

THE STAND

Part II

by

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[The second night will open with a brief recap of the first night's action.]

## ACT 1

FADE IN ON:

1 EXT. THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE DAY 1

It's sizzling in the midday sun. A rectangular hole that can only be a grave has been dug in PETER GOLDSMITH'S beloved garden. A spade waits in the pile of dirt beside it.

TITLE CARD: OGUNQUIT, MAINE JUNE 29

From inside the house, a voice of heartbreaking clarity soars.

FRAN (voice; sings)

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me...

2 INT. CANVAS, ECU 2

A heavy needle held by a young woman's fingers is sewing up the seam in a canvas tarp. Within the V of the closing seam, we can see the pink and white stripes of a pajama top.

THE CAMERA WIDENS OUT and shows us PETER GOLDSMITH. He's dead; not all the chicken soup in the world could save him from this version of the flu. FRAN has propped him up on his pillows and is sewing him into the canvas tarpaulin that's to be his shroud. Nothing shows but his face (eyes peacefully closed in this case) and the pink and white collar of his pajama top.

FRAN (sings)

I once was lost but now am found,  
Was blind but now I see.

FRAN is in deep shock here, but that's not bad at all--it has lifted her beyond herself and made this extraordinary act of love possible. She kisses her father's forehead.

FRAN

I love you, Dad. Frannie loves you.

She starts sewing again. And humming "Amazing Grace."

3 EXT. THE GOLDSMITH DRIVEWAY 3

A large red Cadillac, somehow vulgar in this day after the end of the world, rolls slowly up the driveway. HAROLD LAUDER, resplendent in a leisure suit the color of fresh snot, gets out, looks around. Then starts slowly toward the house.

4 INT. THE STAIRWELL OF THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE, LOOKING UP 4

FRAN is staggering downstairs, carrying the canvas-wrapped body. What she's doing is physically impossible, but she's not only doing it, she's still humming "Amazing Grace." Sweat pours down her serene face. She reaches the foot of the stairs and THE CAMERA BACKS UP, keeping her in view as she advances.

KNOCKING on the frame of the screen door outside the kitchen.

HAROLD (hesitant voice)  
Fran?...Mr. Goldsmith?...anyone?

FRAN  
I'm here, Harold.

5 EXT. ~~INT.~~ AT THE KITCHEN DOOR, WITH HAROLD 5

He's overjoyed. Not only is someone else alive in this suddenly dead world, it's the girl he has a violent crush on. He tears the door open and bolts inside. As he does, FRAN enters from the living room. She staggers, on the verge of falling. HAROLD saves her at the last moment by getting his hands under the shroud-wrapped body. He realizes what it is, and his face cramps with horror and revulsion. FRAN looks at him, and he sees something--some depth of love--in her face that silences him before he can say anything.

FRAN is utterly done in. Silent tears slip down her cheeks.

FRAN  
It's my Dad. I'm going to bury him in his garden. It's the place he loved the best. I think he'll be able to rest there. I really do. But it's so hot...and I'm tired. Will you help me, Harold?

He'd walk across coals of fire for her, if she asked.

HAROLD  
Of course.

They start for the door, the body swinging between them.

6 EXT. THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE EVENING 6

The hole and the pile of dirt have been replaced by a mound and a wooden cross. The yacht-sized Cadillac is still parked in the driveway. There are lights downstairs in the GOLDSMITH house, but they are dim and flickery--there's no electrical power left in Ogunquit.

7 INT. THE GOLDSMITH LIVING ROOM, WITH HAROLD 7

He's looking at a newspaper by the light of a couple of gas lanterns. The paper's three or four days old. The headline reads SUPERFLU SWEEPS COUNTRY GOVERNMENT MUTE. He casts it aside as FRAN comes in with a pitcher of lemonade on a tray.

FRAN

It's warm, of course, but not too bad.

HAROLD is up with puppyish speed, trying to help.

HAROLD

I don't mind warm lemonade; I like it!

FRAN smiles tiredly as HAROLD takes the tray and pours himself a glass. There is a feeling of great melancholy about her tonight. HAROLD follows her with doggy, adoring eyes as she goes to the window.

8 EXT. OGUNQUIT, FRANNIE'S POV NIGHT 8

Dark. Silent. Nothing moving.

FRAN (voice)

It doesn't look like the town I grew up in. It looks like another planet.

9 INT. THE LIVING ROOM, WITH HAROLD AND FRAN 9

She's still looking out the window.

HAROLD

I know what you mean. It's spooky. I always hated it here...the high-school cretins who seemed to spend all their time trying to turn me into a joke...all I ever wanted was to escape. To go to college and never look back. Let alone come back.

He joins her at the window and takes his own look out.

HAROLD

And now all the cretins--all the guys who used to give me wedgies in gym--they're all gone and I want them back. Isn't that crazy?

CONTINUES

9 CONTINUES

She puts her arms around him and gives him a hug. It's brief, sisterly...but HAROLD looks like he's died and gone to heaven.

FRAN

We're not going to get it, are we?

HAROLD

No. Whatever makes for immunity, we've got it. And for two people from the same town, two people who know each other, to be immune...that's got to be a hit on the order of winning the Irish Sweepstakes.

[With sappy intensity]

There must be a reason for it.

She misses this clumsy stab at romance entirely.

FRAN

But you don't think we're...you know...the last?

HAROLD

No. Where there are two, there are probably more.

FRAN

But where? How do we connect with them?

She has begun to unconsciously rub her belly. HAROLD goes back to the couch. He has an air of suppressed excitement.

HAROLD

Stovington. Stovington, Vermont.

FRAN

What do you mean, Stovington, Vermont?

HAROLD

There's a government communicable disease center in Stovington. I was thinking that if there are people still alive and working on the flu, they'd be there. Immune cases, too.

FRAN (hugs him)

Harold, you're a genius!

HAROLD (sputtering happily)

Of course the disease center in Stovington might be deserted too...

FRAN

It won't be! I know it! I feel it!

9 CONTINUES (2)

HAROLD

Can you drive a motorcycle?

FRAN (still bubbling)

Sure! Jess taught me!

HAROLD

He's your boyfriend, isn't he?

FRAN'S face clouds up. Then she forces a smile.

