GEORGIA

What?

JUDE

We've got to sell it on -

GEORGIA

We can forget about that suit. I burnt it.

ON JUDE'S FACE -

He is looking beyond her, ice forming over his soul. Through the burning smoke he can see the dead man, by the open garage door. The dead man taps his hat, and inclines his head graciously towards Jude.

EXT. ARENA. NIGHT.

A sea of eighty thousand waving hands. JUDE'S HAMMER are playing on a distant stage. A younger, skinnier Jude dressed in leather, belts and chains. He is sex on high black boots, more so than the rest of the band combined.

Jude's voice, over.

JUDE (O.S.)

It's what he wanted you to do --

INT. LIVINGROOM. NIGHT.

Jude and Georgia, in front of the largest television ever seen. They are watching some kind of home video of one of his concerts.

GEORGIA

Then why don't we go? Get a room in the city and get the hell out of here?

JUDE

He isn't haunting the house. He's haunting me.

GEORGIA

And me.

JUDE

You could take off. He won't follow you.

ON THE SCREEN -

The handheld camera tracks through the warrens of rooms backstage. We see a young blonde-haired woman walking, gesturing to the camera to follow. She is wearing a western, cowboy outfit with silver stitching, a short sexy cowgirl skirt and embroidered boots.

GEORGIA

That her?

JUDE

Yep.

The camera follows her into the drug-fuelled chaos of an after concert dressing room.

Georgia, looking. She seems totally unfazed.

GEORGIA

And this is all because her sister thinks it's your fault? Like that kid who killed himself after listening to an Ozzy Osbourne song? Did you write a song saying suicide is okay, or something?

JUDE

No. Neither did Ozzy.

GEORGIA

Did she write you crazy fan letters or something?

JUDE

She lived with me for a while. Like you.

GEORGIA

Oh.

JUDE

I got news for you Georgia. I wasn't a virgin when I met you.

GEORGIA

How long did she live here?

JUDE

Eight or nine months. Long enough to overstay her welcome.

ON THE TV - the footage has now changed. Jude, fishing by Lake Ponchatrain. Florida sitting patiently beside him. We get a glimpse of Danny.

Georgia looks at her, face expressionless.

GEORGIA

I've been living with you for about nine months.

JUDE

So?

GEORGIA

So have I overstayed mine? Is nine months the limit? She was a natural blonde, you decided it was time for a brunette?

JUDE

She was a natural psycho so I sent her home. Didn't know I was sending her back to Psychoville -

GEORGIA

She had mental problems, and you just chucked her out?

ON THE TV -

She is writing in lipstick on the camera lens: I LOVE YOU. It comes out reversed.

JUDE

I didn't sign on to hold her hand for the rest of her life. I didn't sign on to hold yours either. And I'll tell you something else, Georgia, if you think our story ends up "happy ever after" you got the wrong fairy-tale.

GEORGIA

You trying to drive me away? Where that dead thing won't get me?

JUDE

Maybe the dead thing is me.

GEORGIA

What was her name?

JUDE

Her name was Florida.

And she is hurt to the quick by this.

GEORGIA

You asshole. What was her real name?

He is surprised by her anger, and strength.

JUDE

Anna.

GEORGIA

And what's mine?

JUDE

MaryBeth.

She turns to the door.

GEORGIA

I'm going to get some sleep. You better come too.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Georgia has her arms around the exhausted Jude.

GEORGIA

You're not going to get rid of me like that. You can say any shitty thing you want to me. I'm sticking, Jude.

INT. BEDROOM. LATER.

The telephone ringing. Jude's hand reaches for it. He speaks quietly, so as not to wake up Georgia.

JUDE

Yeah?

DANNY

Hey Chief, it's Dan.

JUDE

Danny? It's three in the morning.

DANNY

Oh. I didn't know it was so late. You asleep?

JUDE

Not anymore.

DANNY

I'm sorry I left like I did.

JUDE

Are you drunk? Calling drunk and you want your job back? Cause this is the wrong fucking time --

DANNY

No. I can't come back Jude. I'm just calling to say I'm sorry about everything. I'm sorry I said anything about the ghost for sale. I should have kept my mouth shut.

JUDE

Go to bed.

DANNY

I can't.

JUDE

What the fuck is wrong with you?

DANNY
I'm out walking in the dark. I don't
know where I am.

Jude shivers.

JUDE
How'd you get there?

DANNY
I just went walking. I don't even know
why.

JUDE
Jesus your drunk. Look around for a
street sign and call a damn cab.

He puts the phone down. Then he hears it. A throbbing sound, outside. Of an engine. He gets out of the bed, quietly, so as not to wake Georgia, goes to the window. And he sees it.

An old, green Chevy pickup truck outside, a truck built for running on washed-out swamp roads. The lights burning holes through the night mist. The engine is running. But there is no one at the wheel.

Jude speaks to himself.

JUDE (SOFTLY)
Where we going, old man?

The dogs are going wild, throwing themselves at chain link fence of their pens.

He opens a drawer in a beside cabinet, takes out a .38 Magnum. Makes it for the stairs.

EXT. STAIRS. NIGHT.

Jude walks down the stairs slowly. Raises the gun to his cheek, looks at the Shaker chair. There is no suit on it now, but the Fedora hat sits there, like a taunt. The sound of the pickup throbs down here, like a drum. Jude walks swiftly to the front door, pulls it open, and sees the truck there, sitting outside, the headlights blazing at him. He raises the Magnum, is about to blast at both headlights when the phone rings again, shattering his nerves.

He stops himself. Looks from the empty truck to the telephone.

Then he lifts the telephone. Hears Danny's voice.

DANNY (O.S.)
Hey chief -

JUDE
That you Danny? Are you still lost?

EXT. ROAD. PAY PHONE.

A payphone in the middle of nowhere. Lit by the headlights of the same truck. Danny is in the booth.

DANNY
Yeah. Still lost. I'm on this payphone. It's funny, you never see payphones anywhere now.

JUDE
Don't ask me to come looking for you. Kind of got my hands full --

DANNY
I figured it out, Chief. How I got here. How I got here. Out on this road, in the dark.

JUDE
How's that?

DANNY
I killed myself. I hung myself a few hours ago. This road in the dark... this is dead.

INT. HALL DOORWAY. NIGHT.

The scalp tingles on Jude's crown. He can say nothing.

DANNY
There's a truck following me. I wish it wouldn't.

JUDE
What kind of truck?

He stares at the headlights. The headlights dip.

EXT. ROAD. PAY PHONE. NIGHT.

The headlights illuminating the payphone dip.

DANNY
Chevy, I guess. He just dipped his
lights.

INT. HALL DOORWAY. NIGHT.

Jude stares at the headlights. He tries to keep it together.

JUDE
Yeah?

DANNY (O.S.)
It's not that easy to kill yourself,
Jude. It took a long time. I remember
swinging for a long time.

JUDE
Why'd you do it?

DANNY (O.S.)
He made me. The dead man. That's how
he's going to get you. He told me to.

JUDE
You shouldn't have listened.

DANNY (O.S.)
You can't argue with a voice like
that.

JUDE
You have to, Danny.

EXT. ROAD. PAYPHONE. NIGHT.

The headlights are moving towards Danny in the booth. He is
anxious to avoid them.

DANNY
I think I should go now. This road
must lead somewhere.

JUDE
I'd stick where you are Danny.

DANNY
I can't. These lights are staring at
me. Like eyes.

He laughs, nervously.

DANNY

You aren't as bad as you think, Jude,
you know that?

JUDE

Yeah. Don't tell.

DANNY

Your secret is safe. Goodbye.

JUDE (O.S.)

Just wait a while, Danny -

But Danny drops the phone, leaving it hanging. He walks out of the booth, down the empty road. The headlights follow him.

INT. HALLWAY. DOOR. NIGHT.

The Chevy circles slowly, and the lights move towards Jude.

JUDE

Come on, asshole -

He fires the gun at the lights. They shatter, in an explosion of sparks. And they don't. There is nothing there.

Georgia is standing on the stairs, terrified.

GEORGIA

Jude?

He turns, gun in hand. His expression is murderous.

INT. FOX NEWS STUDIO. NIGHT.

Bill O'Reilly, hosting the O'Reilly Factor. Images of a car-bomb in Baghdad.

O'REILLY

One hundred and twenty deaths and as
many wounded. We'll bring you more as
the situation continues to unfold.

He turns his head to the teleprompter.

O'REILLY

Late this evening the Dutchess County Sheriff's department confirmed that Judas Coyne, the popular lead singer of Jude's Hammer apparently shot and killed his girlfriend, MaryBeth Stacy Kimball, before turning the weapon on himself to take his own life.

A helicopter shot of Jude's Farmhouse, police cruisers parked haphazardly in the turnaround and an ambulance backed to the door of Danny's office.

The footage jumps to shots of the dogs in their pens. They are dead, blood in the grass around their heads.

O'REILLY

Detectives also believe that Coyne played a roll in the death of his personal assistant, Danny Wooten, who was found dead in his Woodstock home, also an apparent suicide.

Two paramedics walking from the house to the ambulance, Georgia's tattooed arm dangling from the sagging blue bodybag they are holding.

INT. LIVINGROOM. NIGHT.

Georgia slumped into a chair. Jude above her, the gun in his hand. O'Reilly continues on the television.

O'REILLY

Coyne lived the decadent lifestyle of the rock and roll star to the full -

Footage of Jude's Hammer at a concert in Houston. Jude wears black jeans and black steel-toed boots, bare chested, his torso gleaming with sweat. A sea of a hundred thousand half naked people surge below him, a rioting flood of raised fists, crowd surfers tumbling this way and that.

Georgia speaks softly.

GEORGIA

It isn't true, is it? Are we dead? Is that going to happen to us?

Jude hits the power button. The TV goes off.

JUDE

Bullshit.

The the TV pops back on. O'Reilly speaks on, in his relentless manner.

O'REILLY

The weapon used was a legally held .38
Magnum which he often played with on
stage during his death metal shows.

Jude stands, walks to the television to silence it with his boot. Then her hears a low moan behind him. He freezes.

Then he hears a voice. Full of static, like the voice on the radio.

CRADDOCK

It's on TV. Must be true.

He turns, and sees the dead man behind Georgia, both of his hands cradling her cheeks from behind.

JUDE

You didn't come for her.

CRADDOCK

I'm not going to kill her. No sir. You
will do that.

The dead man smiles. O'Reilly's voice still speaks from the television.

O'REILLY

A single shot the mouth dispensed with
his girlfriend, MaryBeth Tyler, whose
stage name was Morphine when she
worked the Manhattan midtown
stripclubs...

The dead man swings his razor, like a pendulum.

