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AMERICAN GOTHIC

"The Buck Stops Here"

Written

by

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TEASER

FADE IN

INT. LUCAS BUCK'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Room is dark... moon lit from a huge picture window. PANNING across a gallery of hideous gargoyle heads mounted on a wall, tilting down to see movement in the four-poster bed way down below.

CAMERA crawls across the floor... passing a sock, a boot, a stiletto-heeled shoe, another sock, another boot, another stiletto heel.

SELENA

Just so it's not painless.

We hear the sounds of SEX. Fevered gasps... pleasure moans... and the friction of wet skin. As well as words from BILLY and SELENA coming up for air. Carrying on some bold role playing game.

BILLY

A fall down the stairs... loose hand rail. Most accidents happen in the home you know.

SELENA

Hair dryer in the bathtub's always been a personal favorite.

BILLY

Electricity's good. Fork in a toaster. Bare wires!

Camera comes to Billy's pair of blue jeans. Just as Selena's hand reaches down from the giant FOUR POSTER BED. Pulls the BELT from the loops. Camera RISING UP... with the belt... to see it slide (like a snake) under a mountain of red satin sheets.

Billy and Selena go at it in ways we can only imagine as the sum of them squirms underneath. Selena sighs. Camera continues to move... circling the bed.

SELENA

Where were we now?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BILLY

Gettin' rid of the only thing
standin' between us and paradise.

SELENA

Keep goin' Doctor Peele... we were
almost there.

BILLY

Ok... Vehicular. Hit and run!

SELENA

No.. could leave him just a
vegetable. I got it....

Selena pulls the covers off. Her sweat drenched face gasping
for air. Billy pops up too, breathing hard.

SELENA

Poison. Sweet poison.

She licks Billy's lips slowly with an outstretched tongue.

SELENA

Kiss o' death. Untraceable.
Simulating some latent medical
condition. Your forte.

BILLY

Too clever. Better to just say the
cat knocked the Drano in his clam
sauce. Normal household horrors.
Simple is better.

SELENA

(impressed)

You done this before Billy?

BILLY

Just a rich imagination.

She gets up, wrapping around her, as little of the red satin
sheet as TV allows.... walking over to the huge plate glass
window. Billy catches his breath. The woman's run him
ragged tonight.

SELENA

(flat)

We'll just hafta get him a cat.

BILLY

Well... now only if we were really
gonna do somethin'. And we're not.
Are we?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

Selena kisses the window, leaving a lip print. LIGHT grows outside... silhouetting her. A car approaching, sweeping headlights across the room.

BILLY

Look -- Selena, let's just go back and look through the files again. I know it's gotta be there. He's got over three boxes from the hospital.

Billy gets up. Pulls on his pants.

SELENA

I'm so tired o' livin' under his thumb, Billy.

HER POINT OF VIEW OUT THE WINDOW

It's the BUCKMOBILE, The Crown Vic pulling up closer to the house.

BILLY

Guy's name is Carlisle. Yancy Carlisle. The man swears Lucas had something to do with his wife bein' in a coma. All his medical reports have disappeared. I promised him.

Billy comes over and hugs her from behind. Selena smiles. Enjoying the danger.

SELENA

Better get our boots on.

Billy looks out and sees Lucas get out of the car. His face says... HOLY SHIT!!! Billy points.

BILLY

The files.

Selena grabs him and makes him run the opposite direction.

SELENA

Not this time!

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

INT. LUCAS BUCK'S HOME - NIGHT (SCENE RESUMES)

Across the foyer, the DOOR swings open. Lucas comes in, none the wiser at first... then as he comes closer and closer into the foreground.. he begins sniffing the air. Head cocked, like some kinda canine.

STAIRS

Lucas comes hurrying up... stops half way and listens to some far off "whispering" and a clunk. Then runs the stairs two at a time...

INT. HALLWAY/BEDROOM

We move behind him towards the BEDROOM.... barging through the door and marching towards the four poster bed across the way.

Billy and Selena are nowhere to be seen.

Lucas stops... reacts. Goes over to the sheets... grasping them up in his hand and raising them to his flaring nostrils. Inhales.

LUCAS

(bellows)

SELENA!

His initial anger fades a bit... to some kind of twisted respect. The girl has the gall to fuck somebody else in his bed.

Lucas sees a GLINT on the bed. He turns, picks up BILLY'S BELT and looks at the caduceus symbol on the buckle -- two snakes around a staff.

INT. COMA WARD ROOM - DAY

YANCY CARLISLE

A man in a white smock, sits near his comatose wife, DORIS, reading to her from "The Sword and the Stone."

YANCY

"Passage..." (TBD)

Doris begins to get agitated. This is not a peaceful place she dwells in. Her back contorts and she moans.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Yancy rushes to hold her, pats her hand, strokes her forehead.

YANCY

I'm right here, Doris... I'll help you through... like always... we'll just ride it out. That's my gal!

She seems to calm a bit.

BILLY

enters quietly. Yancy turns and looks at him with anticipation. Billy pulls up a seat as Doris goes through another convulsive episode... her mouth silently screaming as if she's going through an agonizing ordeal.

YANCY

Another day of her in this limbo and I think I'll go completely mad.

BILLY

It's probably just a nervous system disorder. I doubt she's even aware of anything. Not as bad as it seems to us.

YANCY

It's like she's drowning right in front of me and I can't do a damn thing to help her.

(beat)

This hell ain't fair to her. My Doris was the sweetest little thing ever graced God's green earth.

(beat)

What'd you learn, doc?

BILLY

Nothing yet. Couldn't find the file. I will. I promise.

YANCY

How can you people lose files?

BILLY

Technically it wasn't me. Before my time here. I think a certain local authority figure may have them. I've been exploring that avenue.

YANCY

Lucas Buck!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

BILLY
I didn't say that.

YANCY
Didn't need to. Can you help her,
Doctor Peele? Can you help my
Doris?

BILLY
If I know what procedures were
done, I know I can probably ease
her suffering. Beyond that...

He shrugs.

YANCY
Hell -- I can do that. With a
flick of my wrist. She suffers no
more.

He makes a gesture... meaning... whipping the plug out of
the wall.

BILLY
That would be a mistake. At least
right now.

YANCY
(suspicious)
That's what Lucas says, too.

PA VOICE
Doctor Peele report to the E.R.

Billy pats the man's shoulder... but has not helped ease his
mind one iota. When Billy's left --

YANCY
I should have made that deal with
you, Lucas Buck.

INT. SCHOOL - SELENA'S CLASSROOM - DAY - CLOSEUP - THE
CADUCEUS BELT BUCKLE

Reveal Lucas Buck is wearing it. As he enters class.

SELENA and a couple other Teachers are in the midst of a
Safety Day instruction.

SELENA
Okay, class... now let's go over
our DO'S and DON'TS again. Ready
now... seat belts?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

KIDS

DO! ..

SELENA

Right you are. Always buckle up.

Selena sees Lucas approaching... thumbs tucked into the belt.

SELENA

Playin' inside an ole refrigerator...

KIDS

DON'T!!

SELENA

Good. And call your city department in charge for quick ...removal.

Kids begin to notice Sheriff Buck. Start going .."Hi Sheriff Buck...etc."