FRAN

Nope. Not any more.

HAROLD (tremendous shyness)

Maybe I...you know, maybe I could be...

FRAN puts her arms around him and puts her head on his shoulder. It's still the embrace of a sister rather than a lover, however, and this time HAROLD knows it.

FRAN

Well, you'll always be my friend.  
Harold.

He hugs her back. If this is all there is, it will have to do...at least for now.

HAROLD

It's so quiet. That's what gets me the most,  
you know?

FRAN (sits up)

Oh! I forgot!

HAROLD

What, Fran?

FRAN (gaily)

It's a surprise! Wait right there!

She flies across the room and runs upstairs. HAROLD sits there, looking mystified, then goes back to the window. He hears FRAN coming downstairs and hurries ██████ to the sofa--maybe she'll sit beside him again.

FRAN enters the room with two red and white boxes. One's quite a bit bigger than the other, but they're clearly a matching set. On both are identical line drawings of a boy and girl jitter-bugging. FRAN opens them as she speaks, disclosing an old-fashioned teenager's record player--the kind that was made for slumber-parties and beach-parties and a storage box crammed full of old 45s.

CONTINUES

9 CONTINUES (3)

FRAN

I found it in the garage while I was looking for something to...[Pauses] While I was looking for a piece of canvas. I thought it would cheer me up. Maybe it'll cheer us both up.

HAROLD

Does it run on batteries?

FRAN

Uh-huh. So what do you want to hear?  
[Shuffles through the 45s]  
Journey? Kiss? The Stones?  
The Beach Boys?

HAROLD

Beach Boys! Yes!

FRAN

Awesome choice--we're not worthy.

She puts on the 45, turns a switch, and drops the needle. The Beach Boys start to sing: "Well, she took her daddy's car/And she's cruisin to the hamburger stand, now..." Their smiles waver and die as the truth hits home: the world they grew up with is gone--house spin, baby. They look at each other solemnly, on the verge of tears. HAROLD puts his arms around her; she puts hers around him. They don't hug like lovers but like a couple of kids lost in the woods.

10

EXT. FRAN DAY

10

She's shading her eyes and looking up at something we can't see. Her expression is apprehensive. In the b.g. is a long extendible ladder. Now it begins to shake as someone descends.

FRAN

Harold! Be careful!

HAROLD

I'm fine, Fran. Really.

He descends into the frame. His clothes, arms, and face are splattered with white paint, and he carries a nearly empty can in one hand. Sunburned and happy, HAROLD looks like a real person, with all his pretensions put aside, for the first time.

HAROLD

Well...what do you think?

FRAN

It's great, Harold.

- 11 EXT. MOSES RICHARDSON'S BARN ROOF, FRAN AND HAROLD'S POV 11  
 The sign, which HAROLD has painted in huge letters, reads: HAVE GONE TO STOVINGTON, VT. DISEASE CONTROL CENTER LEAVING OGUNQUIT JUNE 30 FOLLOW US HAROLD EMERY LAUDER FRANCIS GOLDSMITH.
- 12 EXT. FRAN AND HAROLD, AT THE FOOT OF THE LADDER 12  
 HAROLD (aw shucks, ma'am)  
 I didn't know your middle name, or I would have put that on, too.  
 FRAN  
 It's fine.  
 They start to walk through the field toward the main road (U.S. 1, most likely) where the [REDACTED] red Cadillac is parked. Further up, we see an overturned schoolbus and a Dairy Joy. The Dairy Joy's big plastic cone has fallen into the parking lot.  
 FRAN  
 Have you been having weird dreams since the flu, Harold?
- 13 EXT. HAROLD, CU 13  
 There's a strange, cautious look on his face.  
 HAROLD  
 Huh?
- 14 EXT. IN THE CORN, WITH HAROLD NIGHT 14  
 The director will indicate to us in some visual fashion that this is a dream. HAROLD is wearing a pair of those pajamas --decorated with football pennants or maybe can-can girls-- which are reserved strictly for fat introverts who live alone. He's walking down a row of corn.  
 FLAGG (friendly voice)  
 Harold? It's you, isn't it?  
 Glad to see you--how you doin?  
 HAROLD turns toward--
- 14 EXT. IN THE FIELD, WITH FRAN AND HAROLD DAY 14  
 HAROLD turns toward FRANNIE, his face smooth and innocent.  
 HAROLD (lying)  
 Nope; just the usual mind popcorn.  
 FRAN  
 I have. Two of them. There's a man in one--a scary man. He's out in the desert someplace...he looks at me...



15 EXT. IN THE DESERT, WITH FRAN AND RANDALL FLAGG NIGHT 15

Again the director will make it clear that this is a dream. FLAGG is squatting, back to THE CAMERA, near a small campfire. Buttes and mesas loom ominously in the b.g. In the f.g. is FRAN, barefoot, wearing a nightgown. We hear the SOUND of a LONELY DESERT WIND.

Although obviously frightened, FRAN takes a step forward, kicking a rock as she does so. FLAGG turns. He's wearing one of those sweatshirts with the attached hood, and the hood is up. Within it is only darkness and two dim points of RED LIGHT.

SOUND: A LOW, DOGLIKE GROWLING.

16 EXT. IN THE FIELD, WITH FRAN AND HAROLD 16

CAMERA TRACKS WITH THEM as they leave the field and walk along the shoulder of the road. In the b.g. we can see HAROLD'S sign on the roof of the Richardson barn. FRAN'S good humor is gone; recalling the dream has darkened her mood.

HAROLD

He looks at you? Yes? And?

FRAN (shrugs)

And I see he doesn't have a face.  
Just two red circles of light...  
like the eyes of an animal.

HAROLD tries a clumsy Boris Karloff imitation to cover his growing uneasiness. Her dream is too close to his.

HAROLD

"You'll scream...you'll choke...when  
you see The Fiend without a Face!"

FRAN

Not funny, Harold. In the other  
one I'm standing in the yard of a  
shacky little house in a cornfield.  
There's an old black lady on the  
porch with a guitar in her lap.  
She says she lives in Nebraska, and  
we all need to come and see her.

They reach the Cadillac.

HAROLD (very uneasy now)

That one sounds as weird as the one  
about the guy in the desert.