JUDE

You don't want her.

O'REILLY

A suicide note found on the site
expressed regret for what he was about
to do....

Georgia tries to move her head, but she can't. She is sweating, her eyes terrified, but utterly immobile.

JUDE

Georgia...

O'REILLY
 ...but spoke of voices in his head
 that commanded him to do it.

Jude walks towards her, the gun in his hand. He almost pleads with the dead man, who's voice speaks behind him now, from the TV.

JUDE
 I don't want to hurt her. Don't make
 me hurt her.

O'REILLY
 He placed the barrel of the -38 Magnum
 in her mouth, in an apparent parody of
 a sex act...

The dead man's hands reach out towards the gun. The squiggles dance in front of his eyes.

CRADDOCK
 You heard the man...

The dead man's hands around Jude's. He draws the barrel of the gun towards her mouth.

JUDE
 Please...

O'REILLY
 ...an act he had referred to
 incessantly in his death metal
 anthems...

Georgia moans, terrified.

GEORGIA
 No...

As the dead man places the barrel of the gun in her mouth.

CRADDOCK
 They always say no. Don't mean it.

O'REILLY
 ...but the gun was no parody. The
 bullet was real...

And suddenly there is the ear-shattering crash of breaking glass. Through the window, shattering in slow motion, comes one dog, then another. Angus and Bon.

The dead man takes a reeling step backwards, his face confused. Jude drops the gun. And sees -

Angus leaping at the dead man once more. But the shape of a the dog is overlapping with another shape, the shape of a black familiar, the same colour as the black marks on the dead man's eyes. The dead man staggers from it, suddenly terrified, staggers into the other dog, Bon, again ringed by the terrifying black shape. Teeth rip at the dead man's outstretched hand. Blood falls from the wound, drips to the wooden floor, where it sizzles through.

EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The dead man tumbles down the porch stairs, trying to reach the Chevy pickup. Angus leaps at him again, teeth snapping at his crotch.

The dead man howls, kicks the black dog off, tumbles towards his truck.

He makes it into the door, just as the dogs hurl themselves against it once more. The force of their impacting bodies rocks the truck on it's wheels.

As the truck reverses, spins into a semi circle both dogs leap at it once more. But then the truck is gone, and their heads crash into each other. They crash down in the frozen mud where the truck had been.

Except the lights of the truck still remain, disembodied, defining the night mist. The dogs bristle and bark at them, their black familiars vanishing now. Until the lights themselves fade away and the dogs are just dogs once more.

Jude walks down the porch, into the driveway. Bends to both dogs.

JUDE

Something inside you? That he's afraid of?

Georgia emerges through the front door, behind him. She looks beyond terrified.

GEORGIA

Don't ask me to stay one more night here...

JUDE

I won't. You go pack some clothes. That Mustang's still working...

GEORGIA
Where will we go?

JUDE
South. To Florida. Get that bitch to
call this thing off...

EXT. MOTORWAY. EVENING.

Jude driving. The wind in his hair. One of the dogs in the empty seat beside him. Georgia, in the back, another dog beside her. Canned Heat playing on the car radio. And for a moment, things feel good.

GEORGIA
Who are my little hero dogs?

JUDE
Read somewhere once that dogs had a
familiar inside them.

GEORGIA
Familiar?

JUDE
Kind of spirit. Protector. What do I
know. Just know I read it.

And he sees something now, in the rear-view mirror. A pickup truck, headlights poking through the fading daylight. And he has no doubt who or what it is.

He suddenly slews across two lanes of traffic, towards the nearest exit.

GEORGIA
What did you do that for?

JUDE
Getting tired. I want to get off the
road before dark.

He drives down the Turnpike and looks above him to see the Chevy pickup, continuing on the motorway. All he can recognize through the window is the pale Fedora hat, looking towards him.

He angles the mirror to check on Georgia. She is wrapped around the dog, has not seen it.

GEORGIA
There's a motel up ahead...

A Days Inn, sitting among the Southern trees with their tangle of Kudzu leaves.

And suddenly the Chevy is driving straight at them. Georgia screams. Jude swings left, into the path of an oncoming truck, barely avoids it, rights himself again. Swings into the Day's Inn car park.

GEORGIA

Oh god - what was that -

Jude calms himself. Looks at her.

JUDE

Chevy pickup.

GEORGIA

It was him, wasn't it?

Jude looks at the bleak motel frontage. A series of adjoining bungalows. A bleak neon light.

JUDE

You stay here with the dogs. I'll get us a room.

She looks at him, shakes her head.

GEORGIA

I can't.

JUDE

I'll stay here with the dogs. You get us a room.

She shakes her head again.

GEORGIA

You and me and the dogs go in there.

JUDE

Won't take dogs in no motel. Even this one.

He drives the car and parks it just before the motel entrance.

JUDE

Wait here.

He walks in. The dogs are out of sight of the front office window.

Georgia sits there. The dogs nuzzle her.

Then a circling headlight illuminates Bon's panting face.
 Georgia sits. Can't bear to look around.
 The headlights fill the back window behind her.
 The engine dies. A door opens and closes.
 Footsteps coming towards her.
 Georgia realizes Angus's head is out the open passenger window.
 A voice.

VOICE

Cute.

A hand, brushing of the dog's mouth. The dog growls.

VOICE

What's his name?

And Angus stops his growling. Licks the hand. Georgia at last brings herself to look up. Sees a friendly, middle-aged man there with round glasses.

GEORGIA

Angus...

VOICE

Angus...

And the man walks on towards the Motel front office. Jude passes him on the way, swinging a key on his index finger.

INT. MOTEL-ROOM. NIGHT.

A bare room, with a double bed and a bathroom off. A TV. The dogs enter first, then Jude and Georgia.

GEORGIA

Guess it didn't get rid of him.
 Burnin' his suit.

JUDE

Was a good idea though.

GEORGIA

No it wasn't. He made me do it, didn't he?

Jude says nothing. Opens packets of dog-food.

GEORGIA

What if we can't figure out how to
make him go away?

Jude pulls out a drawer from the dresser. Dumps the dog food in
it. The dogs feed, noisily.

JUDE

Get used to smellin' dog food.

GEORGIA

Boy, are we living foul.

JUDE

I seen people treat hotel rooms worse.
My bassist Dizzy took a shit in a
drawer once, when I wouldn't get out
of the bathroom fast enough.

Georgia sits in the bed.

GEORGIA

So what are we going to do when we get
where we're going?

JUDE

Gonna talk to her sent me the suit.
Gonna find out if she knows how to get
rid of him.

GEORGIA

Are you going to hurt her?

JUDE

I don't know. I might.

GEORGIA

The girl who killed herself, that this
is all about

JUDE

Florida...

GEORGIA

Was she pretty?

JUDE

You want to know was she good in the
sack?

GEORGIA

I'm trying to figure this out. You don't got to be a son of a bitch about it.

JUDE

OK. She was pretty.

GEORGIA

So she was Florida and I'm Georgia. How many other states has your dick visited?

JUDE

I don't keep a map with pins in it. And while we're on the subject, why stop with states? I've had thirteen world tours and I always took my cock with me.

GEORGIA

You asshole.

JUDE

I've got news for you. I got a past. Fifty-four years of it.

GEORGIA

Did you love her?

JUDE

Guess I did. For a time.

GEORGIA

Did she love you?

He nods.

GEORGIA

I feel bad for her. It's not a lot of fun, you know.

JUDE

What?

GEORGIA

Being in love with you. I've been with guys made me feel lousy about myself, Jude, but you're something special. Because I knew none of them cared about me. But you do, and you make me feel like your shitty hooker anyway.

JUDE

She'd get depressed. Could never tell me why.

He looks directly at her.

JUDE

I sent her home because I thought I was bad for her. Thought her family might help. Guess I was wrong about that one too.

He walks towards her, touches her bandaged hand.

JUDE

How is that?

She brushes his hand away.

GEORGIA

We'll be passing through Georgia tomorrow. I want to see Bammy.

JUDE

Who's Bammy?

GEORGIA

My aunt. She bowled a perfect three hundred once. She's my favorite person in the world. Way things are going, might be the last chance I get.

She stands.

GEORGIA

I'm gonna take a shower.

JUDE

I'm gonna walk the dogs.

She stops.

JUDE

One at a time. Unless you want them to shit in the drawer like Dizzy.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Angus, wedged in the open doorway of the small bathroom.

Georgia is in the bath. She luxuriates in the warm, clean water.

EXT. MOTEL. NIGHT.

Bon's feet, padding through the undergrowth, the neon sign of the hotel illuminating it dimly. Jude, holding the lead. Suddenly the dog stops.

JUDE

Come on, you're a dog, take a shit,
for Chrissakes.

But Bon seems to sense something, in the darkness of the scrubby forest around.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Georgia soaps her hair, then sinks her head, under the water.

By the door, Angus whines, then turns his head towards the outdoor window. He growls, pads towards it.

The bathroom door swings shut.

UNDERWATER

Georgia, soaping her hair in the warm bath water.

She opens her eyes.

Sees, through the ripples of the water -

CRADDOCK

The razor dangling from the chain.

ABOVE WATER

Georgia's fingers, gripping the sides of the bath.

Craddock grips the razor between his thumb and forefinger, and slices through the skin of her wrists.

UNDERWATER

Georgia, numbed by fear, staring at the event. Blood streams from her wrist, reddening the water, and her vision.

Craddock, seen through the rippling bloodying water, taps his hat, as if to say, good day, ma'am.

And the red blood obscures his image.

Georgia can't keep her breath any longer.

ABOVE WATER

Her head bursts through the surface of the bathwater. She screams.

EXT. HOTEL. NIGHT.

Georgia's scream pierces the night forest. Jude runs, dragging Angus with him.

INT. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

Jude bursts through the door. Georgia is hyperventilating in the bath tub. She can barely speak.

JUDE

What honey - what -

GEORGIA

HE CUT MY WRIST -

She holds out her hand to him.

GEORGIA

With the thing - he cut me -

Jude holds her wrist. It is undamaged. And the water around her is unbloodied.

JUDE

Come on. I got you.

He lifts her from the bath. Wraps a towel round her.

JUDE

Nobody's cut. Tell me what happened.

She looks at her wrist. At the water in the bath.

GEORGIA

You saying I imagined it?

JUDE

I'm saying there's nobody here but us.
And the dogs aren't barking.

He lifts her tenderly in his arms, and carries her into the other room.

INT. HOTEL BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Jude wraps Georgia under the blankets.

GEORGIA

He can get to us anywhere.

JUDE

He can't. Can't get to us here.

GEORGIA

I need to sleep. You got something
that can help me sleep?