SELENA

Maybe Sheriff Buck will give us a few pointers... since he deals with danger as a way of life in the law enforcement profession. Sheriff?

LUCAS

Happy to Miss Coombs.

(beat)

Most accidents occur in the home. You know that? Fallin' down the stairs... more likely than anything in the outside world. So always hold that rail. Make sure it's fastened tight!

He walks by Selena... a little too menacingly sensual. Brushing across her blouse with his back. She knows he's here to fuck with her today.

LUCAS

The thing that makes our whole modern world go... 'lectricity... can kill you dead in nuthin' flat.

Selena looks at him, realizes that he's repeating the litany of possible deaths she and Billy ran off the other night in his bed.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

LUCAS

So beware... don't ever put a hair dryer near the sink... or the bath. How 'bout something else like that we shouldn't do.

Caleb raises his hand. Lucas nods.

CALEB

NEVER... poke a utensil in after some burnt piece of toast 'less you wanna be charcoal too.

Selena reacts to Caleb's "knowledge." Very odd -- some osmosis between father and son? Lucas picks up a Crossing Guard's little stop sign.

LUCAS

And crossin' the street... look both ways and then look again. Lotta crazy drivers out there who can make a road kill possum outta ya... you're not on your toes!

SELENA

Well... thank you Sheriff Buck... that's about all the time...

Lucas hold a finger up... has more to say.

LUCAS

The normal household has about 25 substances that can kill with just a taste... You can never be too careful in your own home. What are some others class?

CALEB

Window cleaner! Draino!

Selena reacts again to Caleb's choice of words

OTHER KIDS

Liquid Plumber! Rat poison! Bad milk! Ipecac!

LUCAS

That's right kids. Adults sometimes fall prey to foolish mistakes same as the young. So always remember... you're never too old for proper safety.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 3

SELENA
As always... excellent advice for
us all.

Selena directs the kids to leave. They get up and file
towards the door. Lucas gets right up in her face.

LUCAS
With so many things layin' in wait
to take your life... it's a wonder
anybody ever grows old.

CLOSE ON SELENA

She knows this time it's no ordinary threat he's giving her.
She's scared for her life.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

SELENA slinks through the lobby... approaching the
Receptionist.

SELENA
Could you tell me where I might
find Doctor Peele?

SARA

youngish blondish nurse, eyes Selena with a bit of jealous
contempt across the way. She holds two urine samples,
taking them to the lab... but detours and follows Selena
over to Billy Peele's office. Selena knocks on the door and
barges in.

INT. BILLY'S OFFICE - DAY

Selena barges into Billy's office, a bit surprised to see
Gail inside, just finished being examined. Buttons up her
blouse.

SELENA
Excuse me... didn't realize this
was gynecology.

Gail throws Selena a very dirty look.

BILLY
Just make sure you get enough
protein. Your iron level was very
low. Okay?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GAIL

Thanks, Doctor Peele. It's really a big comfort.

She heads out, passing Selena.

SELENA

And how's the little "Buck in the oven"?

Gail doesn't even respond to this. Slams the door on the way out.

BILLY

She's very uneasy about all of this, Selena.

SELENA

I'd say she was very easy.
(beat)

Why is everyone so gung ho to give that girl so much comfort.

Selena sits down on his desk. Picks up a speculum. Toys with it throughout the scene --

BILLY

Don't worry about it.

SELENA

Don't you either. You got much bigger worries right now, Billy boy, believe you me.

BILLY

Such as?

SELENA

Your little escapade the other night has really put us both in a sling with Lucas.

BILLY

My escapade?

SELENA

You wanted those files, didn't you. I was just trying to help you and your noble cause.

BILLY

I didn't say... let's stop and "do it" in his bed. You upped the ante.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

SELENA

We mighta got waylaid, but you didn't say no either as I recall, Billy.

BILLY

Yeah, and we didn't get the files either, did we? Now I got this poor guy Yancy ready to go off the deep end. And nothing I can tell him.

SELENA

He thinks Lucas is behind his predicament?

Her mind is racing.

BILLY

Sure of it. He's primed to go postal too.

SELENA

Lucas came into my classroom this morning, Billy, and told me... he was going to kill me.

BILLY

He said that? Actually said it.

SELENA

In so many words. If you read between the lines. Maybe you too.

Billy shakes his head. Doesn't buy it.

BILLY

How does he expect to do this and get away with it.

SELENA

I don't know how. I'm sure it'll be slow and agonizing. But he'll get away with it because he's Lucas Buck and he always has.

BILLY

Even he can't pull that off and not pay.

Selena gets up and heads to the door.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 3

SELENA

Won't do us much good if he pays or not if we're in the ground, Billy. It's very simple now. Him or us. This is self-preservation.

BILLY

If you're serious, Selena... you got the wrong man. I mean -- you know what we're talkin' about here?

Selena stops at the door.

SELENA

Manslaughter.

Right outside the door... a little gasp, then glass breaking, is heard.

Both Billy and Selena hush. A LOUDSPEAKER VOICE is heard.

VOICE

Doctor Peele, please report to the O.R.

Selena blows him a kiss.

OUTSIDE DOOR

Selena exits the door, leaving a very worried Billy in the background, putting on his white jacket. Moving with her... stopping to glance down at Sara, who looks up at her with a very disturbed expression, cleaning up the mess.

Selena moves on. We stay on Sara, who watches Billy head off.

SARA

(to self)
Manslaughter?

INT. SHERIFF STATION - RECEPTION - DAY

Yancy strides through the outer office over to Lucas Buck's office.. Knocks again and again and again.

Lucas opens the door -- is not pleased in the slightest to see this man.

YANCY

Sheriff Buck. I need to talk to you.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LUCAS
Better have somethin' worth
listēnin' to.

INSIDE

Lucas goes to his chair behind the desk and plops down.

LUCAS
What the hell's on your mind?

YANCY
Hell. That's where I am. In hell.
And so's my Doris!

LUCAS
Well now... let's recollect...
shall we. I asked you to do me an
itty bitty favor as I recall.

YANCY
Commit a mortal sin for you, more
like it.

Lucas sighs and leans back in his chair.

YANCY
You said... if I gave Mrs. Bright a
placebo instead of her regular
medicine... it wouldn't be like we
were poisoning her or anything.
Just nature's course.

LUCAS
And nothin' wrong with that line o'
thinkin'.

YANCY
And in turn... my wife would live.
You swore...

LUCAS
You wife IS alive now, isn't she?

Yancy comes unglued.

YANCY
In a coma! That's hardly livin'.

LUCAS
Well now, Yancy -- you sent those
sugar pills over a couple times...
then changed your mind. Basically,
you reneged on an agreement.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

YANCY
I couldn't be responsible for her
death. It wasn't right!

LUCAS
That's where my responsibility
ended, Yance.

Just then, Caleb barges in the door. Hands Lucas a sealed envelope.

CALEB
My cousin, Gail, said give this to
you.

Lucas takes it. Caleb starts to go.

LUCAS
Stick around, son. Help yourself
to a... mint.

Caleb comes back... still a bit unsure till Lucas holds a jar of candies out. Aluminum foil covered chocolate "silver dollars."

LUCAS
Where were we now, Yancy...