CONTINUES

16 CONTINUES

FRAN

No, this one's nice. She's nice. And what makes these dreams especially weird is that they don't fade like dreams usually do. I can't get over the idea that those people are real.

[Reacts to his look]

You don't know what I'm talking about, do you?

HAROLD (lying his ass off)

Nope. I wish I did, but--

FRAN (sighs)

Well, never mind. Let's go get us some rolling iron, Harold.

HAROLD

Now you're talking.

They get into the red Cadillac and drive away, HAROLD steering carefully around the overturned bus.

17 EXT. A MOTORCYCLE DEALERSHIP, LONG DAY 17

Two bikes pull away from the gas pumps at the side of the building and out onto the wreck-littered highway. There they idle side by side.

18 EXT. FRAN AND HAROLD, CLOSER 18

HAROLD (buckling helmet strap)

You ready?

FRAN

God, yes! Vermont or bust!

HAROLD

Let's go.

They drive off, and THE CAMERA PANS TO FOLLOW. HAROLD gives an exultant "Yahoo!" FRAN echoes it. We HOLD ON the dwindling bikes for a moment, then

DISSOLVE TO:

19 EXT. A DEAD LION DAY 19

It lies on its side in a cage.

TITLE CARD: NEW YORK CITY JUNE 30

CONTINUES

## 19 CONTINUES

THE CAMERA PANS some of the other cages in the Central Park Zoo. We see more dead beasts. At last we come to the one living being here: a grizzled, shocked-looking LARRY UNDERWOOD, standing on a nearby jogging path.

LARRY (shouts)

Hello?

20 EXT. VARIOUS VIEWS OF CENTRAL PARK 20

As LARRY'S shout ECHOES, we see the carousel, Tavern on the Green, a softball field, a vacant playground with the swings and seesaws standing still. The occasional dead body.

21 EXT. LARRY 21

He cups his hands around his mouth.

LARRY (screaming this time)

Hello, is anybody there?

22 EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE PARK, WITH NADINE CROSS 22

She's a beautiful woman whose age is difficult to guess, partly because her dark hair is shot through with startling streaks of white. She's at least ten years older than LARRY, and it might be even more. She is sitting on a park bench, not reacting to LARRY'S shouts, although she and we can hear them clearly.

The MONSTER-SHOUTER is lying dead on his back not too far away. He's still got his bell in one stiffening hand, but the Central Park pigeons have gobbled his eyes. New Yorkers are so rude.

LARRY (voice, closer)

Is anybody ANYWHERE?

NADINE takes a cigarette and lighter out of her purse. She debates, takes another look at the MONSTER-SHOUTER, and decides.

NADINE

Over here!

23 EXT. LARRY, ON THE CENTRAL PARK RAMBLE 23

He comes sprinting TOWARD THE CAMERA, his face so brightly hopeful it nearly blazes. He stops and looks around, suddenly frantic with the possibility that the voice may not shout again...or worse, that there was no voice, except in his own mind.

LARRY

Where? Keep shouting!

24 EXT. NADINE, ON HER PARK BENCH

24

She smiles, drops her half-smoked cigarette to the gravel, and crushes it beneath the toe of one ladylike pump. Then she reaches back into her purse, this time emerging with a pearl-handled .22 revolver. It's every bit as ladylike as her shoes, but probably a lot more deadly.

NADINE

I don't believe I need to.

LARRY bursts through a line of bushes and looks at her, wild-eyed. She looks back calmly. He sees the pistol in her lap.

LARRY (points at the .22)

You wouldn't shoot me with that, would you?

NADINE

Are you dangerous?

LARRY

Only to myself.

NADINE (puts the gun away)

Then I'm not going to shoot you. You look frazzled. Come and sit down.

He walks slowly over, sits down, looks at her with wonder.

LARRY

I can smell your perfume.

NADINE (smiles faintly)

It's  Opium.

He abruptly hugs her. She looks startled, then realizes this is relief and not a prelude to rape. She smiles again and gives him a brief return hug before releasing him and pushing him away...down, boy. LARRY takes the hint.

NADINE

I'm glad to see you, too. Except for the pigeons, we seem to be the only living creatures left in the city.

LARRY

Don't you believe it. There's looting going on...and shooting. Some of the ones doing it are sick, but most of them aren't.

NADINE

So my gun might not be such a bad idea.

CONTINUES

24 CONTINUES

LARRY

No.

He gets up, goes over to the MONSTER-SHOUTER, and looks at him.

LARRY

You know, I've seen this guy.

NADINE (shudders)

How can you tell? His eyes are--

LARRY

By the mask. And the bell. I saw him in Times Square just before things really went to hell. He was shouting about monsters. He said they were coming.

NADINE

It seems he was right. I'm Nadine Cross.

She holds one well-manicured hand out to him without rising, just as cool as cucumbers in the shade. He takes it and shakes it before sitting beside her again. He's already interested in her, and well on his way to being fascinated.

LARRY

I'm Larry Underwood. I admire your composure, Nadine.

NADINE

It's not composure, it's shock.

LARRY

Tell me something.

NADINE

All right, but fair warning--if you ask me what my sign is, I really may be forced to shoot you.

LARRY (laughs)

Actually, I was going to ask if you'd like to have lunch with me.

NADINE

That would be lovely. One last rare rib-eye before the power goes off and we grim █████ survivors are reduced to bean-sprouts. Can you cook, Larry?

LARRY

I'm not bad, Nadine.

CONTINUES

24 CONTINUES (2)

She puts her hand on his arm and they get up. NADINE pauses for a final look at the poor old MONSTER-SHOUTER.

NADINE

He reminded me of an insane Diogenes.

LARRY (uneasy)

Yeah...just lookin for an honest monster.

She looks at him with surprise, then hands him her pistol.

LARRY

What's this for?

NADINE

I have an idea you're probably a lot more composed than I look. Now...are you going to feed the lady or not?

LARRY

I knew I was gonna meet someone nice today. That's why I made reservations.

They start off toward 5th. THE CAMERA watches them go.

NADINE

Maybe you're psychic.

LARRY

Maybe I am.