Jude rummages in his bag and takes out a packet of sleeping
pills.

JUDE

Here.

She swallows it. Drinks some water. He takes a battered guitar
out of a case and begins to play some chords. Georgia stares at
him, drowsily.

GEORGIA

What was her name? The dead girl?

JUDE

Florida.

GEORGIA

And my name's not Georgia either. Tell
me her godamn name.

JUDE

Anna. Anna McDermott.

GEORGIA

And what's my name?

JUDE

MaryBeth.

He plays some more.

GEORGIA

That's nice.

Jude hums a melody.

JUDE

Been on my mind since...

GEORGIA
You got a title?

JUDE
Georgia. MaryBeth from Georgia.

GEORGIA
You're kidding.

JUDE
It's for you.

GEORGIA
Sing it, will you?

JUDE
Don't have all the words.

GEORGIA
Sing it anyway. If it's for me.

He begins to sing. Improvising the words.

JUDE
I been in Georgia
But never to MaryBeth
If there's a place called that Never
been there yet

She smiles, drowsily, and closes her eyes.

ON JUDE'S FINGERS -

Filling out the space between the melody.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK

He is another hotel room. Bodies lying everywhere, sleeping, making out, drinking. Jude is sitting in the bathroom, playing the same guitar.

VOICE (O.S.)
Did you fish on lake Ponchatrain?

We see the blonde haired Anna McDermott sitting with him.

ANNA MCDERMOTT
You know what the most romantic sound
in the world is? Rain on lake
Ponchatrain A nice spring rain.

Jude plays on, as if he is used to her questions.

ANNA MCDERMOTT
Do you think I should change my name?
You should pick out a new name for me.

JUDE
I already have.

ANNA MCDERMOTT
Florida. From now on my name is
Florida. Anna McDermott is dead to me.
She's a dead girl. All gone. I never
liked her anyway. Do you miss
Louisiana? Isn't it funny we lived
only four hours from each other?

JUDE
You ever shut up the questions?

ANNA MCDERMOTT
What do you think happens when we die?

And now, as in a dream, she is talking to Danny. They are
sitting by a lake.

DANNY
Were you one of those kids who would
drive their momma crazy going, why is
the sky blue? Why doesn't the earth
fall out of the sky?

ANNA MCDERMOTT
You ever seen a ghost? My stepdaddy
has. He talks to them.

She stands. She takes her clothes off and stands by the water.

ANNA MCDERMOTT
You want me to tell your fortune?

DANNY
Sure.

ANNA MCDERMOTT
We're all going to die.

She dives into the water.

UNDERWATER -

But we are in a bath now. Blood is dripping into the water from
above. Her head slips down, submerges, quite dead.

INT. CABIN. DAWN.

Georgia wakes. But she is dreaming. And the phone by the bed is ringing. She reaches for it.

 GEORGIA
Yeah?

 DANNY (O.S.)
MaryBeth?

 GEORGIA
Yeah?

EXT. TELEPHONE BOX. DAWN.

Danny in the telephone box. Morning mist on the empty road.

 DANNY
I'm running out of quarters.

 GEORGIA (O.S.)
Danny?

 DANNY
You have to tell Jude, it's not his
fault.

INT. CABIN. DAWN.

Georgia, with the phone to her ear. She is still dreaming, though we don't know it yet.

 GEORGIA
It's not?

 DANNY (O.S.)
No. He's not all that bad. But that's
our secret. Oh God...

We can hear the sound of a truck.

EXT. TELEPHONE BOX. DAWN.

We can see the pickup truck, coming out of the mist. And the phone begins to beep. The time Danny's quarter bought is expiring.

DANNY
He's coming. And I've no more
quarters.

GEORGIA (O.S.)
Call me on your cell, Danny -

DANNY
Can't get a signal here. There's only
this telephone box. Oh God.

ON THE PICKUP -

It accelerates rapidly.

DANNY
Tell Jude that Anna told me -- Oh lord
--

The pickup is hurtling towards Danny, in the box -

DANNY
She didn't kill herself - she -

And before he can get the words out, the pickup truck slams into
the telephone box, destroying it in an explosion of glass and
steel, and Danny is dead again.

INT. CABIN. DAWN.

Finally Georgia wakes up. And we realize she has been dreaming.
Jude is lying beside her, wide awake.

JUDE
You've been tossing like a dying fish.

Georgia is oddly calm. Some realization has happened.

GEORGIA
Yeah?

JUDE
You been dreaming?

GEORGIA
Yeah.

He is holding her hand. She turns her hand in his, to expose her
own wrist.

GEORGIA

Look -

There is old scar tissue on her wrist, where she imagined Craddock slashed her.

JUDE

You been hiding that from me?

GEORGIA

You ever known me to be a cutter?

She strokes the scars.

GEORGIA

It's your dead girlfriend. She's trying to talk.

He sits up, rapidly.

JUDE

Please, MaryBeth. Maybe I can take a dead guy.

He walks into the bathroom. Pours hot water, to wash his face.

JUDE

But an old girlfriend, leaving track-marks on your wrists?

The mirror steams up. And an invisible hand is now writing on the steam. Jude stares. He says softly.

JUDE

I take that back honey...

Georgia rises from the bed, wrapped in the sheets, and comes behind him.

Written on the steam filled mirror is one word. FLORIDA.

GEORGIA

Assume you didn't write that...

JUDE

No...

GEORGIA

And the dogs aren't barking.

JUDE

No.

Georgia stokes the scars on her wrist.

GEORGIA
There's a ghost here alright. But one
that loved you.

INT. MUSTANG. HIGHWAY. DAY.

They are driving again. And this time Georgia is at the wheel.

GEORGIA
Did you love her?

JUDE
Please, darlin'

GEORGIA
I'm not asking do you love me. I'm
asking did you love her. It's kind
of... important...

JUDE
I guess I...

GEORGIA
Why do you find it so godamn hard? Did
you ever tell her?

JUDE
Yes.

GEORGIA
And how did you say it? Let's get tats
together honey? Matching piercings? Or
those three little words - I love you -

JUDE
No -

GEORGIA
So what did you say?

JUDE
I said we should have a kid together -

And Georgia is stunned by this. Can barely keep driving.

GEORGIA
A child?

Jude is embarrassed, almost ashamed.

JUDE
You asked, Okay?

GEORGIA
You?

JUDE
Yeah. Tough undeluded old me. Thought
it might make her feel better. Make me
feel better.

GEORGIA
And?

JUDE
Only made her feel worse.

GEORGIA
Wow. She must have been clinical.

She drives a moment.

GEORGIA
Ever thought of askin' me?

JUDE
You want the truth?

GEORGIA
Even if it hurts.

JUDE
Yes.

And tears stream down Georgia's face.

GEORGIA
I really need to talk to Bammy.

JUDE
Why?

GEORGIA
Cause she bowled a perfect four
hundred once -

She swings the car suddenly off the road.

JUDE
You spooked or something?

GEORGIA
No. Hungry.

She has pulled in opposite a Denny's. She sits in silence for a moment, then says softly.

GEORGIA

You weren't lying back there were you?
When you said that? To her or me?

JUDE

No.

He clams up again.

JUDE

But some things you don't say twice.

INT. DENNYS. DAY.

The place is full of cigarette-smoke. As they enter an old man at a table near the cash desk is talking into an electrolarynx, which he holds to his throat.

OLD MAN

You got air-conditioning? Well why don't you turn it on. You don't bother to cook the food, why you wanna fry your paying customers?

Jude walks with Georgia to a seat at the counter. The old man turns to his equally ancient wife.

OLD MAN

I'm eighty seven years old for Christ sake. Their fryin us like eggs --

AT THE COUNTER -

Georgia turns to look at them, like the Andrew Wyeth painting, American Gothic.

GEORGIA

Think we'd look like that if we got old together?

JUDE

Suppose I'd be hairier. Like Santa, gone horribly wrong.

GEORGIA

Guess a ninety year old strippper'd be just what you need...

The waitress hears this, as she spreads menus in front of them, with some distaste.

WAITRESS

Coffee?

Jude nods, hardly noticing her. He reaches out a hand to touch Georgia's cheekbones.

JUDE

With old ladies it's all about the cheekbones. And the eyes. You've got them both.

Georgia blushes, uncharacteristically. She reaches out her cup towards the waitress, with her bandaged hand.

GEORGIA

You know Jude, sometimes your such a decent guy I can almost forget about what an asshole -

As she reaches towards the waitress, the waitress is reaching with the coffee-pot - and pours it over Georgia's bandaged hand. Georgia screams.

GEORGIA

Want to watch where you're pouring that, you dumb bitch?

WAITRESS

I am so sorry -

Jude reaches for Georgia's hand, but she is already on her way to the bathroom.

JUDE

Accidents happen -

WAITRESS

I am so sorry, but that's no reason for her to talk that way -

JUDE

She got burnt. I'm surprised you didn't hear worse.

WAITRESS

I knew what I was serving the moment I set eyes on you. Pair of lowlifes. You payin her by the hour?

And every eye in the Dennys is now on him. He throws some money on the counter.

JUDE

Keep the change. And get your fat ass out of my sight.

He Goes to follow Georgia to the bathroom, when he sees the old man staring at him.

JUDE

You got something on your mind?

The old man shakes his head, takes the electrolarynx from his throat and places it on the table. And suddenly the thing speaks.

ELECTROLARYNX

Yes. You will die.

His wife stares at it in disbelief.

WIFE

It picking up shortwave again?

ELECTROLARYNX

The dogs won't save you will kill her
kill yourself we'll ride together at
nightfall

WIFE

Make it stop, Peter -

Jude looks through the window behind them. He can see the pickup truck, parked a few spaces from the Mustang.

INT. BATHROOM. DAY.

Georgia, pushing open the door into the restroom. The door bangs into a man washing his hands by the sink.

GEORGIA

Oh. I'm sorry -

The man turns. It is the ghost, Craddock, with his squiggles for eyes.

CRADDOCK

We will be in the death-hole together -

And she slams her fist towards those squiggles of eyes. Her fist passes right through him of course, and smashes the mirror behind into wicked shards of glass. She grabs one, to protect herself. Then a hand touches her shoulder, from behind.

GEORGIA

GET OFF ME -

She slashes towards him. But it is Jude, not Craddock, she is driving the knife of glass towards. He ducks, but the glass slices through his cheek. He wraps his arms around her, blood spouting from his cheek.

JUDE

Honey - it's me -

He holds her, trying to calm her. Blood everywhere. Behind them, a woman screams.

WOMAN

Oh my God - oh my God -

INT. DENNY'S. DAY.

Jude emerges, holding a towel to his streaming cheek with one hand, his other arm wrapped around Georgia. As he passes the old couple, the Electrolarynx is still doing it's thing.