Yancy motions towards Caleb.

YANCY
In front of the boy?

LUCAS
I got nuthin' to hide from him.

Lucas gives Caleb a book of mug shots and wanted posters. Caleb's fascinated, starts leafing through it.

YANCY
Well... forgettin' all I did or
didn't do and all you may have
expected... if my Doris can't be
saved... then let me let her go.

LUCAS
If it's worth fifteen to life to
you... be my guest.

YANCY
You have no idea what she's going
through. It would be for mercy!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 3

LUCAS

On the yard at Rahlway that'll get you 'alotta sympathy, I'm sure.

Lucas winks at Caleb. Caleb smiles. Probably not understanding what they're talking about. Yancy is a broken man.

YANCY

Why're you doing this? If I understood... maybe I could take it. But just for greed? For a bloody dollar...

Lucas' eyes glaze with near religious fervor. He uncrumples a DOLLAR BILL from his pocket. Gets out of his seat and presses the reverse side of it in Yancy's face.

LUCAS

THIS... is a force of nature! Every bit as strong as gravity. It makes the world go round! What do they call this Yancy?

YANCY

I dunno... Legal tender?

LUCAS

They call it a... BUCK! Manifest destiny... bigger than both of us, friend. You ever look at one up close? Real close!

Lucas yanks open a drawer. Pulls out a MAGNIFYING GLASS... makes Yancy examine the bill with it.

WE SEE: the PYRAMID with the All Seeing EYE.

LUCAS

What the hell's this doin' on our money? You ever ask that? What did the Founding Fathers worship at this altar? Who the hell is that watching you?

Yancy shakes his head.

LUCAS

It ain't the eye o' God. That's for damn sure! Annuit Coeptis... "He hath prospered our beginning."

Caleb chimes in like it's some game.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 4

CALEB

Annuit coeptis!

YANCY

Lucas... I don't understand what you're drivin' at.

LUCAS

Novus Ordo Seclorum. "An old order of the ages is born anew."

CALEB

Novo seclordum!

LUCAS

This is the fabric of our lives. Each bill is... like a neuron shuttling around the world brain. Every day we sell just a little more of ourselves. Credit and debit. Debit and credit!

CALEB

(grinning)
Credit and debit!

YANCY

I think you're crazy, Lucas. Both of you!

LUCAS

Tryin' to get you to see the light. The big picture... not the tiny scope of your petty problems.

(beat)

Don't ever denigrate the sanctity of our American currency!

Yancy gets up. Shakes his head. Ben barges in. Startling both of them.

LUCAS

Ben... will you ever learn to knock?

BEN

A Safety Day banner fell down and crowned one of the Leahy twins.

Lucas rolls his eyes. He gives Caleb a dollar. Caleb trots out.

When Lucas is not looking... Yancy pilfers one of his coffee packets... then hurries out.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 5

YANCY

Don't say I didn't warn you, Lucas!

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

Back in the chemistry section at the back of the shop.

YANCY delicately opens the aluminum foil coffee packet.
Pours out the coffee.

YANCY

The Buck stops here!

He has a variety of poisons laid out. Arsenic... Cyanide,
etc... Grinding them up and adding brown dye to them.

He then seals the tainted grounds back into the packet. He
smiles.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

GAIL comes in with two large bags of groceries.

CALEB sees her enter and follows her to the kitchen.

CALEB
You get the Cocoa Puffs?

GAIL
(distracted)
I think so, Caleb. Yeah, I'm sure
I did.

Caleb comes over and helps her unload the items in the two bags. He starts taking out one raw meat product after another... calf liver, sweetbreads, beef tongue, chicken liver, gizzards, tripe, pigs feet... etc.

CALEB
Don't see 'em. Nuthin but meat and
more meat in here.

All are bloody and disgusting. Then finally... he pulls out a box of Cocoa Puffs. But something has leaked and the box is soggy with bloody juice. He holds it up, barely wanting to touch it.

CALEB
Gail... I can't eat this now.

GAIL
I'm sorry. There's some change
here... take it. Go on out and buy
whatever you feel like, okay.

He takes it. Though he knows it's kind of a bribe. He starts to leave. He stops at the door.

CALEB
Can I get Snausages?

GAIL
Sure you can.

CALEB
And some bear claws at the bakery?

GAIL
I guess so.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

He smiles and leaves... a very happy boy.

We follow Caleb to the front door. He opens it, but then does not exit, hearing something back in the kitchen. He slams the door.

Gail (thinking Caleb has left) begins to make loud carnivorous sounds back in the kitchen.

Caleb heads back that way. They grow louder as he goes. Caleb pushes open the kitchen door, slowly, and observes.

Gail caught in a hideous animalistic act, eating the raw meat. Devouring it like a jackal, tearing it with her teeth. Bloody juice drips down her cheeks and all over her blouse. Overpowered by some diabolic hunger.

Caleb's eyes bug.

CALEB

Gail!

She looks for a second like she might even growl at him. Then seems to snap out of it -- though not aware of what she's been doing. She spits out a mouthful in the sink.

CALEB

You better cook that up first Gail!

GAIL

Oh... of course, Caleb, I was just...

She starts to realize what she was doing.

GAIL

Just going to make a stew.

Miss Holt comes in. Seems to have an inkling as to what's going on. She comes to Gail's aid.

MISS HOLT

Run along, Caleb. Let the women have a talk now.

Caleb shakes his head. Can't quite fathom it, but it's really upset him.

INT. CALEB'S ROOM - DAY

Caleb hurries into his room, slamming the door open hard. But it only makes a dull thud.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CALEB
Merly? Merlyn Temple?

A voice behind the door startles him.

MERLYN
Yes, Caleb.

She appears from behind there in her corporeal form (no angelic entrance).

CALEB
What's the matter with Gail?
What's wrong with her?

Merlyn knows, but she's reluctant to tell Caleb she's pregnant.

CALEB
You think Lucus Buck coulda
poisoned her. If he did anything
to hurt her... I'll kill him.
Swear I will.

MERLYN
NO! Don't ever say that! If
anything ever happens to Lucas,
Caleb...

She trails off.

CALEB
Then what?

MERLYN
Your life and his... for better or
worse are connected. His fate and
your fate cannot be separated.

CALEB
All you ever been drummin' into me
is... I got a choice! Now you say
I don't.

MERLYN
But he is your father, Caleb.
And that's a powerful thing. But
you have a power, too, Caleb.

CALEB
I do?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

MERLYN

You think every little boy is watched over... the way I do for you. You're special. Born that way.

Caleb shrugs.

MERLYN

Someday soon a real test will come... whether you become like him or follow another path.

CALEB

And I don't even have any say in it?

MERLYN

Of course you do!

CALEB

Well, then... Lucas Buck and Gail and even you, Merly, can just stop pullin' at me in umpteen directions all the time. I'll be who I damn well wanna be!

MERLYN

Caleb!

She's shocked at his swearing. Leaving, he slams the door as hard as he can.

INT. HOSPITAL - PHARMACY - DAY

Selena slinks into the Pharmacy alcove inside Fulton County Hospital, setting off the tinkling customer bell.

Yancy is in the back, trying to catch up on his back orders.