25 EXT. 123 WEST 44th STREET, BETWEEN 6th and BROADWAY 25

This is a restaurant called Un, Deux, Trois. 44th Street itself is deserted, except for the ever-present Traffic Jam of the Dead.

SOUND: The SIZZLE of good steak hitting a hot grille.

26 INT. UN, DEUX, TROIS, WITH NADINE 26

She's the only diner in the big room, sipping a glass of vino with a little Mona Lisa smile on her face. The SIZZLE is louder.

LARRY (voice)

How rare?

NADINE

Just run it through a warm room.

CONTINUES

26 CONTINUES

LARRY (approaching voice)  
You know, I was hoping you'd say that.

He's got a tray balanced on one hand and a chef's hat on his head. He sets the tray down on a nearby table, disclosing two giant steaks on dishes the size of serving platters. NADINE laughs and applauds.

LARRY grins and shakes his hands over his head like a victorious fighter. He serves the steaks, then takes off his apron and hat. As he sits down, something EXPLODES nearby. It's followed by the CHATTER OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE...a long, drawn-out SCREAM...and then silence again. But it's a hungry silence.

NADINE  
Jeez, Louise.

LARRY  
We have to get out.

NADINE  
I beg pardon?

LARRY  
Out. Just get the hell out. It isn't just the looters and the crazies, either. Do you have any idea what Manhattan's going to smell like by the middle of July, after all the people who are lying dead in all those apartments and high-rises start to rot?

NADINE (revolted)  
Okay--that's a wrap on the steak.

She puts her knife and fork down, takes a vial of pills from her purse, opens it, and swallows one with wine.

LARRY  
What's that?

NADINE (with a challenging look)  
Vitamin C.

LARRY  
Oh. Well...

CONTINUES

26 CONTINUES (2)

NADINE

It was a tranquilizer, all right? The thought of seven million people rotting in the July heat kind of got to me, I guess. I'm weird that way.

LARRY

Oh. Sorry. Really. Sometimes I can be the world's most insensitive bastard.

Another CHATTER OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE, this one more distant

NADINE

You're forgiven...mostly because I've got an idea that the time for sensitivity has passed. I think you're right, Larry--the Big Apple's baked. Would you like some company when you go?

LARRY

Sure.

If we haven't noticed before, we can't miss it now: he's falling in love with her.

NADINE

Good. When do we go?

Another EXPLOSION. They look toward the sound, then back at each other. NADINE stretches a hand out across the table to him, and LARRY takes it.

LARRY

The sooner the better.

NADINE

Where?

LARRY

West. Toward Nebraska. A town called Hemingford Home.

NADINE

Nebraska? Why there?

But there's something false about what she's saying. LARRY senses it and looks at her quizzically.

CONTINUES



26 CONTINUES (3)

LARRY

I've been dreaming about it. And about an old black woman who calls herself Mother Abigail. The town's real enough; I checked in the Rand-McNally Road Atlas.

NADINE

Are you saying you had a vision of this old black lady?

LARRY (intensely uncomfortable)

I know it sounds crazy, but...yeah. I guess I am saying something like that. You haven't had any dreams like that?

27 EXT. IN THE DESERT, WITH NADINE

27

She's three-quarters to us, her salt-and-pepper hair blown back by that lonely DESERT WIND. She appears nude.

FLAGG (voice)

Nadine.

She turns toward the voice, eyes widening. A HAND falls on her shoulder. We can just see the cuff of FLAGG'S denim jacket.

FLAGG

How I love to love Nadine.

He sweeps her into his arms--it happens before we get so much of a glimpse of his elusive face--and she locks her arms around his neck, embracing him passionately.

28 INT. IN THE RESTAURANT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

28

NADINE (curt)

I don't dream. I never have.

She **gets** up abruptly and walks toward the front window. LARRY **thinks** about it, then joins her. Outside, more AUTOMATIC WEAPONS CHATTER. NADINE flinches from the SOUND. LARRY puts his arm around her, and she looks at him gratefully.

NADINE

West is fine. Any direction is fine. Let's just get out of this...this high-rise graveyard.

LARRY (delighted)

Great!

CONTINUES

28 CONTINUES

He sweeps her into his arms and aims a kiss at her mouth. NADINE turns her face slightly, so the kiss lands on her cheek. And we see that strange little Mona Lisa smile again.

FLAGG (faint voice)

How I love to love Nadine...

DISSOLVE TO:

29 EXT. A BRICK BUILDING IN A WESTERN CITY DAY 29

It's a grim-looking institution with bars on the windows of the top three floors. In the b.g., the city skyline bakes in the summer sun. Nothing moves.

TITLE CARD: PHOENIX CITY JAIL JUNE 30

SOUND, FAINT: METAL RINGING ON METAL. It sounds like Gabby Hayes ringing the chuckwagon triangle in an old Western.

30 INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY WING DAY 30

The CLANGING IS LOUDER, ECHOEY. We're looking down a narrow aisle between double-decker cells, maybe twenty in all. In the extreme f.g., a GUARD lies crumpled on the floor, dead of the superflu.

LLOYD HENREID (voice)

Hey! Hey, somebody let me out!

The CLANGING SOUNDS STOP, then RESUME. THE CAMERA GLIDES DOWN the center aisle, floating past the cells. Many are empty, but those which are occupied are occupied by corpses.

Except for one. In the very last cell on the left, we can see a steel bar--actually a cotleg--hitting the cell bars and making that enormous RINGING SOUND.

LLOYD (voice continues)

You can't just let me die in here! It's not constipational! Hey, ANYBODY! Let me OUT OF HERE!

THE CAMERA reaches LLOYD. He barely resembles the confused stickup man we met in Burrack. He's pale, scared, and beard-scruffy. His uniform bags on him, looking four sizes too large. He bangs on the bars a few more times, then drops the cotleg, as if the effort has exhausted him. His right hand is streaked with blood, and the cotleg is smeared with it. Behind him, his bunk sags on its missing leg.

CONTINUES

30 CONTINUES

LLOYD (quieter now)  
You have to let me out. I'll starve if  
you don't.

It's himself he's talking to.

LLOYD (very soft)  
Starve.

He goes to the bars between this cell and the next.

LLOYD  
How you doin, Trask? How's the kid?