ELECTROLARYNX

You will kill her kill yourself the
dogs the dogs won't save you -

It's vibrations make it fall off the table, landing at Jude's feet. He stomps it into bits of useless plastic, as he makes it through the door.

EXT. DENNY'S. DAY.

Out they come, and are immediately confronted with the spectacle of the pickup truck, which they have to pass to get to the Mustang. A talk-radio station is blaring from the front seat.

TALK RADIO

...it feels good to embrace those core
American values but it would feel
better to choke that bitch next to you
and throw her on the blacktop in front
of a semi...

Jude has his hand on Georgia's elbow as they walk past the sound.

GEORGIA
We're going to lose this thing...

JUDE
No we're not. That ghost has a healthy
fear of them dogs.

And he makes it to the car, opens the door.

GEORGIA
If he doesn't get us now, he'll get us
later. I heard his voice in my head.

JUDE
Get in, Georgia -

And he pushes her inside. Gets in the driver's seat, starts the
car, with the towel still pressed to his bleeding cheek.

EXT. MOTORWAY. EVENING.

Jude, driving, south. His free hand is holding the towel to his
cheek, so he hasn't put on his seatbelt. There are deep forests
to either side of the motorway. Georgia is sitting with the dogs
in the back seat.

GEORGIA
Just passed exit 37, didn't we? My
aunt Bammy lives somewhere off the
38...

She untangles a road map. Then Jude sees headlights, bearing on
him from behind.

JUDE
Georgia -

GEORGIA
The name's MaryBeth -

JUDE
Can't I call you Georgia in the state
of Georgia? We got problems other than
your aunt Bammy -

GEORGIA
Bammy's not a problem. She's a
solution --

The headlights come right up to behind his back fender, flooding
the car with harsh light.

GEORGIA
Put on your seatbelt -

JUDE
I got one hand to my bleeding cheek,
the other to the wheel. You do it.

As she leans over to do it, the headlights pull alongside them and she can now distinguish the pickup truck.

GEORGIA
Oh Lord -

Suddenly the radio blares into life. The Beatles singing, I AM THE WALRUS

RADIO
I AM THE DEAD MAN
I AM THE WALRUS
GOO GO GO JUUB
YELLOW MATTER DRIPPING FROM A DEAD
DOG'S EYE -

Jude kills the radio.

JUDE
Forget about him -

And he can see Craddock, driving alongside him now, tipping his Fedora hat in recognition.

JUDE
He's not real -

POV -

From a semi, driving towards them, on the other side of the road.

THE PICKUP - flaring lights - heading straight towards the semi -

The driver of the semi swerves to avoid a collision -

ON JUDE -

Looking at Craddock. Behind him, Georgia screams.

JUDE'S POV -

The semi, heading straight for him. And it is all too real. Jude swerves, to avoid it. Back into the opposite lane. Into the opposite space where Craddock's pickup was.

THE SEMI SWERVES THROUGH AN ONCOMING STREAM OF CARS, CAUSING
CHAOS -

JUDE IS HEADING TOWARDS ANOTHER PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS -

Driving on the wrong side now -

He swerves to avoid a collision -

AND CRASHES INTO THE BARRIER -

EXT. WOODS/MOTORWAY. EVENING.

The Mustang falls through the air, towards the forest below.

Hits the ground.

Jude is propelled out of the front windscreen, through the
shattering glass.

EXT. CRASHED MUSTANG. NIGHT.

Absolute silence down here. Jude's body is lying across the
bonnet of the wrecked Mustang, the safety belt tangled somewhere
round his feet.

A pair of hands grip his body. Male hands.

They pull him off the bonnet, drag him through the earth of the
forest floor towards the open door of another vehicle, sitting
in it's own mud-tracks.

We recognize the raised tires of the Pickup Truck.

We see Craddock now, placing Jude's body in the passenger seat.
Slamming the door.

Craddock gets in the driver's seat, and the Pickup drives off,
on the forest floor.

INT. PICKUP. NIGHT.

Craddock, driving.

CRADDOCK
Rain comin' down...

He puts on the wipers. Then turns on the radio. Country music
plays.

CRADDOCK

Just you and me, on the long night
drive.

ON JUDE'S FACE.

He is waking up now. Looks out the rain filled window. Can see the forest track give way to a road. And the road is somehow recognizable.

CRADDOCK

Them old time tune's is best, don't
you think, now we're on the road
together...

The radio plays Hank Williams.

CRADDOCK

None of that goo goo go juub stuff...

A light, on the road, in the distance, through the rain.

Jude rubs his eyes. He sees an old-fashioned pay-phone, lit from inside. Nobody in it.

EXT. CRASHED MUSTANG. NIGHT.

Georgia, releasing her seatbelt, extracting herself from the wrecked car. The dogs crawl out of the open door, after her.

GEORGIA

Jude?

No reply. Then she sees the smashed windscreen, Jude's body lying across the bonnet.

GEORGIA

Oh god, no -

She scrambles desperately up on top of the bonnet, reaches his face. Turns it towards her.

GEORGIA

Don't go, Jude, you're not dyin' on me

-

But he seems quite dead, and unresponsive. His face looks almost peaceful, in the moonlight.

INT. PICKUP. NIGHT.

Jude, watching the road. He is realizing where he is.

CRADDOCK

You know where we're headed, you
pervert son of a bitch? Straight into
the death hole, lalalalala

The payphone passes them, in the rainswept windscreen. A figure
beyond it now, walking forwards, backwards hitching a lift.

CRADDOCK

This is the road that's got no
turnin', this is the death road. And
I'll go down the death hole with you.
Be my mouldy breath over your mouth.

The figure, backwards hitching, turns. When he sees the pickup,
he drops his arm. And now Jude can see him. It is Danny.

EXT. CRASHED MUSTANG. NIGHT.

Georgia, slapping Jude's dead face.

GEORGIA

You're not dyin', you hear me? I won't
let you. Gonna have your child, gonna
have a sister and a brother for that
child, you hear me? Jude?

Her lips reach his, blowing air into his mouth...

INT. PICKUP. NIGHT.

Danny's terrified face, approaching in the headlights.

CRADDOCK

My lala mouldy breath lala

And Jude suddenly grabs the steering-wheel from his hands.

ON DANNY'S FACE -

The headlights swinging towards him, then past -

ON JUDE -

TWISTING THE WHEEL, SCREAMING DEFIANCE

ON CRADDOCK -

PULLING THE WHEEL BACKWARDS -

CRADDOCK
DRIVE AINT OVER YET AINTEVENBEGUN -

EXT. MOTORWAY. NIGHT.

And we are back on the motorway, of the crash site. The Pick Up, swinging into the path of -

THE SEMI -

The driver of the semi swerves, to avoid a collision -

ON JUDE, IN THE PICK UP -

Still pulling the wheel, from Craddock's hands. He looks left, sees -

HIMSELF, IN THE MUSTANG -

Georgia behind in the back seat, screaming -

THE MUSTANG - swerves to avoid a collision -

AND CRASHES OVER THE BARRIER

THE MUSTANG SAILS THROUGH THE AIR, FLIPS -

AND CRASHES INTO THE FOREST BELOW -

EXT. CRASHED MUSTANG. NIGHT.

Jude, on the bonnet of the crashed Mustang.

ON JUDE'S FACE -

Lips come away from his, in a kiss.

He opens his eyes slowly. Sees Georgia. She almost cries with relief.

GEORGIA
Where were you baby, where were you?

JUDE
I was on a road... with him... the
death road...

GEORGIA

But we beat him, we beat him good -
you're alive...

JUDE

Yeah. I plan on keepin' it that way.

He holds her tight.

JUDE

We can get out of this. We can win
this thing.

GEORGIA

Tell me how -

JUDE

Cause I love you too much to go dying
now. You hear me?

Jude looks up and sees Craddock, up above, on the motorway.

JUDE

I'm gonna live to see your
grandchildren.

EXT. FOREST. NIGHT.

The dogs, running through the forest. Jude and Georgia behind,
holding them on a leash. Jude is limping now, face bleeding, a
wreck.

Their faces are lit by flashing police and ambulance lights,
heading towards the crash scene on the motorway above.

JUDE

Do we want to spend the night in
cuffs?

GEORGIA

No, but where we headed?

JUDE

You said your aunt Bammy lives off of
exit 38?

He limps on, beneath the motorway.

EXT. PICKET FENCE SUBURB. NIGHT.

A small wood-fronted house, with a garden at the end of a white picket fence street. Georgia and Jude make an unlikely, bedraggled couple walking down it. Georgia stops at the house at the end.

GEORGIA
Nobody home.

JUDE
She got a husband?

GEORGIA
No. But she got her bowling, her
bridge, her bingo...

She walks round the back.

GEORGIA
She's got a garden shed we can wait it
out in...

INT. GARDEN SHED. NIGHT.

Jude and Georgia curled up on a piece of fake lawn, fast asleep, the dogs pressed against their bodies.

INT. GARDEN SHED. DAY.

The doors of the shed open. Midday light floods on top of them, waking Georgia. An old plump lady with a garden trowel stands there, looking down.

GEORGIA
Bammy -

She stands up. Jude slowly comes awake.

BAMMY
What the heck -

Georgia throws herself into her arms.

BAMMY
MB.

She steps back to take a look.

BAMMY

What is wrong with you? You smell like a dog. You strung out?

GEORGIA

I smell like a dog cause been in a car with them for days. Why do you always have to think of the worst damn thing?

BAMMY

Maybe cause your sleeping in my garden shed on my astroturf. Might have something to do with it.

Jude holds the dogs by the leash. Bammy walk towards him, wiping her hands on her apron.

BAMMY

You must be the rock star?

JUDE

Yes Ma'am.

GEORGIA

Can I use the toilet Bammy?

BAMMY

Haven't decided yet.

GEORGIA

What's the holdup?

BAMMY

I'm trying to figure out what the chances are you two are here to slaughter me for the money in my purse and take it to buy Oxycontin.

GEORGIA

What's Oxycontin?

BAMMY

Heard it on the news this mornin. There's kids in Junior high prostitutin' themselves for it.

JUDE

We're not in Junior High.

BAMMY

I would say you aren't.

She walks to the back door.

BAMMY

Guess you better come in. Don't want my neighbours thinkin' I'm startin' my own chapter of the Hell's Angels.

INT. BAMMY'S. DAY.

A hallway, leading to a small kitchen. Georgia bounds up the stairs.

BAMMY

You like lemonade, Mr Rock Star?

JUDE

Yes ma'am.

He follows her into a kitchen, where she takes a pitcher from the fridge.