Selena comes to his counter at the back and sets a deluxe jar of Vaseline on it. He looks at it askance.

SELENA

Kinda chapped.

Yancy recognizes Selena and is immediately suspicious.

YANCY

He sent you, didn't he?

SELENA

And who would that be.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

YANCY

You don't fool me. You didn't just come in here for that.

SELENA

Impulse buy.

YANCY

Lucas Buck. You and he have quite a past together. I'm aware of a lot of things.

SELENA

So am I. And so is he! You ever wonder how Lucas Buck knows so much. Why it's so easy for him to pull all the puppet strings in this town.

YANCY

By acting without a conscience, I imagine. Preying on people's foibles, their failings... their fear.

SELENA

All that's true. But he's a special man. With special powers. If you're gonna try and take him on... or take him out.. you don't just aim a barrel and pull a trigger. It's been tried.

YANCY

How'd you know that's been on my mind?

SELENA

Cuz it's been on mine, too. For a long, long time.

Yancy holds up a poison packet of coffee.

YANCY

Tomorrow, Lucas might notice a funny taste in his Sanka. He'll probably finish half a cup and start to complain to Ben before his heart freezes up. Forever.

He smiles. Selena shakes her head.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

SELENA
Might not even kill him. He
doesn't die easily.

YANCY
Tell me how, then! This man has
ruined my life. I have nothing to
lose.

SELENA
Like Achilles had his heel... Lucas
has his point of vulnerability.
His weakness.

YANCY
Where?

SELENA
You ever heard of the pineal gland,
Mr. Carlisle? That's his.

YANCY
Sure... people used to think it was
the seat of the soul. Right
here... in the front of the
brain... the third eye, some say.

Yancy's eyes widen... A revelation.

YANCY
Yes! Third eye! Of course.

Yancy punches up the register. Picks out a stack of dollar
bills, starts laying them all out, PYRAMID SIDE up.

YANCY
All seeing THIRD EYE! YES! It all
makes sense. He was even bragging
about it. Pineal... third eye...
Annuit coeptis.

He looks up. Selena is gone. Yancy smiles with a zealot's
knowing look. He's found the answer.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

Billy is walking along with a nervous patient, CECIL
SPURGEON.

CECIL
Older I get, the younger the
doctors do.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CECIL (Cont'd)
You done this thing you're gonna do
to me before, have you?

BILLY
Many times. Not to worry.

Billy pats Cecil on the back, then peels off.

BILLY
I'll see you before you go under,
okay, Cecil.

Cecil is feeling okay now... till he runs smack into LUCAS,
who "pops up" just ahead of him.

CECIL
Sheriff Buck. Whatta'you doin'
here?

LUCAS
Wishin' you well. Understand,
you're goin' under the knife.

CECIL
Lucas, I-been meaning to get back
to you, but... what with all the
concern over my condition...

LUCAS
Oh, sure Cecil. I understand, with
major surgery weighing on your
mind... it's easy to forget about
commitments you made to your
friends, right?

Cecil is really starting to sweat.

Billy is in the background, checking over his operating
implements in the autoclave room.. He sees this
conversation Lucas is having with his patient and doesn't
like it one bit, heads back over.

CECIL
Lucas, I couldn't... I just...

LUCAS
Yes, you could. And yes, you will!

BILLY
Hey, Buck... mind not raising my
patient's blood pressure.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

Billy sees the belt buckle. Lucas makes a point of notching one hole tighter.

LUCAS

Just wishin' him luck, Doctor Peele. Wanted to make sure his insurance was up to date.. I understand it can be a very tricky procedure.

Billy take this as a threat.

BILLY

Someday, Buck. Someday!

He ushers Cecil away, walking past Dr. Pike, the administrator.

DR. PIKE

Is there a problem, Sheriff?

NEW VANTAGE OVER SOMEONE'S SHOULDER

watching this scene, watching Lucas say something to Dr. Pike, then start to walk away. All of a sudden -- Lucas glances over right at this Mystery Person, who turns away. We don't see them.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY - CLOSEUP - A DOLLAR BILL

seen through a magnifying glass. Examining the Pyramid and the All Seeing Eye.

YANCY (O.S.)

An old order of the ages ends tonight!

He pulls the magnifying glass back and using the sun, begins to burn a hot, white hole right through the All Seeing Eye. It ignites... then the bill catches fire. It's tossed up into the air. Floating, slow motion.

INT. HOSPITAL - OPERATING ROOM - DAY

Billy is in "the moment" of the critical surgery on Cecil. Nurse Sara mops his brow. With a little too much tenderness.

BILLY

Scalpel!

She slaps it in his palm.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BILLY

Suction... the lower cavity. Good.
Okay... we'll wait and see if that
holds... time.

Another nurse signals... time... Billy nods.

BILLY

Okay, team... homestretch. Tie
that off... okay, good... Marrow
retractor!

Sara goes to the table full of instruments. Panic in her
eyes. Fingers graze over the gleaming metal implements.
They cannot find the one he called for.

BILLY

Marrow retractor... now!

Sara turns back to Billy, panic in her eyes. His hand is
held out.

SARA

It's not there, Doctor Peele... it
was this morning. I sterilized
it... laid it out... but now.. it's
gone.

BILLY

Hold this... pinch it tight!

Bill goes to the table... searches. Sure enough.

BILLY

God damn him! He's gonna fry for
this.

SARA

Who is?

BILLY

Lucas friggin' Buck!

SARA

He took it?

BILLY

I'll never prove it, I'm sure.
Unless I move quick. But he was
here. Pickin' a bone with Cecil.
Damn him!

(beat)

Let's try to get out of this man's
chest without a lawsuit.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

SARA
What should we do?

BILLY
Gotta improvise. Get me a
langoscope, hooked up to the
suction. See if you can override
the max output and get me eighteen
hundred BTE's. (MEDICAL DIALOGUE
TBD)

INT. HOSPITAL - SCRUB ROOM - DAY

Billy is scrubbing down, exhausted. Sara comes over.

SARA
Great job, Doctor Peele. You
pulled it off.

BILLY
Can't believe we did --

SARA
It's gone. The marrow retractor
has left the building. Couldn't
find it anywhere.

BILLY
Bet I can.

SARA
Where're you going?

BILLY
To strike a blow for justice.

Sara's a bit worried as Billy puts on his jacket and hurries
away.

EXT. LUCAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

LOOKING DOWN... from above a GARGOYLE at the roof... as

BILLY'S CAR

pulls up. Parking right up on the curb. Billy gets out,
hops the locked gate and storms up the walk.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Billy rings and rings the minor scale chimes.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BILLY

C'mon, Buck. Face the music. I know it was you!

He rings again and again. Taps the tapper as loud as he can. Still no response. He POUNDS HIS FIST...

THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN. Not locked. Billy pokes his head in.

BILLY

Buck? Unless you say no... I'm comin' in.

INT. LUCAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

He enters. Hears something. But there's no Lucas anywhere in sight. Billy walks through the front room. Gazes at the sinister decor. Takes a penlight from his pocket.

BILLY

Let's see where you hid it...

MOVING behind Billy as he stealthily searches through the house, following the tiny cone of light.