31 INT. TRASK'S CELL, LLOYD'S POV 31

TRASK lies face-up on the floor, dead of the superflu.

32 INT. LLOYD 32

LLOYD  
Good. Good. Glad to hear it.

He goes to his bunk and turns up a corner of the mattress at the head of the bed. Underneath are a few sticky, slimy dates. LLOYD takes about half of them, crams them into his mouth, gobbles, swallows. Sucks his fingers. Takes one or two more, then lowers the mattress again.

LLOYD  
Save the rest for later.

A crafty expression comes over his face. He goes back to the bars separating his cell from TRASK'S. He eats his dates and chats with the corpse. .

LLOYD  
I dreamed about him again last  
night, Trask--the guy I saw up  
on the phone pole. (Pause) God,  
I'm hungry.

LLOYD squats down and reaches carefully through the cell bars with his cotleg. As he fishes for TRASK, he begins to sing an old Jay and the Americans tune.

LLOYD (sings)  
"Come a little bit closer,  
You're my kind of man..."

CONTINUES

## 32 CONTINUES

LLOYD catches the collar of TRASK'S prison jump-suit and begins to pull him across the floor.

LLOYD (voice; sings)  
"So big and so strong,  
Come a little bit closer..."

We might have suspected before; now we know for sure. LLOYD is quite mad. He plays TRASK like a prize fish. When he gets him to the bars, he puts aside his cotleg and reaches through. He takes TRASK'S hand with all the gentleness of a lover.

LLOYD (strokes TRASK'S hand)  
"I'm all alone, and the night is so long."  
 [Normal speaking voice]  
 He's going to come for me. He said so. In my dream. I'll see that he takes you too, Trask. I stick up for my buddies; just ask...you know...Poke.

He pats TRASK'S hand, puts it down, then gets slowly to his feet. He sways, faint with hunger. He frowns down at TRASK, and shakes his finger at the dead man.

LLOYD  
 He will come. But you gotta believe.

He goes to his cot again, and this time he turns up the foot of the mattress. He looks down at something with eyes which are both rapt and revolted.

LLOYD  
 Just in case.

33 INT. FOOT OF THE COT, LLOYD'S POV 33

There's a big dead rat lying there.

34 INT. LLOYD 34

LLOYD  
 Emergency supplies. You know.

He goes to the bars giving on the corridor and looks out.

LLOYD (not much hope)  
 Hey! Anybody there? [Pause] Anybody?  
 [Pause] Please?

He lowers his head against the bars, a picture of misery and terror and madness.

CONTINUES

34 CONTINUES

LLOYD (very low)  
Please come. Please. I'll do anything.  
Anything at all--if you'll only come  
and let me out.

35 EXT. THE CHEERY OIL REFINERY, LONG DAY 35

TITLE CARD: POWTANVILLE, INDIANA JUNE 30

The refinery holding tanks look like huge white tin cans on the horizon. We can read the words CHEERY OIL on their plump sides.

TRASHCAN MAN (faint)  
"Baby can you dig your man,  
He's a righteous man,  
Baby, you can tell me if anyone can,  
Baby can you dig your man?"

36 EXT. THE STAIRS GOING UP THE SIDE OF THE TANK DAY 36

THE CAMERA SPIRALS UP, past the giant red letters spelling out CHEERY OIL. The TRASHCAN MAN continues to SING. Below that, we hear the SQUEAK-SQUEAK of a wrench working a rusty bolt-head.

TRASHY (sings)  
"Now I didn't come here to BUMP-te-BUMP,  
An I didn't come here to THUMP-de-THUMP..."

THE CAMERA reaches the top. We see THE TRASHCAN MAN for the first time. He's back to us, bent over the pumping machinery in the center of the oil-tank's flat, circular top. Beside him is an open back-pack. That SQUEAKING SOUND is LOUDER, and we can see he's operating a long-handled wrench.

TRASHY (sings)  
"You just gotta tell me if anyone CAN,  
Baby can you dig your MAN, he's a righteous--"

1st TEENAGE VOICE  
Hey, Trash! What'd ole lady Semple say  
when you torched her pension check?

2nd TEENAGE VOICE  
Hey, Trash--people who play with fire  
wet the bed! Dintcha know that, freako?

3rd TEENAGE VOICE  
Yeah, and then they have to go to the  
looneybin up in Terre Haute!

4th TEENAGE VOICE (female)  
Oougghh! Keep him away from me!

CONTINUES

## 36 CONTINUES

TRASH wheels around, terrified, confused, ashamed, and we get our first good look at him. If there can be such a thing as an intellectual imbecile, TRASHY is it. He's twenty-two and built like a football tackle. Tiny wire-rimmed spectacles bob up and down in the middle of his huge face. He holds the wrench up like a club.

TRASH

Stop it! Just stop it!

The voices LAUGH MOCKINGLY.

5th TEENAGE VOICE

Hey, Trash! Why dintcha burn up the school?

More LAUGHTER. CATCALLS. TRASH begins to back away, dismayed and frightened...toward the edge of the tank...toward death... or suicide...when...

FLAGG (voice)

No one's there, Trash.

TRASHCAN MAN stops and cocks his head attentively. A little smile lurks around the corners of his mouth, hoping to be born.

FLAGG (voice)

They're all dead and they can't hurt you anymore. Can't tease you anymore.

TRASH

Can't hurt me. Can't tease me.  
Not anymore. Bumpty-bump! My life  
for you!

He returns to the pipe sticking out of the pumping machinery. The cap has been mostly unthreaded. TRASH puts the wrench on it, gives it a turn, and the cap falls off.

TRASH

There! Bumpty-bump! Dig your man!

He puts the pipe-wrench down, rummages in his pack, and comes out with an old-fashioned alarm-clock which has been attached to a dry-cell battery. Wrapped around it is a lot of electrical cord which ends in two copper wires. These strands have been braided together to make a metal pigtail about eighteen inches long.

TRASHCAN MAN unwraps the cord and begins to feed it into the pipe, continuing to sing his own peculiar version of LARRY'S hit song under his breath. When the cord is paid out all the way to the battery, he sets the clock's alarm to midnight and the hands to 11:58. Then he twists the wind-up key on the back of the clock several times. The clock starts to TICK. TRASHY stands up and backs away from it, his eyes wide.