BAMMY

Never heard the romantic story of how you two first met.

JUDE

We were both in Central park, picking daisies. Got talking...

BAMMY

It was either that or you met in some perverted fetish club.

JUDE

Come to think of it, it might have been a perverted fetish club.

He drinks from the glass she hands him.

JUDE

Good lemonade.

BAMMY

You'll be staying the night?

Jude shakes his head.

JUDE

Got to get to Florida.

BAMMY

Some friends of yours having an orgy you don't want to miss?

Georgia comes through the door. The dogs nuzzles round her knees.

BAMMY

You want to let those dogs run round the yard?

GEORGIA

They'll only mess up your flowerbeds.

BAMMY

Messin' up my kitchen as it is.

GEORGIA

Please, Bammy.

Bammy looks at her closely.

BAMMY

How come you both so beat up? You got scrapes on your scrapes.

GEORGIA

Kind of.. got in a fight..

BAMMY

Was it with each other?

GEORGIA

With the driver of a car rear-ended us.

BAMMY

Was he drunk?

GEORGIA

Don't think so.

BAMMY

What happened when the cops got there?

JUDE

We didn't stay to talk to them.

BAMMY

You are in some hurry.

She drinks some lemonade, and makes a wry face.

BAMMY

Didn't kill him, did you?

JUDE
No ma'am, we killed nobody.

BAMMY
Cause there's an old guy out beyond
the apple tree giving me the bad eye.

Jude stares out of the window. Sees Craddock there, appearing
and disappearing in the sunlight peeking through the clouds.

BAMMY
And I'll tell you one thing. He ain't
alive.

Jude looks from Bammy to Georgia.

BAMMY
So, are you gonna let me in on what's
happening?

JUDE
She can see him?

Georgia nods.

BAMMY
I can see a lot of things. And most of
them aren't there.

GEORGIA
It's why I want to drop by here. She's
what you might call the county
psychic.

BAMMY
I'm the one the cops call when they
want to find a body. When a mommy
wants to speak to her dead child. I
also cook a pretty good meatloaf. So
why don't I feed you two and you tell
me all your troubles?

She looks from the dogs to Georgia.

BAMMY
Don't worry. He's not coming in this
house. With your aunt Bammy here. Not
to mention them dogs.

Jude looks out of the window again. Craddock is gone.

BAMMY
See? He's gone now.

INT. KITCHEN. LATER.

Darker outside. Georgia, Jude and Bammy are finishing a meal of meatloaf and coleslaw.

JUDE
You made that slaw yourself, aunt
Bammy?

BAMMY
I aint your aunt. Ma'am will do just
fine, Mister Rockstar.

JUDE
Pretty good coleslaw, Ma'am.

GEORGIA
No need to be short with him Bammy.

BAMMY
Sorry. But there's something he's not
telling me. There's more than this
man, Craddock, haunting you. There's a
girl.

Jude exchanges another look with Georgia.

BAMMY
She's got blonde hair. Got an angel
light. She asks questions.

JUDE
She's his stepdaughter.

BAMMY
She died.

JUDE
She killed herself.

BAMMY
Not what I'm getting.

She stands.

BAMMY
I think all three of us got to talk
with her.

INT. LIVINGROOM. DAY.

Bammy walks into the unnaturally neat livingroom, draws the curtains. She takes a Ouija board from a cupboard, places it on the table.

BAMMY

You seen one of these before Mister rockstar?

JUDE

No, ma'am.

BAMMY

It's a Ouija board. Lets me talk to dead people. Sit down, the both of you.

They obey her immediately.

BAMMY

Place your fingers on the pointer.

ON THE OUIJA BOARD -

A circular alphabet. A pointer, in the centre. Two word, at opposite ends of the circle. YES and NO.

BAMMY

Called a planchette --

She takes Georgia's and Jude's hand and places one finger each on the planchette.

BAMMY

Now. Introduce yourself.

Georgia seems to know the drill. She glances at Jude, then begins.

GEORGIA

My name is Marybeth Stacy Kimball. I called myself Morphine for a few bad years, and the guy I love calls me Georgia but Marybeth is who I am, my true name.

Bammy looks at Jude.

BAMMY

Your turn. Your real name now. The true name has a charge to it.

(MORE)

BAMMY (cont'd)
 Enough charge to bring the dead back
 to the living.

Jude takes a breath. Feels unutterably stupid.

JUDE
 My name is... Justin Cowsinski, I
 guess. Though I haven't answered to
 that since I was nineteen.

Bammy goes still. Then, intones, in a deep voice.

BAMMY
 We want to talk to Anna McDermott.
 Justin and Marybeth need your help. Is
 Anna there? Anna? Will you speak to us
 today?

No movement from the planchette. And the whole thing suddenly
 seems ridiculous.

BAMMY
 Sometimes those who knew her has to
 call.

GEORGIA
 Jude. I mean Justin. Call her.

Jude takes another breath.

JUDE
 Anna, you around? Is there an Anna
 McDermott in the house?

GEORGIA
 Ask her. Ask her for real.

JUDE
 This is so dumb it's -

GEORGIA
 You haven't tried -

JUDE
 Yes I have.

And Bammy speaks slowly.

BAMMY
 No, you haven't. Real names. What did
 she call you?

Jude sighs. He tries again.

JUDE

Florida. Come on and talk to me
Florida. It's Jude, darlin'. I'm sorry
I didn't call you. Are you still
waiting for me? I'm calling now.

And the board jumps beneath their fingers. Georgia gives a low
moan. Her eyes roll up in her sockets.

ON THE BOARD -

As the planchette spells -

W-H-A-T K-E-P-T

And suddenly Georgia speaks, in a different voice, one that
seems distant and small.

GEORGIA/ANNA

What kept you?

Jude shivers, hearing the voice.

JUDE

What's happening -

BAMMY

Someone's talking through her.

JUDE

How?

BAMMY

Don't matter how. Who is it?

JUDE

It's her --

And the planchette surges, as if in answer.

SPELLING OUT -

W-H-Y I-S

Georgia speaks again.

GEORGIA/ANNA

Why is the sky blue?

JUDE

She always said she'd rather ask
questions than answer them -

BAMMY

Don't talk to me - talk to her -

The light is low in the room now, as if there's a storm outside. Jude is overcome by emotion. He speaks low, as if he could be talking to both of them, Georgia and Anna.

JUDE

I'm sorry kiddo. I didn't know how to help you. I wish you'd fell in love with one of the good guys. Someone who wouldn't have sent you away when things got hard -

The planchette moves again. A - R - E - Y - O - U.

GEORGIA/ANNA

Are you angry?

JUDE

Yes.

The planchette swings to the word NO.

JUDE

You shouldn't have done that to yourself -

The planchette turns. Georgia talks.

GEORGIA/ANNA

Done what?

JUDE

Done what? You know what. No matter how bad things were between us -

And the Planchette surges back to the word NO.

JUDE

What do you mean, no?

The planchette spells, Georgia talks.

GEORGIA/ANNA

What if I can't answer?

JUDE

She can't answer questions. Only ask them -

And now everything moves into quick time. The planchette whirling, Bammy talking in her other voice.

GEORGIA/ANNA
Is he after you?

JUDE
Yes. He thinks it's my fault you
killed yourself and he wants to get
even -

GEORGIA/ANNA
Why are you so dumb?

And suddenly the dog whines.

GEORGIA/ANNA
What were you thinking?

JUDE
You sayin' it wasn't my fault?

GEORGIA/ANNA
Did you ever hurt me?

JUDE
I hope not -

And the planchette moves to the word NO.

GEORGIA/ANNA
Can I stop loving you?

And the planchette again moves to the word NO.

JUDE
Can you tell me what happened?

GEORGIA/ANNA
What's worse than dying?

And Jude gets it.

JUDE
Jesus Christ. Your father -

GEORGIA/ANNA
You think he's my father?

JUDE
You mean he wasn't -

GEORGIA/ANNA
Why do little girls cry?

JUDE
The swine -

GEORGIA/ANNA
Why me?

JUDE
Don't tell me that Florida - don't
tell me I sent you back to -

GEORGIA/ANNA
When will you stop blaming yourself?

JUDE
Who else can I blame?

And the needle spells one word.

STEPFATHER -

The needle breaks free of the planchette and flies through the air. The dog snarls and leaps, scattering the table, throwing himself against the blowing curtains of the window, through which we can see Craddock on the lawns.

Georgia gives a low moan, and falls onto the floor. Jude jumps down. Holds her jaw. Her teeth are clamping, as if she is having an epileptic fit.

JUDE
Give me a cloth - she'll bite her
tongue off -

He pulls the tablecloth from the table, jams it between her teeth.

INT. KITCHEN. EVENING.

Georgia sits at the kitchen table. Jude is making her sip some of Bammy's lemonade. Georgia is shivering, and silent.

JUDE
Can I call you aunt Bammy now?

BAMMY
Whatever you want, Jude.

JUDE
You think she remembers any of that in
there?

BAMMY

Not in her waking mind.

Georgia shakes her head, coming to.

GEORGIA

One of you gonna tell me what happened?

JUDE

Why don't you tell us.

GEORGIA

I saw a girl...

JUDE

Florida.

GEORGIA

I was a girl...

Georgia holds out her wrists. She looks at the scar there.

BAMMY

Stay the night Jude.

JUDE

Can't.

BAMMY

Why not?

JUDE

Because it isn't safe.

BAMMY

If you ain't gonna stay, leave her. Go on without her.

GEORGIA

Can't stay. And don't ask me, Bammy. A friend is dead because he didn't get clear of us fast enough.

BAMMY

Don't give up on yourself. The dead win when you quit singing.

GEORGIA

He's the singer. You gonna quit?

JUDE

Not now.

Georgia hugs Bammy.

GEORGIA

I love you Bammy. But you have to let us go...

BAMMY

You two got wheels?

EXT. BAMMY'S. DAY.

An ancient old lady cadillac at the door of her garage. There is a small Prius parked beside it. Jude is working on the engine. It sputters into life, and black smoke fills the garage.

BAMMY

Got a big carbon footprint.

JUDE

It knows how to turn. How much we owe you?

BAMMY

Whatever, Mr. Rock Star. Just send me a cheque...

EXT. HIGHWAY. EVENING.

A MONTAGE -

Of Jude driving South, in Bammy's Cadillac.

A CONVERSATION -

Broken over the hours from dusk to dark.

Georgia raises her head from sleep.

GEORGIA

Thirsty --

She reaches across the dogs to grab a bottle of Cool Aid.

GEORGIA

What if Anna's sister can't help us?
If she can't make Craddock's ghost go away?

JUDE

Why don't you just rest? We're gonna be driving awhile.