AT THE FILES

He comes around the corner to check the files, (the ones he had to leave in the teaser) and as he shines the light here is very surprised to see: they have all been ransacked. Files are strewn everywhere. Haphazardly. A sound in another room is heard. Billy freezes.

IN ANOTHER ROOM OF THE HOUSE - CLOSEUP - THE MARROW RETRACTOR

a streamline device with a protruding bit, razor sharp for piercing bone and extracting marrow. A GLOVED HAND picks it up.

In the b.g.... Billy can be seen moving across the hall at the back of the house.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Billy searches in here... seeing a glint of metal in the corner.

He heads over... but finds it's just a huge antique EXECUTIONER'S AXE, the kind used for beheading in Olde England.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Just then... the sound of the front door opening is heard. Billy looks for somewhere to hide.

ON THE ENTRANCE

Lucas comes in, this time immediately knowing someone is in his house. He whistles a familiar melody, then...

LUCAS

... said the spider to the fly.

He begins to move quietly through his house.

INT. FILE AREA

Lucas comes here -- turns on a light, and sees the residue of ransacking.

LUCAS

PEELE!

He sees someone dart down a hallway. He follows.

LUCAS

This is Judgement Day! You're still here. I can hear that heart o' yours thumpin' with acute fear. I can smell the adrenaline!

INT. STORE ROOM

Billy comes into a cluttered room filled with relics, stuffed animals, statues, gargoyles and weapons, etc. He grabs a saber and hides back behind a huge Chinese paper fan.

LUCAS

Such a shame, really... cuz believe it or not... I liked you, Peele. We coulda been friends. You're a man's man and so am I. You had a real good head on your shoulders.

Lucas walks by the open doorway, carrying the executioner's axe over his shoulder like a baseball bat. He heads further down the hall.

LUCAS

It's not going to be in that location too much longer, though, I'm afraid.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Lucas suddenly comes back to the doorway. Sniffs.

LUCAS

Yeah... we coulda been buddies.
Shot pool, gone fishin'.

He slowly moves into the room. Billy can see him through a tiny hole in the fan. He has the sabre poised behind the thin paper... ready to plunge at Lucas when he nears.

LUCAS

Now I'm gonna use that noggin for
gator bait, son. You just pushed
it too far. And I got a reputation
to protect.

Billy holds his breath. Lucas seems to know where he is, approaches.

LUCAS

I never like it to have to come
down to such a barbaric denouement,
but you really left me no choice
this time.

He raises the axe up... starts to swing it.

THEN... OUT OF NOWHERE...

The GLOVED PERSON, still barely seen, jumps out... blind siding Lucas and swinging the MARROW RETRACTOR... jabbing the point right into Lucas' forehead.

Billy reacts. As surprised as Lucas. Lucas crumples to the floor. The Gloved Person runs away. Never was seen clearly.

Billy rips the fan away. Runs to Lucas' side, touches the marrow retractor, but doesn't remove it.

MOVING INTO BILLY'S FACE

reacting to the awesome fact: Lucas Buck has been assassinated.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

LUCAS BUCK on a gurney. Barely conscious. A centimeter wide hole in his forehead. Above and between the eyes: The Third EYE. Looks like someone shot him point blank with a .22 caliber.

BILLY, RITA, SARA AND A COUPLE OTHERS

push him along the corridor as fast as they can safely go.

BILLY

I want a CAT scan. Full work-up.
Book MRI time in Charleston. We
may have to chopper him.

RITA

Somebody shot him?

BILLY

Not exactly.

Sara and Rita look at each other. Something is wrong with this picture. Dr. Pike catches up with the group.

DR. PIKE

Ben Healy called. He's on his way.
Did the paramedics bring Lucas in?

BILLY

No... I did.

SARA

Pulse is low... not critical.

Lucas raises up SUDDENLY and GRABS BILLY BY THE THROAT.

LUCAS

PEELE!

Then collapses... unconscious again. Looks are exchanged.

They wheel him into the O.R.

JUMP CUT

INT. OPERATING ROOM

All the team are gloved and gowned and prepping for brain surgery.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DR. PIKE

What were you doin' there at his house?

BILLY

Had something to talk to him about. Personal.

DR. PIKE

How did this injury occur?

BILLY

Someone plunged a marrow retractor into his skull.

(beat)

Look... Doctor Pike, all due respect... let's save this chat till I get him stabilized. Now is NOT the time, okay?

DR. PIKE

It's your show till then.

He starts to bail out of the room.

DR. PIKE

This will have severe repercussions for all of us.

BILLY

There's definite trauma... brain swelling in the frontal lobe.

Someone comes running in with x-rays. Billy looks at them.

BILLY

I'll be damned.

SARA

What?

BILLY

This was a shot to the pineal gland. Like they were aiming for it. Weird little vestigial sensory organ. Modern science still doesn't know what it really does.

Billy tries to fathom this, examining further.

BILLY

Got it pretty good too. Okay, gang... it's gonna be a long one...

Pulling back as the team goes to work.

INT. DR. PIKE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ben has been here awhile. The marrow retractor in plastic, sitting on the desk.

DR. PIKE

You seriously suspect Doctor Peele?

BEN

I'll ask the questions, okay Doctor Pike.

The door opens. Sara comes in. Still in some of her surgical garb.

SARA

You wanted to see me, Deputy Healy?

BEN

How's the patient doiñ'?

SARA

Surprisingly well. Billy saved his life, I think. Swelling has subsided. He's critical, but there's no probable brain damage.

BEN

You say he saved Lucas. Might he have tried to take that life earlier in the evening?

SARA

If he did... it was... self-defense.

BEN

You think he did it. He say as much to you?

SARA

No... don't get me wrong. That's not what I'm saying. He won't say a thing about it.

(beat)

He was pretty angry at Lucas in Cecil Spurgeon's surgery. I know he went to find him afterwards... all riled up. That's pretty much all I know.

DR. PIKE

Why was he angry with Lucas?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SARA

He thought Lucas took...
-- (points to the retractor)
...that! It was suddenly missing
during the operation. Lucas had
been hounding Cecil just before, I
guess. That's pretty much all I
know.

BEN

So Billy blamed Lucas... thought he
took the marrow thing... next thing
you know... Billy is at Lucas'
house, uninvited and this is
stickin' in his forehead.

Ben gets up, takes the evidence with him.

BEN

Soon as he's not absolutely
needed --

DR. PIKE

He's off the case... far as I'm
concerned as of now!

BEN

And keep an eye on things around
here --

Dr. Pike nods. Ben heads out the door. Sara follows.

INT. LOBBY

Sara trails Ben as he strides over to the I.C.U. wing.

BEN

Somethin' else, Sara?

SARA

Maybe. There was a woman who came
by earlier to see Doctor Peele.

BEN

A woman?

SARA

You know who I'm talkin' about.

BEN

Selena Coombs?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SARA

Yeah. I heard her and Billy talking. Wasn't s'pose to. Just happened to be within earshot. They said alotta things, but one word sticks out now after all this. I'll never forget it.

BEN

Okay, Sara... cut to the chase!

SARA

Manslaughter.

BEN

That... pretty much all you know?

Ben stops. Looks at her. Then enters Lucas' I.C.U. room.