37 EXT. THE CLOCK-FACE, ECU TRASHY'S POV 37

This close, we can see the minute-hand moving. It's almost reached 11:59. Midnight is suicidally close.

38 EXT. TRASH, CU 38

He looks drugged, fascinated...and then a big, nutty grin surfaces on his face.

FLAGG (voice)  
Go, Trashy! Run! Now!

TRASH (waking up)  
Yuh!

Still grinning, he turns and pelts across the top of the tank toward the stairs.

39 EXT. TRASHCAN FLEES DOWN THE STAIRS DAY 39

We will INTERCUT TRASHY'S headlong flight down the metal stairway that spirals around the oil-tank with the TICKING CLOCK. When TRASH gets about halfway down, he stumbles and falls, cutting his face and scalp. He picks himself up and runs on. He's terrified...but he's also CACKLING WILDLY.

40 EXT. THE PUMPING MACHINERY 40

LIQUID FIRE belches out of the pipe and sets TRASHCAN MAN'S pack on fire. More FLAME JETS from the pipe, and AN EXPLOSION rips through the pumping equipment. Now there is a core of fire burning hotly at the center of the tank's top.

41 EXT. THE BASE OF THE OIL-TANK, A LONGER SHOT 41

We're looking at the tank from the far side of Indiana Route 130. TRASHY reaches a point about twelve feet above the ground and leaps over the railing. He sprawls in the gravel, picks himself up, and RUNS FULL OUT for the highway, darting scared looks back over his shoulder as he comes. He's still grinning. Scared or not, he's loving every moment of it.

As he crosses Route 130:

TRASH  
MY LIFE FOR YOU! BUMPTY-BUMPTY-BUMP!

42 EXT. THE CHEERY OIL TANK, MEDIUM LONG 42

It explodes into a GIGANTIC FIREBALL.

43 EXT. TRASHCAN MAN

43

Hell is behind him...and reaching out for him with burning fingers. TRASHCAN MAN throws himself into the ditch on the far side of the highway. A muddy, marshy trickle of water runs through it. He begins to crawl along the ditch through the water, still grinning. Charred bits of fallout from the explosion sift down on him, and the sky above him is darkening with oily black smoke.

TRASHCAN MAN (shrieks)  
MYYY LIIIFE FORR YOUUUUU!

44 EXT. THE CHEERY OIL TANK FARM

44

The other tanks explode. It's total inferno; the apocalypse has come to Indiana.

45 EXT. FURTHER DOWN ROUTE 130

45

We're about a half a mile from the oil-tanks now; the difference is like the difference between being in hell and just looking in through the door. The fire boils and moils in a bouquet of dangerous yellow roses. Over them, clouds of black smoke rise like thunderheads into the Indiana air.

TRASHY comes bolting up and out of the ditch. He's streaked with mud and blood and his clothes are smoked to his body. Most of his hair is burned off. His gold-rimmed glasses hang askew. He looks like Donald Duck's inventor friend Gyro Gearloose after a run of bad luck. He runs directly TOWARD THE CAMERA.

FLAGG (voice)  
Trash. Trashcan Man.

TRASHCAN MAN stops and looks around, the burning oil-tanks behind him forgotten for the time being.

TRASHY  
What? Where are you?

He looks up at:

46 EXT. TELEPHONE LINES, TRASHCAN'S POV

46

There's a CROW perched on the line--almost certainly OUR CROW.

FLAGG (voice)  
Everywhere.



47 EXT. TRASHCAN MAN, ON ROUTE 130

47

He's totally blissed out.

FLAGG (voice)

I will place you high in my counsels,  
Trash. And I will set you to burn.

TRASHY sinks slowly to his knees and clasps his hands in a gesture of prayer as the oil-tanks blaze behind him, lighting him in a corona of fire.

TRASHY

My life for you. My life for you!

CAMERA MOVES IN on his blistered, soot-streaked face, and then we

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 1.

## ACT 2

48 EXT. A SMALL HOUSE IN A SEA OF CORN NEAR SUNSET

48

It's one we've seen before, in the dream STU had just before DEITZ tried to kill him. We're looking down on it from a HIGH CAMERA POSITION which emphasizes the way the surrounding fields of corn make the clearing look like an island. There's only one tree--the hardy old survivor with the tire-swing hanging from it. Off to one side is a small building which can only be the privy.

TITLE CARD: HEMINGFORD HOME, NEBRASKA JUNE 30th

THE CAMERA BOOMS DOWN toward the outhouse with the crescent moon carved in the door. As we CLOSE IN, the door opens. The ancient black woman STU, FRAN, and LARRY have all dreamed about walks slowly out. Her face is lovely and serene as she surveys her yard. She puts her hands in the small of her back, stretches, and winces with pleasure as small bones CRACKLE AND STRETCH. She talks to the Lord throughout--and what she's doing really does have a lot more in common with ordinary conversation than it does with prayer; to MOTHER ABAGAIL, God is almost an equal. After all, He and she are approximately the same age.

MOTHER ABAGAIL

You were right, Lord. Those prunes did the trick. But my, don't they taste nasty?

She WALKS SLOWLY across the yard, stopping by the tire swing.

ABBY (pushes the swing)

"Once in every generation the plague shall fall among em"--that's what it says in Your Book, Lord. But it seems like You might have gone a little too far this--

She hears a SOUND--a combination RUSTLING IN THE CORN and LOW ANIMAL SQUEAKING. She turns and looks at:

49 EXT. CORNFIELD, MOTHER ABAGAIL'S POV

49

There's something moving around the base of the stalks. Small dark things. Furry things.

50 EXT. ABBY

50

ABBY

Rats in the corn, Lord. And the rats  
are his, ain't they? Well-a-day.

She begins walking again. We can see a rocking chair on the porch. On the table beside it is a cup of coffee. Leaning up against the wall is an old steelhead guitar.

MOTHER ABAGAIL reaches the foot of the porch steps, looks up at the sky, and we see she's not as serene as we first thought.

ABBY

They're coming, Lord...I feel em. The man from Texas...the one from New York... the man who can't talk...the woman with child. They'll pick up more along the way, too. But some of em'll be goin on. To him.