GEORGIA

I don't want to kill anyone Jude. I don't want to use my last hours on earth to murder anyone --

JUDE

These aren't you're last hours on earth.

GEORGIA

I don't want you to kill anyone either, Jude. I don't think I could take anymore ghosts after me.

JUDE

You want some radio?

He turns up the radio. Dave Grohl sings.

GEORGIA

Promise me you won't kill her Jude. No matter what.

JUDE

Marybeth? That better?

GEORGIA

I like it when you call me by my real name. Don't call me Georgia anymore, okay?

JUDE

Okay.

GEORGIA

I wish you didn't first see me takin' my clothes off for drunks. Throwin' knives in nothing but high heels. I wish you could have known me before I got like I am...

JUDE

You know how people pay more for furniture that's been roughed up a little? Distressed? A little wear is interesting honey.

GEORGIA

That's me. Actively distressed.

He takes her hand in his as he drives.

GEORGIA

If I die Jude, and you're still alive,
I'm gonna stop him. From the other
side.

JUDE

What are you talkin' 'bout? You're not
gonna die.

She holds out her hands, to look at them. She has scars now on
both of them.

GEORGIA

Got myself another scar.

JUDE

What's happening to you?

GEORGIA

It's Anna. I'm carryin' her round
inside me. I have been for a while, I
think. She wants me to help her back
here. So she can stop him.

JUDE

MaryBeth.

GEORGIA

That's my name. Don't wear it out. On
second thoughts, do. I like when you
say all of it.

JUDE

MaryBeth...

He kisses her wrist.

GEORGIA

That's me. Mary. Beth. Two girls for
the price of one. If Anna's inside
me...

She kisses his hand back.

GEORGIA

When you're lovin' me, you're lovin'
her too. Isn't that a good deal, Jude?
How can you resist?

JUDE

Best deal I ever had...

And there are tears in his eyes, as he follows the road.

EXT. JESSICA MCDERMOTT'S HOUSE. FLORIDA. NIGHT.

In a new development of McMansions, the house is painted dayglow yellow, among others in assorted ice-cream colours. Jude drives the car past, then swings into the garage of an unfinished house, about a hundred yards away.

INT. CAR. NIGHT.

Jude turns off the engine.

GEORGIA
Do we have a plan?

Jude examines the house in the rear-view mirror.

JUDE
Looks like tomorrow is garbage day.
She hasn't brought out her cans yet.

GEORGIA
So?

JUDE
We wait until she carries them out,
till she opens that door.

GEORGIA
And then?

JUDE
You remember speaking in tongues?

GEORGIA
You know I don't.

JUDE
Maybe it's better that way.

INT. CAR. DAWN.

The house, in the rear-view mirror. Georgia speaks from behind him.

GEORGIA
What are you thinking?

JUDE

I was wondering which rock star did
the most time inside.

GEORGIA

Rick James did three years.

JUDE

Ike Turner did a couple at least.

GEORGIA

Leadbelly -

JUDE

Broke rocks for ten years. For murder.

GEORGIA

Don't say that --

JUDE

If I play my cards right, I can do
more than all three of them together.

GEORGIA

Prison don't frighten you?

JUDE

Got a lot of fans there.

He adjusts the mirror.

JUDE

We're on...

EXT. MCDERMOTT'S HOUSE. MORNING.

The garage door opening. Jessica McDermott, who we saw in the
earlier scenes, drags out a plastic trash-can and leaves it on
the driveway. She goes back inside for some more, leaving the
garage door open.

When she is out of sight -

JUDE

Wait here -

He gets out of the car, takes tyre-iron from the trunk and
stuffs it under his shirt, down his pants.

GEORGIA

Hell no -

She opens the door.

GEORGIA

We just gonna knock on the front door,
say, hi, say hello to my crowbar?

Georgia gets out. Bon follows her.

JUDE

Something like that.

He walks towards the house. Georgia follows.

GEORGIA

What if we just try and tell her - you
never wanted to hurt Anna - never
wanted her to kill herself -

JUDE

That's not what this is about. I'm not
so sure we're the bad guys in this
story -

And he is through the garage door, the dogs loping after him.

INT. GARAGE. MORNING.

Jude walks past a cherry convertible. And is reaching his hand
to the door into the house, when Jessica McDermott opens it,
half in, half out of the kitchen.

JUDE

Howdy -

She reacts instantly. Grabs a knife from the kitchen tabletop
and swings it at him. He ducks, whacks the knife from her hand
and grabs the front of her blouse, pushing her inside.

INT. KITCHEN. MORNING.

Jessica staggers backwards into the sun-splashed kitchen.

JESSICA

If you came to kill me, be my guest.
He'll be on the other side with open
arms -

JUDE

I bet you're looking forward to it.

He swings her round and pinions both of her arms, so she can't hit at him. He talks right into her ear.

JUDE

He was kind of possessive about the two of you -

She struggles. Angus leaps on top of her.

GEORGIA

Get off her -

She grabs the dog's collar, pulls her back. Jessica spits bile, still struggling.

JESSICA

You aren't fit to speak of him. He scraped uglier messes off the heel of his boot.

JUDE

You got that about half right. You both stepped in a pile when you screwed with me.

JESSICA

You think you can best him?

JUDE

Maybe not. But I can find out the truth. About what I let her come back to -

JESSICA

The girl who came back wasn't my sister. You ruined her. She was poison inside -

JUDE

See all along I thought he was her father. Just found out lately what the real deal was -

JESSICA

Craddock loved her. The way he loved me.

JUDE

What kind of love are we talking about ma'am?

JESSICA

He was the best man - you turned her -

JUDE

Anna says different. I been hearing from all sorts of dead folks lately.

JESSICA

Is she on your case too?

JUDE

No. She tells me what she couldn't when she was alive.

JESSICA

What does she say?

JUDE

Why do little girls have to cry?

JESSICA

That one of your lyrics, Mr. Rock Star?

JUDE

Don't you get it? It's not me that hurt your sister. It's him. You've been punishing me for something he did...

JESSICA

He'd never hurt her...

JUDE

He'd been molesting her since she was a kid. It was in front of my face and I never seen it. Her moods. Her dependency. She came home to tell you.

GEORGIA

Oh my God. Am I hearin' what I think I'm hearin'?

JUDE

The one person who could have helped her. Besides me. See, we've got one thing in common -

And Jessica goes limp. As if she is overwhelmed by this information.

JUDE

That's what I came here to tell you. So you'd call this thing off. And I'm gonna let you go now.

He releases his arms.

She moves away from him behind the kitchen cabinet. Says softly...

JESSICA

What right have you to talk about my sister?

Georgia looks at her wrists.

GEORGIA

I'm wearing her scars...

JESSICA

You self-mutilating slut. You're the type cuts herself for fun.

JUDE

Your sister killed herself. Because she wanted it to stop. Like I want this to stop.

JESSICA

What happened to the suit?

JUDE

What does that matter?

JESSICA

It's gone, isn't it. And you're stuck with him. You turned my sister against him and he won't stop until you're both in the ground -

Angus growls. Jude looks down to restrain him.

And Georgia screams.

GEORGIA

Put it down -

Jude looks up. Sees Jessica with a huge magnum pistol which she has taken from a drawer.

JESSICA

Who are you to call him a child molester? How many years have you on that whore behind you?

And there is sudden silence in the room. We hear the radio, which has been on all the time.

RADIO

...what's Florida's number one export?
You might say oranges, but if you did
you'd be mistaken...

Jude slowly raises his hands.

JUDE

You put that thing down now -

JESSICA

How old was my sister when you made
her your whore?

JUDE

Twenty. And I didn't -

JESSICA

She came back like a slut. With
attitude. Oh, you taught her to strut,
didn't you, Mister Judas Coyne, you
gave her a mouth, a filthy one, she
accused him of everything in the book
when she came back from you.

JUDE

My god - don't tell me you knew -

JESSICA

She called it abuse - it wasn't abuse,
it was love, he loved her the way he
loved me -

JUDE

Please don't tell me you knew all the
time...

The dog moves towards Jessica. She swings the gun to protect herself and BOOM - the enormous cannon in her hand goes off.

It throws her one way and the dog another.

JUDE

No...

Bon flips over backwards with the force of the shot. And out of it's body now comes the black shadow. It curls in the air, leaping towards the sunlight, catches every sunbeam on its glistening black hairs, and is gone.

JUDE
You've killed him -

The radio is still droning.

RADIO
...wild stallions in Yosemite Park are
starving after months of drought. The
dog's the thing. Dogs protecting the
sons of bitches and whores that ruined
your sister. Shoot the other dog now
and let me at them. Death hole's
waiting gonna drag them down...

JESSICA
You poisoned her -

She swings the gun towards him, and Angus leaps. Jude reaches his hand out to restrain the dog. She fires once, taking Jude's finger off, spraying the wall behind him with his blood. As Angus sails through the air she fires again, hitting the dog in the groin, before his body smashes into her, throwing her to the ground, sending the gun skidding across the floor.

And the radio drones on.

RADIO
Holyeverlastingjesus! I was good I was
kind and I loved her and whoever blows
that dog to kingdom come will now be
saved...

Jude screams, through clenched teeth...

JUDE
Get that goddamned gun -

And Georgia grabs it from the floor.

GEORGIA
Oh God -

She trains it with shaking hands on Jessica.

GEORGIA
Oh Jude, baby -

Jude staggers to his feet. Lifts Angus in his bloodied arms. Jessica below him on the floor.

JUDE
How does this thing end?

JESSICA

Told you already. Ends with you both
in a hole in the ground, his breath in
your ear -

The dog moans in his arms.

JUDE

Not yet...

He lurches towards the door.

EXT. HOUSE. DAY.

The lawn sprinklers spraying water. As Jude and Georgia come from the front door, the water sprays their faces. He gets his foot caught in one of the hoses.

JUDE

Son of a bitch -

He wrenches the hose free of it's tap. The water gushes towards him like an angry fountain.

GEORGIA

You need a hospital -

JUDE

No. You know why.

GEORGIA

Got to -

JUDE

I'll stop the bleeding. Just get us to
the car -

EXT. MUSTANG. DAY.

Jude places Angus in the back seat.

JUDE

You got a blanket?

Georgia gets in the driver's seat. She throws him her jacket.

GEORGIA

For you?

JUDE

For him.

He slams the door, sits in the passenger seat, when he hears the screech of tyres.

CRADDOCK'S PICKUP TRUCK -

Is steaming towards them, from the open garage door. Jude screams at Georgia.

JUDE

Move it honey - go -

Georgia turns the keys. The engine roars.