INT. LUCAS' I.C.U. ROOM - DAY

Lucas is unconscious. Billy, exhausted, catches a couple Z's, slumped on a couch across the way.

Ben comes in, goes over and stands by Lucas. It's very disturbing to him. The major force in his life now nearly lifeless.

BEN

(to Lucas)

You always used to kid me... said you didn't know if I needed a "bottle in front o' me or a frontal lobotomy."

(laughs)

Who'd o' thought you'd be the one that...

His feeble stab at humor peeters out.

BEN

Lucas? Don't you die on me now, okay?

Ben reaches out and touches him. Tries to rouse him. Genuinely upset to see him in such a state.

BEN

Man o' man.

Lucas suddenly rouses. Billy wakes up. Heads over.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

LUCAS

Ben? BEN!

BEN

Yeah... Lucas... I'm right here.

LUCAS

(whispers)

Bring me... my... son.

Ben nods. Lucas spasms and loses consciousness.

BILLY

What'd he say?

BEN

Wants to see Caleb.

(beat)

Looks bad, Billy.

BILLY

I think he's gonna pull through.

BEN

For you, I meant. What do you got to say for yourself.

BILLY

I didn't do it. All I'm gonna say.

BEN

Know a good attorney.

BILLY

I won't need one. Unless this is gonna be typical Trinity justice. Kangaroo Court.

BEN

You're placed at the scene of the crime. Motivation witnessed by several people. Fingerprints on the murder weapon. The victim even grabbed your throat and shouted your name. Pretty conclusive... 'less you're a Heisman Trophy winner.

BILLY

You forgot one important point.

BEN

Yeah?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

BILLY

There hasn't been a murder.

Billy is hovering over Lucas, checking vitals.

BILLY

If I tried to murder him, I'd want him dead. And I don't. But others do.

BEN

Selena has something to do with this, doesn't she?

Billy is really clamming up now.

BEN

Partial conversation was heard earlier. Could be very damning as well in light of later events. Could make it a premeditated attack.

BILLY

You want to know anything about Selena, I suggest you go ask Selena. Got nothin' more to say to you, Ben. Now get out of here... I gotta keep his swelling in check.

Billy pulls on gloves again. Ben starts to head out.

BEN

Don't go anywhere Doctor Peele. Stick right here in this building till I say so. Understood.

BILLY

Understood... Deputy Healy.

The two friends have never been in this position.

INT. SCHOOL - SELENA'S CLASSROOM - DAY - CLOSEUP - A GLOBE spinning, covered with some liquid. SUDDENLY it erupts in FLAMES. To a chorus of cheers and laughter. The world burns.

SELENA

grabs a fire extinguisher and immediately knocks the fire out. Kids sprayed with foam.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SELENA
Alright everybody out! In the
hall! Right now!

Selena opens the windows to let the smoke out.

SELENA
Caleb? Did you do that?

Caleb comes over, looking more mischievous than we've ever
seen him.

CALEB
Experiment. What happens if we
lose our orbit. And get too close
to the sun.

The way he says it is disturbing. Not the usual charmer we
know.

SELENA
You know better!

CALEB
(defiant)
Do you?

She starts after him...

SELENA
Caleb...

He turns and hustles out through the smoke.

AT THE DOOR

The last of the kids exit. Ben enters.

SELENA
Always good to see you, Ben.

BEN
This isn't social, Selena. In
fact... it's very professional.

SELENA
You're always that, Ben.

Ben rolls his eyes and comes over, takes out his pad.

BEN
Witness says you came by to see
Doctor Peele yesterday. Was that
visit... clinical? Or personal?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

SELENA

Does all this have a point?

BEN

You don't know, do you, Selena?
You been in school all day.

SELENA

Know what?

BEN

Lucas...

SELENA

Did he hurt Billy? God, I swear...
I'll kill him!

BEN

Selena... somebody skewered the
front of Lucas' cerebellum... with
a medical gadget. Tried to suck
his brains out. Billy's very much
a suspect.

A long moment while it sinks in... Then Selena starts to
laugh. A crazy, nervous laugh.

SELENA

Lucas... finally... somebody stuck
it in you... for a change.

She laughs till she practically falls on the floor. Then
gets serious.

SELENA

Will he live?

BEN

They don't know. Doctor Peele
stabilized him. Lucas is gonna
need all our prayers is what I'm
told.

SELENA

Our prayers? Ben, this is me...
Selena... you're talking to.

She tries to laugh again... but can't. A wave of genuine
emotion comes over her and she starts to cry.

Ben comes over and holds her. A bit awkward. Neither in
control.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 3

BEN

I know... it'll probably be just a little too weird if he's a goner. What'll we do with no Lucas Buck to torture our lives.

She sobs for a while, then breaks away...

SELENA

We'll live like we oughta been livin' the whole time. As we damn well please!

BEN

Selena... you didn't do it, did you?

Pause. Selena wipes away the last of her tears.

SELENA

Wish I had. But no, Ben, I'm not your culprit.

AT THE DOOR

Caleb is standing on something. Looking through the window part of the door... appearing to be six feet tall. A creepy intensity in his gaze.

BEN

I'm taking Caleb.

SELENA

What for?

BEN

His father wants to see him.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

We see... Caleb is standing on Boone's back, who's crouching down on all fours.

BOONE

Caleb... c'mon man... it hurts!

Caleb doesn't react to his friend's words in the slightest. His eyes are fixed on Ben and Selena. Listening to what they say.

INT. HOSPITAL - LOBBY - DAY

Ben enters with Caleb and Gail. Caleb looks curious. Gail very tentative about this visit to Lucas Buck.

BEN

Said no visitors for another hour or two.

They PASS BY THE PHARMACY. Yancy Carlisle watches them go by.

GAIL

Don't know what I'm even doin' here.

BEN

Nobody made you come, Gail.

GAIL

I know. He's gonna be okay?

BEN

Touch and go.

They come to the

WAITING AREA

Ben sees Dr. Pike way across the way coming out of Lucas' I.C.U. room.

BEN

Wait here. Caleb, you'll be the first to see him. Hang tight -- I got something I gotta do.

Ben goes over and talks to Dr. Pike in the b.g.

A nurse wheels by someone with a big bag of red plasma on an IV.

Gail's eyes follow it closely as it passes. Caleb notices this.

CALEB

You're not turnin' into a vampire on me, are you Gail?

GAIL

Caleb... course not.

In the b.g... Billy exits the I.C.U. Ben takes his cuffs out. Billy holds his wrists out. Ben decides not to cuff him.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

CALEB

Did Lucas Buck do something to you,
Gail? I know he did!

GAIL

What makes you say that?

CALEB

You say you hate him. But I know
you don't. It's like he put a
spell on you.

Ben leads Billy out past them.

CALEB

Hi, Billy Peele!

BILLY

Caleb.
(nods)
Gail...

Once he's passed.

CALEB

Jeez Louise... it was him who done
in Sheriff Buck. I'd o' never bet
that horse.

Billy looks back at Gail. She looks at him.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

BILLY

tries to catch up on sleep.

The SOUND of stiletto heels on concrete comes his way.
Their gait and rhythm perks his ears. He knows it's Selena
approaching.

He gets off his cot. But does not rush over to the bars.
At first Selena's shadow, then her flesh shows up outside.