The WIND GUSTS. The CORN RATTLES. She surveys it.

51 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, CORNFIELD POV

51

SOFT SQUEAKS AND RUSTLES.

ABBY

Rats in the corn.

[She raises her voice]

I know you're there! I feel you  
lookin at me!

[Back to normal tone]

Well-a-day.

She slowly begins to mount the steps.

52 EXT. THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

52

It's only four or five steps up to the porch, but even that has clearly exhausted her. When she speaks, she's out of breath.

ABBY

I know what you're askin, Lord,  
an I don't want to do it. I'm scared,  
but that ain't the main thing. The  
main thing is I'm a hundred and six  
years old come October--a fact You  
know well, Lord--and that's a mite  
long in the tooth to be leadin the  
Children of Israel out of Egypt...  
or the Children of America into  
Colorado.

CONTINUES

## 52 CONTINUES

She sits down with the knees-coming-totally-unlocked suddenness of extreme old age, closes her eyes for a moment, and works on getting her breath back. When she has, she takes her cup of coffee and drinks some.

ABBY

I know, Lord...Doctor said cut out the coffee, said the caffeine's bad for my ticker. But I only have just the two cups a day. [Pauses] Well... sometimes three. [Pauses] 'Sides, he's dead n I'm alive.

She looks out at the corn and returns to her main thesis.

ABBY

I'll do what You say, Lord--ain't I always?--but at the end of it even Your own Son prayed that the cup be taken from his lips. All I'm askin is that You let me die where I've lived all these years. If that ain't Your will, then Thy will be done...but for whatever it's worth, I don't like it much n I don't understand it at all.

She's had her say; now she takes her guitar on her lap and begins to play "Jesus, Won't You Come By Here." Her voice is old, cracked, wavery, and absolutely beautiful.

ABBY (sings)

"Now is the needy time,  
Lord, now is the--"

Breaks off in surprise and fear.

53 EXT. THE EDGE OF THE CORN, ABBY'S POV TWILIGHT 53

Magic hour has arrived, and every shadow seems to have its own life. Standing among the shadows, almost seeming to be formed of them, is RANDALL FLAGG. He's about three rows back in the corn, dressed in his old jeans and denim jacket. His face is DIM, but this time it's there, and it's recognizably human.

54 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, ON THE PORCH 54

ABBY

The devil's imp! But I got the Lord to protect me, n I ain't afraid of the likes of you.

- 55 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN 55  
Rats SQUEAK and SQUIRM around his old cowboy boots.  
FLAGG (very low)  
I think you lie, old mother.  
He raises his hands and holds them palms-out to her. There are no lines on those palms.
- 56 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL 56  
ABBY (frightened but determined)  
Get thee hence!
- 57 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN 57  
Those RED POINTS OF LIGHT appear in his eyes; he continues to hold his hands out to her.  
FLAGG  
Turn them away if they come, mother--  
take my advice and turn them away.  
If you come into the west, you'll  
die there. All of you will die there.
- 58 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL 58  
She begins to play her guitar and sing...to drown him out.  
ABBY (sings)  
"What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear..."
- 59 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN 59  
FLAGG (closes his open hands)  
Your blood is in my fists, mother.  
And blood begins to drip slowly from them.
- 60 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL 60  
ABBY (sings)  
"We should never be discouraged,  
Take it to the Lord in prayer."  
Blood has begun to fly out from her strumming hand, splattering the guitar, beading up on the finish. She doesn't notice.  
ABBY (sings)  
"Are we weak and heavy-laden--"  
She looks down at her guitar and dress, sees that both are spattered with blood, and gasps.

- 61 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN 61  
He holds his dripping fists out in the gathering gloom.
- FLAGG  
Your blood is in my fists.
- 62 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, CU 62  
Her fear leaves her, and her face fills with stern determination. This time she CLOSES HER EYES when she speaks to God, and she is clearly praying, not just making conversation.
- ABBY  
Dear Lord, take this evil vision  
from my my sight.
- She opens her eyes again, clearly confident FLAGG will be gone...
- 63 EXT. THE CORNFIELD WHERE FLAGG WAS TWILIGHT 63  
...and he is. The PERSISTENT SQUEAK AND SCUTTER of RATS remains, however.
- 64 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL 64  
She looks down at herself and sees there's not a single drop of blood on her anywhere. Of course not--it was just FLAGG'S trick, and her prayer has rid her of him...or has it?
- SOUND: SQUEAK AND SCUTTER.
- 65 EXT. THE CORNFIELD WHERE FLAGG WAS 65  
Rats flicker and twist at the base of the cornstalks, then DISAPPEAR.
- 66 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL 66  
She looks up at the darkening sky.
- ABBY  
I'm scared, Lord. If it's your will  
to bring em on anyway, best do it  
before I lose my heart. Amen.
- She begins to play again. THE CAMERA DRAWS SLOWLY UP AND AWAY until we're looking down at the house, as we were when we first came to Hemingford Home.
- ABBY (sings)  
"Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
Cumbered with a load of care,  
There's a friend who never fails us:  
Take it to the Lord in prayer."

67 INT. LLOYD HENREID'S JAIL CELL NIGHT 67

SOUND: THE LOUD, ECHOING CRASH of a door being thrown open.

LLOYD jerks awake and almost tumbles off his sagging bunk. He stares around wildly.

68 INT. A COUNTY JAIL CORRIDOR 68

Linoleum floor. Worn bootheels clock along it. We've seen them before. THE CAMERA TRACKS WITH THEM, then RISES TO WAIST LEVEL, revealing FLAGG'S faded jeans and a brass belt-buckle which has the words DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR woven around a death's head wearing a Green Beret.

FLAGG reaches the barred door between this area and the cellblock where LLOYD is. A sign reads ADMITTANCE RESTRICTED NO PASSES. FLAGG'S weird lineless hands clasp the bars... caress them...and THE CAMERA finally rises to his face.

This is a clearer close-up version of the HUMAN FLAGG we saw in the corn, but it is still the face of a monster. FLAGG is happy in his work, though, you have to give him that. It's just that his grin could peel paint, boil turtles alive inside their shells, and cause prostate cancer in young men if looked at too long without sunglasses on.