JUDE'S POV -

IT IS NOT CRADDOCK'S TRUCK -

It a cherry convertible, driven by Jessica Price. The convertible hits the picket fence, smashes through it, gathering speed slamming over the sidewalk, coming straight towards them

Georgia shoves the Mustang into gear, the tyres screech, the Mustang takes off as -

The convertible slams into the pylon behind them. The white egg of an airbag explodes from the steering wheel. It is sprayed with blood.

INT. MUSTANG. DAY.

Georgia screeches down the tiny street, swings onto a larger one.

JUDE

Nice driving.

GEORGIA

Did we hurt her?

JUDE

No. She hurt herself.

He pulls bandages from a packet, wraps them round his hand.

JUDE

I'll be picking guitar with my toes before this is over.

GEORGIA

I'll find a hospital -

Jude tries to tie the bandage with his teeth.

JUDE

No hospital. Get on the highway.

GEORGIA

You could die without a hospital.

JUDE

Just drive. I can stop my finger bleeding. As long as Angus is alive, we got a chance.

GEORGIA

What kind of chance if the dog can't move -

JUDE

Craddock's not scared of the dog. He's scared of the dog inside the dog. Just get on the highway. Go west.

GEORGIA

Where west?

JUDE

Louisiana. Home.

EXT. HIGHWAY. DAY.

Georgia, tearing down the Highway.

Jude applies another bandage.

JUDE

My father's farm is just across the state line, in Moore's Corner. Take three hours. I'm not going to bleed out in three hours. There's an old woman looks after him, registered nurse. She'll have morphine. And he'll have dogs. You want to believe it. A whole pound of them. Savage bloody animals.

Georgia shivers as she drives. She is sweating, looks like death.

GEORGIA

Tell me we didn't cause her to die, Jude...

JUDE

No. We didn't. The only one we're gonna kill's already dead...

The radio is playing some cheesy country music.

JUDE

Think they play Garth Brooks in hell, honey?

She turns the dial. And Craddock's voice crackles into life.

RADIO

I never thought you'd have so much in the tank, boy. You don't have any quit in you. But when that dog in the back seat quits breathing, then so do you - you and that two dollar whore next to you -

Jude lifts his foot and slams his heel into the dash. Craddock's voice is lost in a deafening blast of bass.

JUDE

Remember I said the dead man didn't come for talk?

He smashes it again. It goes silent.

JUDE

I take that back -

EXT. COWSINSKI FARM. EVENING.

Low Louisiana hills. Spanish moss and Kudsu clinging to the live oak. The car drives up the long drive towards the decrepit Cowsinski farm.

INT. CAR. EVENING.

Jude, asleep beside Georgia, driving. She pulls up by the muddy turnaround, a barn to one side, old farmhouse to the other.

GEORGIA

This it?

No reply From Jude, who is out of it beside her. She reaches back to touch the dog.

GEORGIA

Hey, Angus, we made it -

But he didn't. The dog feels cold beneath her fingers.

GEORGIA

Oh god...

And, way behind her, at the bottom of the hill appear the floodlights of Craddock's truck.

GEORGIA

Oh Lord -

She gets out, pulls the passenger door open. Jude almost falls out of it.

GEORGIA

Get on your feet. Get in the house.

Jude reaches back for Angus.

JUDE

Angus -

GEORGIA

He's dead.

JUDE

No...

He reaches back his good hand, turns the dog's face.

JUDE

Got to get to the pound -

He staggers out of the car, and lurches towards the barn of the dog-pound.

INT. DOG POUND. EVENING.

Empty. All the cages, all of the barn. The door opens and Jude stands there. Bereft.

JUDE

Oh my Lord -

GEORGIA

What?

JUDE

She sold them.

He leans against the barn door. Behind him, we see the lights come on in the porch of the main farmhouse. Arlene stands there, in her nurse's uniform.

JUDE

Arlene?

He staggers back towards her. Almost falls into her arms. His blood smears her nurse's uniform.

ARLENE

Justin?

JUDE

Where are the dogs, Arlene?

ARLENE

Old Pitt across the hill... said he'd take them off my hands...

She looks at his hand.

ARLENE

What in the name of Jesus happened to you?

GEORGIA

Lost one of his fingers -

ARLENE

Whyn't you take him to a hospital?

GEORGIA

He said you were a nurse.

She looks at Georgia's bandaged hand.

ARLENE

Got your own bandage? Like matchin' tattoos?

Georgia shakes her head.

GEORGIA

Got infected by a dead thing.

ARLENE

Come on. Let's get you both inside.

She sees the truck lights at the end of the hill.

ARLENE

You expecting someone?

She moves up the porch steps. Georgia shivers, and follows, supporting Jude by the elbow.

INT. MERCEDES. NIGHT.

The body of the dead dog, Angus. The headlights of the approaching chevy illuminate it, making the hairs glisten.

INT. FARMHOUSE. EVENING.

Arlene sits him on a chair. Unties the bandage on his hand.

ARLENE

You in a race with your daddy to see
who'll die first?

She looks at Georgia's bandaged hand.

ARLENE

You missing a finger too?

GEORGIA

I'm okay.

ARLENE

Gonna get you the amble-lance.

She reaches for the phone, hits the button impatiently.

ARLENE

Can't get a dial-tone.

She tries again, listens to the receiver. Shivers.

ARLENE

Picking up some AM chatter. Guy
chatterin 'bout how to cut up animals.

She puts the phone back down.

ARLENE

Maybe the wind yanked down a line.

She stands, lifts Jude.

ARLENE

Come on big boy. I got morphine in
your daddy's room.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude's father, as we saw him at the beginning, lying immobile on his cot, no IV tube attached now. Arlene helps Jude in. Georgia stays at the door.

JUDE

Howdy.

The old man, of course, says nothing.

JUDE

Daddy, this is Georgia. Georgia, Daddy.

As Arlene prepares a syringe...

ARLENE

Any point in asking you what happened?

JUDE

Will that stuff make me sleep?

ARLENE

If you're lucky -

JUDE

Don't want to sleep -

ARLENE

Afraid you'll dream of your daddy?

JUDE

Something like that -

And she injects him.

JUDE'S POV OF HIS FATHER -

As the morphine takes hold. The old man seems to smile.

JUDE

It's okay old man. You're my bad dream. I'm not yours.

He tries to keep his eyes open.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

An an old television set. The evening news is playing. We see Arlene's body, in her nurse's uniform, being carried from the porch by Medics. A gunshot wound to her head. News cameras, policemen everywhere. Yellow tape ringing the farmhouse. An announcer telling the tale.

ANNOUNCER

Reports of three, perhaps four bodies
on the property. One positively
identified as Arlene Carlson, working
as a nurse, died of gunshot wounds...

The camera pulls back to find Arlene, looking at herself.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude sweating, lying on a cot beside his father. Arlene is fixing a tourniquet to the bloody stump of his finger.

ARLENE

I'm not dead, am I Justin?

JUDE

Why you ask?

ARLENE

TV came on. Of its own accord. Story
on the news. About how we was all
dead. You'd shot us -

JUDE

It's a lie. None of it is going to
happen.

ARLENE

Then the power went. There's a truck
in the driveway, just sitting. Old man
in it.

JUDE

You stay away from him.

ARLENE

I'll have to go to the neighbours to
call the ambe-lance. But I'm scared to
pass that truck.

JUDE

Don't mess with that truck. Drive across the lawn and through the fence if you have to.

ARLENE

You need tetanus and antibiotic shots or gangrene'll set in.

JUDE

Don't worry about me.

ARLENE

Okay then. But you still need them shots.

She stands.

ARLENE

Somethin' bad is going down. You want to tell me 'bout it?

JUDE

I can't. He'll hurt you too. You just get out of here.

Arlene stands.

ARLENE

That poor child's sleepin' in the other room.

JUDE

Thank you Arlene.

ARLENE

And I'm sorry I sold them dogs. Miss the sound of them barkin'.

She kisses him on the forehead, and goes.

EXT. FARMHOUSE. NIGHT.

Arlene's car, making a wide circle round the muddy fields, avoiding the pickup truck.

The headlights are on, but there is nobody sitting at the wheel now.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude, on the bed. He can hear the departing sound of Arlene's car. From his expression, we know he doesn't want to think of what's going to happen next.

Then he hears a sound, and he knows it has begun.

An old wardrobe, against the wall. The door slowly creaks open.

And there, hanging on a hanger, among other of his father's clothes, is Craddock's suit.

The buttons gleam. Above the collar, it is shrouded in shadow, as if Craddock could still be wearing it.

JUDE

What kept you?

But his attempt at bravado sticks in his throat.

He can hear another sound now, from the bed his father lies on. Tortured breathing. His father is, somehow, coming back to life.

Movement from the cupboard now. The suit is shaking itself free of dust. It moves from the cupboard, limbless, bodiless. It drapes itself over the body of his father, like a virus, trying to find a host. As if an invisible tailor is preparing a corpse for a coffin.

Jude stares, through his doped eyes, fascinated and terrified. His father's breathing gets louder, like a death-rattle.

Then his father's mouth begins to open. He speaks, slowly at first, in Craddock's voice.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

Thought you could pull the tube on me son...

JUDE

She said you wouldn't suffer none...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

Oh I suffered alright. And I could hear every word. You and Arlene talking 'bout starvin' me to death.

JUDE

You were already dead...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Well then. Not dead anymore.

His father's head begins to turn.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
So here we are again. Just you and
me...

His father looks at him. But with Craddock's eyes. The effect is
terrifying.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
All out of road...

JUDE
Yeah. The fun had to stop sometime...

His father's parched lips smile, revealing rotten teeth.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Still full of fight, sonny boy.

His father sits up now, wearing Craddock's suit. He reaches out
a bony hand and touches Jude's cheek.

JUDE
You're not my father...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Isn't that something? A thousand
miles, you're singing the same song.

Jude is sweating now. He tries to pull it together.

JUDE
Never gonna stop singing...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Dead don't sing son.

JUDE
My daddy couldn't stop me, and boy was
he tough. Tougher than you, you child
raping son of a bitch...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
She loved me, sonny boy.

JUDE
No, she went to her grave to get away
from you. That's what this is about,
isn't it?

(MORE)

JUDE (cont'd)
 Took me all this time to figure it out. Anna needed me to free herself from you. And you couldn't stand that thought..

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Psychobabblebabblebabble.

As the word repeats, his face forms many images of itself. We glimpse Craddock's, among the faces.

JUDE
 Maybe. But it's true. And I'm only gonna ask you one thing.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 One last request...

Again, the same multiplying effect. Jude stares, sweating.

JUDE
 Leave the girl...

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Oh no. Can't leave her behind now. She's going to sit between us when we ride the night road.