SELENA

You'll never know how impressed I
am, Billy Peele.

BILLY

I didn't do it, Selena.

SELENA

Everybody thinks you did.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BILLY
They'll never prove it.
Circumstantial at best. The real
killer'll get what's comin' to 'em.

Billy slowly approaches the bars.

BILLY
Can't believe you really went
through with it.

SELENA
I was shootin' pool with Archie
Lauter. He'll vouch.

BILLY
Oh I'm sure he will.

Billy reaches through the bars... GRABS SELENA by the arms
and pulls her near. Squeezing her biceps a little too
tight.

BILLY
It wasn't you, was it? In the
house. Nope... not enough strength
in these stems to crack that thing
through his skull.

SELENA
Let me go!

He does.

BILLY
But you're behind it. Whoever it
was.

SELENA
I made a few wicked... jokes with
you. Guess it's bad luck to kid
about such things. But it was all
in the game, Billy.

Billy looks at her.

BILLY
I hadn't given my heart to anybody
in a long, long time. I started
to... with you Selena.

SELENA
It was a fair exchange. You know
how I feel about you.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

BILLY

Just can't believe you'd set me up. Cold-blooded. Got my fingerprints in his house. Left my belt. Used a weapon only a doctor would know about. You plan it since the day we met?

SELENA

I would never...

BILLY

(continues his rant)
Talkin' manslaughter... just a little too loud. They'll try to pin it on both of us. Premeditated. But you'll walk... and I'll fry.

SELENA

I won't let that happen.

They just stare at each other. She comes to the bars... puts her face through the gap. He leans over and kisses her. Their lips go at it. Minds of their own. Then Billy pulls away. Walks back into the shadows of his cell. Selena sighs, then clicks her heel on down the way... without a word.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING AREA - DAY

Dr. Pike comes over to Gail and Caleb. Gail looks at him, then shakes her head.

GAIL

I'm not ready to see him yet. I... just not... yet...

Caleb hops up. Dr. Pike walks him over towards Lucas' I.C.U. room.

INT. LUCAS' I.C.U. ROOM - DAY

As they come in... Dr. Pike is very surprised to see:

YANCY CARLISLE

standing over Lucas' bed. Yancy is a bit startled too (He cannot believe Lucas is still alive).

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DR. PIKE
Mr. Carlisle... what the hell are
you doin' in here?

YANCY
Just payin'... my respects.

DR. PIKE
There are no visitors. 'Cept
family.

Yancy on his way out... looks at Caleb. Caleb stares
daggers back at him.

Caleb goes over and pulls up a seat near Lucas.

CALEB
Like it or not... you're my daddy.
Felt I oughta come say somethin'.
Since it might be good-bye...
forever.

Dr. Pike hovers around some of the equipment. Monitoring
things legitimately. OR?

Caleb reaches out and touches Lucas. A wave of genuine
emotion comes over him.

CALEB
Never thought I'd feel like cryin'
over anything bad happenin' to
you... Sheriff buck.

Caleb wells up with tears.

CALEB
Maybe I'm cursed. But I'm a part
o' you and you're a part o' me.
(beat)
I don't want ya to go yet! Okay?

Lucas smiles. Then groggily wakes up. Lifts his arm up and
holds Caleb's hand.

THEN... Lucas begins to go through some horrible reaction.
Spasm of pain. He grimaces.

LUCAS
C'mere... come... closer...
Caleb...

Caleb is spooked, but Lucas has his hand in his grip. He
comes closer.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

Spasms get even worse. Monitors go off. People come into the room.

Lucas with his last ounce of strength drags Caleb close enough to whisper in his ear. We don't hear what he tells him.

FLATLINE DRONES... Alarms going off.

Rita goes over and pulls Caleb away from Lucas.

Caleb has the slightest smile on his face... but no one notices.

Dr. Pike and a crash unit pound Lucas' chest and apply the paddles repeatedly.

RITA
You okay? Did he say anything to you?

CALEB
Nope. Not a thing.

In the b.g., the crew gives up. Everybody looks at Lucas... but not Caleb.

DR. PIKE
He's dead. Lucas Buck is dead.

RITA
You gonna do an autopsy?

Dr. Pike thinks long and hard. Speaks in a whisper.

DR. PIKE
No. Should get this man in the ground as soon as possible.

Moving into --

EXTREME CLOSEUP ON CALEB'S FACE

Something is wrong. Something sinister we've never seen in him before...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY - LUCAS BUCK'S WAKE

The place is packed. Huge turn out. The King is dead. Half of them just want to know if it's really true.

PANNING

across the faces of some familiar CHARACTERS from previous episodes. T.J. from "Damned If You Don't"... Judge Jeb Streeter and his wife, Charlotte... Old Bertie... Gloria Kirby, etc.

One by one, people file up to the open coffin, to gaze at the body and speak their mind.

OLD LADY

Never thought I'd live to see the day. Guess there is a God.

She spits... right in Lucas' face. Crowd murmurs. An usher ushers her away.

BEN AND SELENA

react to the spit incident. Look at each other. Both feeling very weird. Disbelieving.

SELENA

Never thought in a million years he'd ever really... die.

BEN

Yeah. Who woulda.

Ben goes up toward the coffin.

DOWN IN FRONT

Selena comes over to Gail, who's sitting next to Caleb, dressed in black, head to toe.

SELENA

Hello Caleb... if there's anything I can do?

She strokes his head gently. He gives her a wicked look. That seems to say... 'You can go down on me right here, teacher!' Selena turns away from the disturbing stare.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SELENA

You look good in black, Miss Emory.
Mourning becomes you.

GAIL

Who did this to him? Are there any
suspects?

SELENA

Well I imagine there are. Billy
Peele. Yours truly and about half
o' Fulton County. Motive for doin'
in Lucas is about as rare as
nitrogen honey. He gave us all a
lotta grief.

Caleb gets up and leaves.

GAIL

(to herself)

He gave me somethin' more.

SELENA

Guess so.

CALEB

is moving through the back of the place where it's standing
room only. He's looking for someone.

YANCY

is lurking back here. People muttering... "It's a new day
in Trinity... "Won't have Lucas Buck to kick us around
anymore." But also some supporters: "Didn't know the man,
but it was always safe to walk the streets with him as
Sheriff. That's for sure"

Ben is keeping a wary eye on Selena. He watches her head
towards the back.

Gail comes up to the coffin. Can't bear to look at Lucas'
ashen face.

GAIL

(softly)

I came here, to your town to nail
you to the wall Lucas. Thought you
were the devil. But you can't be.
The devil doesn't die. I know
you've done some... questionable
things. But you were always good
to me.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED 2

GAIL (Cont'd)

(beat)

Then lo and behold Lucas... you touched me. Touched me deeply. I can't explain, but it was like I was connected... for the first time. Like destiny.

(breaks down)

It's just not fair. How could you... just when I opened up to you... looked at you with these brand new eyes... how could you go? How could you give me your child and leave me. It's just not fair... it's not fair...

She collapses on the coffin. People mutter.

CALEB

comes over to Yancy. Stands right in front of him. Yancy is wary of the intensity of his stare. Caleb holds his hand out. Yancy shakes it. But Caleb won't let go.