JUDE
 She's got no part in this.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Where'd you find that piece of jailbait anyways?

JUDE
 Strip bar. In New York.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Figures. Could never keep your pecker zipped, could you? Even when you was little. Remember I took that hammer to your hand?

JUDE
 That wasn't you. Was my daddy.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Was it your pecker-pulling hand?

JUDE
 No. It was my guitar playing hand.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

Well, do you know what you're gonna do
with that good hand now?

His hand comes up in front of Jude's face. It holds the gold,
cut-throat razor of Craddock's.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

You're gonna bloody the floor with
that whore of yours. And your daddy's
gonna watch...

He whips out the blade and holds it in front of Jude. Jude can
see his own face reflected in it.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT.

Georgia, lying in bed. Asleep, exhausted.

And there is someone lying in the bed with her. Anna.

Anna is holding Georgia's hand, stroking the wrist scars there.
We see the same scars on her wrist.

THE CAMERA MOVES INTO GEORGIA'S FACE -

Framed by Anna's. The effect is erotic and mysterious, at the
same time.

GEORGIA COMES INTO LARGE CLOSE UP -

As she wakes.

She shivers. She is alone in the room.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude turns away from the blade.

JUDE

You just let her go now. Do what you
want with me.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

You saying no to your daddy?

JUDE

Always said no to my daddy -

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
YOU ORNERY LITTLE GUITAR PICKING PUNK,
YOU ACTUALLY SAYING NO TO ME?

His fury brings Jude right back to his childhood.

INT. BEDROOM. MIRROR. NIGHT.

Georgia looking at herself in the mirror. We see Anna's face reflected there.

GEORGIA
Help us.

Anna's face mouths the same words, as if Georgia is talking to herself.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude, his father, and the blade.

JUDE
Okay dad. If this is the way you want
it.

And Jude whacks him across the jaw. An almighty haymaker. Jude's father goes flying across the room and crashes into the wardrobe.

JUDE
Wanted to do that since the day I was
born.

His father gets to his feet again. Blood pouring from his damaged mouth.

JUDE
And you know what? It felt good.

EXT. NEARBY FARMHOUSE. NIGHT.

A tiny, decrepit farmhouse, surrounded by forest. Anna Mcdermott is walking towards it, towards the barn, from which we hear the yapping of many, many dogs.

INT. BARN/POUND. NIGHT.

The dogs we saw before, in Martin Cowsinski's pound, in temporary cages. Large aggressive-looking creatures, yapping and snarling at each other.

The camera drifts towards them. Comes the rest on a latch, behind which we see the snarling dogs.

ANNA'S HAND reaches down and begins to open the latch.

It has a scar round the wrist, which seems to pulse with light.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Jude's father coming back towards him.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Thought I fixed that hand of yours
years ago -

Jude brings his fist down once more. And his father slashes at him with the razor.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Time to cut it right off -

The razor catches Jude across the wrist. Jude staggers back.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Can still draw blood, son -

He strides past Jude towards the open doorway.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
Now where's that skinny bitch of yours
-

And Jude slams his body into that of his father. They crash through the open door into the hallway.

INT. BARN/POUND. NIGHT.

ANNA'S HAND pulls the latch open.

Four or five dogs bound out. Race through the barn doors into the night.

INT. HALLWAY. NIGHT.

They slam against the door of the hallway. Jude's father brings the razor down again. Jude grabs his wrist with his good arm.

JUDE

You touch her I'll kill you -

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

But I'm dead son, I'm dead -

Jude twists his body, slamming him backwards towards the kitchen door.

INT. BARN/POUND. NIGHT.

THE WOMAN'S HAND opens cage after cage. The dogs run into the night.

INT. HALLWAY/KITCHEN. NIGHT.

JUDE STAGGER BACKWARDS AS -

His father slashes at him with the open razor.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

Same old story. Daddy gives him a chore. Little Justin won't do it. Daddy picks up the slack. You ever gonna learn son?

The razor catches him across the shirt, drawing blood.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK

Do your own slicing and dicing -

Jude tumbles into the kitchen, as his father follows with the razor. Then suddenly, a kitchen knife sprouts from his chest.

He groans, dully, looks down and up and sees -

GEORGIA, STANDING BY THE MAGNETIC KNIFE RACK.

She snaps another wide-bladed knife from the rack. Throws it, expertly. It thumps into the old man's neck, sprouting blood. She grabs another knife and comes towards him. Jude screams.

JUDE

Keep away - he won't lie down and die -

His pulls the knives out, speaking in Craddock's voice.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 You will die she will die we'll all
 ride the nightroad together --

Georgia throws another knife. This time he ducks, and it sticks itself in the wall. He brandishes both bloody blades, sharpening them off each other.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Remember hog-guttin' time, son?

He comes towards Georgia, both bloody blades flashing.

MARTIN/CRADDOCK
 Always cut from the crotch upwards.
 Guts fall out all on their own -

Georgia grabs another knife, although she knows it will be useless

GEORGIA
 Goodbye Jude - nothin's gonna stop him
 -

And suddenly he stops. He hears the sound. The barking, yapping, of many, many dogs.

INT. DADDY'S ROOM. NIGHT.

The glass panes of the windows shatter, as one dog comes through it, then another, then another.

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

The dogs leaping down the stairway towards whatever Jude's father has become. Their black shadows leap out of them as the dogs surge towards the bleeding apparition.

He turns.

One dog leaps for his crotch.

Another black spirit dog emerges from it as it leaps, and goes for his throat.

Jude's father staggers back from the dogs, hits the double doors and tumbles down the porch.

EXT. FARMHOUSE. NIGHT.

The dogs pile through, bent on mayhem. Black spirit doubles emerge from each of them, surge towards Jude's father.

A pair of arms reach out to wrestle with the black dogs. A face screams in agony. We recognize Craddock.

The body of Jude's father falls, inert, on the ground.

And there is a dark figure above the body now, wrestling with the dogs. Craddock, the ghost, trying to beat off the ghost dogs.

CRADDOCK TEARS A GHOST DOG FROM HIS BLEEDING NECK -

TRIES TO REACH HIS PICKUP TRUCK -

BUT DOG AFTER GHOST DOG PILES ON TOP OF HIM -

THEY WRAP AROUND HIM LIKE SCARVES OF SMOKE -

BLACK TEETH TEARING FLESH FROM HIS BODY -

DRAGGING HIM, LIKE THE DOGS OF CHARON, DOWN TO SOME HELL -

CRADDOCK BACKS AWAY FROM THE TRUCK -

AS IF TO ESCAPE, HIS GHOST FORM SURGES ONCE MORE DOWN INTO THE BODY OF JUDE'S FATHER -

THE CORPSE GOES RIGID, AS IF HIT BY A BOLT OF ELECTRICITY, THEN GOES ABSOLUTELY STILL.

EXT. PORCH. NIGHT.

Jude and Georgia, standing by the door, looking down, in amazement.

The pickup truck is gone. Twenty or so snarling, real dogs, around the body of his father.

They seem to be standing on guard, to prevent what may emerge.

JUDE

Who let those dogs out?

GEORGIA

She did.

JUDE

Arlene?

GEORGIA

No. She did. There.

She points. He looks up. He sees a figure, standing in the muddy ruts, where the truck was. Florida. Anna May McDermott.

A beautiful, melancholy figure. A true ghost.

Her mouth moves. We can't hear what she says.

But Georgia interprets.

GEORGIA

She wants to know when you're going to stop blaming yourself.

Jude stares at the face of his old girlfriend. A hundred conflicting emotions on his face.

JUDE

From now on, darlin'...

Anna May's mouth opens again, soundlessly.

GEORGIA

You promise?

Jude puts his arm around Georgia, and nods.

JUDE

I do.

And Florida, Anna May McDermott vanishes into thin air, as if she was never there.

Only the dogs left, snarling round his father's body.

One of them moves forwards, begins to worry with his teeth at his father's boot.

Jude walks slowly down the stairs, pulls the dog away.

JUDE

Get away there fella. That's my daddy...

He touches his father's face. Turns it over. He is quite the dead corpse now.

JUDE
Correction. Was my daddy...

And suddenly the telephone rings, from inside.

GEORGIA
Don't answer it.

Jude looks at her. The phone keeps ringing.

JUDE
Might be Arlene...

INT. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

The telephone ringing.

Jude walks back into the kitchen.

He walks to the old-fashioned phone. Holds his hand, for a moment. Then picks it up.

JUDE
Yeah?

DANNY (O.S.)
Guess what, Chief.

JUDE
That you Danny?

DANNY (O.S.)
Yeah. My cell phone works. How about that.

ON JUDE.

He doesn't know what to say.

DANNY (O.S.)
No more shoving quarters in that old machine.

JUDE
Does that mean you'll be calling a lot, Danny?

DANNY (O.S.)
Only if you want me to.

Georgia comes through from the porch. Her eyes meet Jude's.

JUDE
I'd kind of appreciate a little
privacy... for a while...

DANNY (O.S.)
Just wanted to tell you. Truck's gone.

JUDE
Yeah. Gone from here too.

DANNY (O.S.)
Anything you want, Chief. I'm here for
you.

JUDE
Hate to remind you Danny... you're
pretty much... dead...

DANNY (O.S.)
Yeah, I guess. Maybe I'll walk down
that road now...

JUDE
You do that Danny. Say hello to Elvis
for me.

He puts down the phone. Georgia comes to him, through the
bloodied kitchen. She takes his hand.

INT. COFFIN. DAY.

CLOSE ON THE FACE OF JUDE'S DEAD FATHER -

A strip of sunlight illuminating the face. There is the sound of
earth falling down, from above. The earth blocks out the light
and we are in the darkness, the relentless sound of falling
earth continuing.

EXT. FIELDS/FARMHOUSE. DAY.

Jude, with Georgia and Arlene. A freshly-dug grave, the coffin
inside it. Jude is shovelling the earth.

GEORGIA
Don't we say a prayer?

JUDE
Don't know any. Just songs.

GEORGIA
Sing one then.

Jude begins to sing, as he shovels.

JUDE
Tombstones is my pillow, cold grounds
is my bed
Tombstones is my pillow, cold grounds
is my bed

INT. COFFIN. DAY.

Absolute darkness down here. The very distant sound of singing.

JUDE (O.S.)
Early one morning, death walked in my
room --

Then, the unmistakable sound of slow, tortured breathing.

EXT. FIELDS/FARMHOUSE. DAY.

Jude, Georgia and Arlene. Jude still digging and singing.

JUDE
Early one morning, death walked in my
room --

A figure behind them, none of them seems aware of. It is Jessica Price. Dead. Just as we left her in the accident. Blood streaked face. Blood matted hair.

THE END.