CALEB

You're a-liar!

YANCY

What're you talkin' about, kid?

Ben's keen eye is on this exchange as well.

CALEB

You didn't respect him. You hated him as much as anybody can hate anything.

People are starting to mutter and look this way.

Caleb, with one last squeeze of strength... really crushes Yancy's hand. (beyond what a young boy should be able to do). Then lets go and scurries away.

Ben watches Yancy... looking very guilty, holding his hand in pain... slinking over to Selena. But she turns away and ignores him as he tries to say something to her.

Yancy backs away through the crowd...

Ben ponders what this all means.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

Yancy is doing his work. A huge amount of prescriptions to fill. Backed up for days. Counting out pills.

YANCY

So much work to do. So many orders to fill.

The door opens. The tinkly bell goes off indicating someone entering. Yancy doesn't even look up.

Selena goes over to Yancy.

SELENA

Town won't be the same.

YANCY

Lucas Buck was quite a man.

Ben is watching these two from across the way. So is Caleb.

YANCY

Helped an awful lotta people, I'm told. I respect that.

Selena ambles off.

INT. JAIL - DAY

BEN

comes to the bars outside Billy's cell.

BILLY

How was the service, Ben? You give a eulogy.

BEN

I mourned in my own private way.
(beat)
In between bodyguarding the coffin.

BILLY

So, now you're the man.

BEN

Hardly. Town's 'bout to split at the seams.

BILLY

What're you doin' here, then?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BEN

Anytime there's... too much evidence stacked against someone in a crime... you gotta be suspicious. Your prints were on the marrow thing, but there were "non-prints" there, too. Someone who wore rubber gloves. Why both? Makes you wonder.

BILLY

Lucas died while I was in here. That oughta tell you something.

(beat)

And he wasn't ready to die when I left him, Ben. What'd the autopsy say?

BEN

There wasn't one. His will forbid it. Said no embalming, either. Get him in the ground by sundown.

BILLY

You gotta be kidding.

BEN

On file with Dr. Pike. It was his signature, Billy.

Billy is incredulous.

BILLY

You let me outta here. I'll prove... shadow of a doubt... I didn't do it. C'mon, Ben.

BEN

Who the hell did?

BILLY

There's a guy who I know was ready to snap. He had it in for Lucas. Selena knew it, too. He even worked at the hospital.

Ben mulls it over.

BEN

Not Yancy Carlisle?

Billy reacts.

INT. COMA WARD ROOM'- DAY

Yancy enters the room, carrying a satchel, sets it on a table and opens it. Begins to take out precious personal things of this couple. Framed photos, toys, a pillow. Locks of hair. Tickets. Programs to ball games and ballets. A square of quilt, etc.

YANCY

(talking to God)

I've sinned. Struck a man with a mortal blow. If he indeed was a man. But I knew it was wrong. Even as I did it. Yet there was a greater good to be done by striking that blow.

In the corner of the room... something begins to glow. Merlyn fades in, watching this man.

YANCY

I'm here for my Doris. Wherever she is, in that unholy place... with that pain that grips her. I pray... "she shall be released!"

He moves toward the plug.

Merlyn waits for him there. Yancy gasps seeing her.

MERLYN

You know what you are doing?

YANCY

Bein' an agent of mercy.

MERLYN

Life is precious. Every life.

YANCY

But that is not living.

Merlyn isn't here to stop him. She's listening.

YANCY

I know you. You're Merlyn Temple. I used to send you sedatives and sasparilla. When you were... alive.

It sinks in to Yancy who he's really talking to. Merlyn reacts, too.

MERLYN

That was you?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

YANCY

You're in a better place now. You of all people must understand what I'm saying.

MERLYN

I do.

He leans toward the plug. She moves to stop that.

MERLYN

No!

YANCY

Please.

MERLYN

Allow me to do this. Save yourself a sin.

Yancy smiles... nods to thank her.

JUST THEN... across the room... DORIS wakes up.

DORIS

Yancy? Where am I? How'd I get in here? Yancy... are you there?

Yancy can't quite believe this... his Doris is back. Yancy looks at Merlyn.

YANCY

She's back? My Doris... forever...

Merlyn shakes her head.

MERLYN

For as long as you two need to say everything needs to be said.

Yancy nods... understands. Thanks her just the same.

He hurries to Doris' side. We stay with Merlyn as she observes Yancy and Doris hugging and kissing.. touching... drowning in each other's tears across the room.

DORIS

Oh God... Yancy.

YANCY

Been so long, darlin'...

Merlyn sheds a tear herself.

INT. HOSPITAL

Ben and Billy come hustling in. This wing is deserted. Just a receptionist. Billy head towards Lucas' ICU room.

BILLY

I want records, Ben. Every test and medication that was done. While I was attending and after. We may have to exhume.

BEN

What about Carlisle?

BILLY

When he comes in, in the morning... nab him. Do your thing, Ben.

Before they get to the door for ICU... there's a SOUND way across the lobby. MOANING. SOMETHING CRASHES.

Both hear a scrambling across the lobby. Caleb dashes out of the Pharmacy. He looks at them, then runs away.

Both Billy and Ben run over.

BEN

Caleb... Hey... come back here!

Caleb stops, turns back. The look on his face sends a shiver down your spine. He's on the dark side, now. Like a feral child.

Caleb takes off again. They are about to pursue... when a voice is heard inside the Pharmacy. Choking. Glass breaks. They look inside.

INT. PHARMACY - NIGHT

Yancy lays on the ground, choking. Desperately trying to draw air into his lungs. His mouth and throat totally stuffed with pills.

Ben and Billy come running over and hunker down next to him.

Billy tries the Heimlich. A few pills spit out... like teeth... but he's still choking.

BILLY

Ben... give me your fountain pen!

Ben double-takes. Hesitates. (for the Internet crowd... a deja vu of Selena getting Ben's pen so Lucas could kill Gage Temple)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Now Ben!

BILLY

Ben still is tentative... as he slowly takes out his special pen. Billy grabs it. Uncaps it, rips out the ink cartridge...

He slices a little gash with a knife... Then SLAMS THE HOLLOW SHAFT INTO YANCY'S THROAT... doing a tracheotomy.

Yancy breaths.

BILLY

I just saved your life, Yancy. Now you can save mine. Tell him.

Yancy spits out a few more pills. Looks like teeth.

YANCY

I did it. Hit him with that thing. Didn't think I killed him, though. Third eye... that's where his power is. Third eye!

Ben and Billy look at each other. The guy's cracked.

YANCY

Thought for sure I'd get caught. Wasn't right to leave you on the spot, Dr. Peele.. You been nuthin' but good to me.

BILLY

It's okay. It all worked out okay.

YANCY

Yes it did. Doris... she's free!

He smiles.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

CAMERA moves through the darkened, vacant place. A storm outside. Lightning flashing and thunder getting louder.

Moving towards Lucas' coffin. Nailed shut, now. Closer and closer... Lightning strikes...

INT. COFFIN - NIGHT

Thunder rolls. Lucas' eyes open! He can't move a muscle.
Paralyzed... but LUCAS BUCK IS ALIVE!!!

FADE OUT

TO BE CONTINUED...