FLAGG (smiling)  
Hooooo-hoooo!...Anybody home?

69 INT. LLOYD'S CELL 69

He's off his bunk in a flash, snatching up the cotleg and beating on the bars.

LLOYD (screaming)  
Down here! DOWN HEEERE! Please!  
Please help me!

70 INT. THE HALL, WITH FLAGG OUTSIDE THE BARRED GATE 70

FLAGG (does Elmer Fudd)  
You sound pwetty hungwy, wabbit!

He reaches out and grasps the lock-box. There's a FLARE OF BLUE LIGHT between his fingers, and the door rolls back on its tracks. He walks onto the cellblock, BOOTHEELS CLOCKING.

71 INT. LLOYD, AT THE BARS OF HIS CELL 71

As those RAPPING BOOTHEELS approach, LLOYD steps away from the door of his cell. Now fear wars with hope on his face.

72 INT. THE CORRIDOR, LLOYD'S POV

72

FLAGG appears, just a SHAPE at first, and walks slowly to the cell. At last he comes into a bar of light and we see his happy, hateful face. There are two buttons on his jacket. One shows the face of Jesus, the other the face of Angus Young (lead guitarist, AC/DC).

73 INT. FLAGG AND LLOYD

73

They regard each other without speaking. LLOYD stares at FLAGG as if hypnotized. This mutual regard stretches out and out... and then FLAGG reaches forward and puts one of his hands gently over LLOYD'S. This small gesture of kindness--even coming from a spook like FLAGG--undoes LLOYD. He tries to hold back his tears and can't.

LLOYD (sobs)

Can you please let me out, mister?  
Please. I'll do anything.

FLAGG

You poor guy--stuck in here all this time. What a bummer!

LLOYD slips to his knees. He tries to look up at FLAGG and cannot meet that burning gaze, that midnight grin. He looks humbly down ██████████ at his clasped hands again.

FLAGG

Tell me something, Lloyd.

LLOYD (starts)

How do you know my name?

FLAGG

Lucky guess. How'd you stay alive this long?

LLOYD (crafty)

I saw it comin down and saved up some food, that's all.

FLAGG points a finger through the bars. The mattress flies off LLOYD'S bunk, revealing the rat. It has lost some weight since we last saw it. LLOYD screams.

FLAGG

And B'rer Rat? How'd he taste?

LLOYD puts his hands over his face.

CONTINUES



73 CONTINUES

LLOYD (whispers)  
Poke should be here, not me--everything  
was Poke's idea.

FLAGG  
And you ended up with nothing to eat but  
Rat Tartare! Bad luck! Worst damn luck  
I ever heard of! But it could just be  
that your luck's on the change, Lloyd.  
Look here.

LLOYD drops his hands from his face and looks up. FLAGG  
reaches into his pocket and brings out a black stone with  
a strange red flaw in it...a flaw that looks like an eye.  
Later we'll see a similar stone around FLAGG'S neck.

LLOYD stares, fascinated, as FLAGG begins to walk the stone  
along the backs of his fingers. The red flaw seems to wink  
and roll as the stone moves.

LLOYD (soft awe)  
Wow!

FLAGG (does W.C. Fields)  
Wait a minute, son...wait a minute  
...you ain't seen nuthin yet, like  
the man said...

He drops the stone into his hand and makes a fist around  
it. When he opens his hand again, the stone has become a  
SILVER KEY.

LLOYD (wide-eyed)  
My...dear...God!

FLAGG  
Good, huh? I learned that from a little  
massage-parlor honey in Secaucus, New Jersey.

He slowly seats the key in the lock on LLOYD'S cell door.

FLAGG  
Say--I never introduced myself, did  
I? Pleased to meet you, Lloyd; hope  
you guess my name.

LLOYD  
Huh?

CONTINUES

73 CONTINUES (2)

FLAGG

Nothing--just a little classical reference. Actually, the name's Flagg. Randall Flagg. And before I open this cell and take you out for a couple of cheeseburgers and a milkshake, I think we need to have an understanding.

LLOYD looks up at FLAGG with blindly hopeful eyes, clearly ready to understand anything.

FLAGG

I'm going to make you my foreman, Lloyd --gonna slip the keys to the kingdom right into your hand. I pick you, Lloyd. Do you understand that? I pick you. Has anyone else ever done that in your life? Even Poke? Did he pick you?

LLOYD

No...we was just cellmates.

LLOYD stares at strange visitor with fascination. His lethal love-affair with RANDALL FLAGG has begun.

FLAGG

Would you like to get back at the kind of people who'd leave a man to die in a jail-cell like a--?

He points to the dead rat.

LLOYD

You bet I would.

FLAGG

Yes--I am betting you would. You aren't very bright, Lloyd, but you're the first--I'm even going to put you ahead of the Trashcan Man.

LLOYD

Who?

FLAGG

All I need is your word that we're going to stick together. No backstabbing or falling asleep on guard-duty. Just you and me, Lloyd. We stand or fall together. You give me your promise and I'll give you the key.

CONTINUES

73 CONTINUES (3)

I...I promise. LLOYD (licks his lips)

FLAGG twists the KEY. There's a HUGE BLUE FLARE. LLOYD SCREAMS and staggers backward, hands over his eyes. FLAGG rolls the cell door open. He takes the KEY and holds it out to LLOYD.

FLAGG  
You're free, Lloyd. Come on out.

LLOYD does. He reaches for the KEY, then hesitates. FLAGG seizes his hand and wraps it around the KEY. We see one of those BLUE FLASHES from between his fingers. LLOYD CRIES OUT in surprise. FLAGG grins as he slowly opens his hand. The KEY has once more turned into the BLACK STONE with the red flaw.

Mine? LLOYD (whispers)

FLAGG nods, and LLOYD closes his hand tightly around the stone. He looks at FLAGG with a fierce, dawning love.

Mine! LLOYD

FLAGG (charming)  
Shall we get some dinner, Lloyd?

You bet. LLOYD

FLAGG slings an arm around LLOYD'S shoulders and draws him down the corridor and away from the cell that was almost his coffin.

74 INT. THE CELLBLOCK CORRIDOR, WITH FLAGG AND LLOYD 74

They walk toward us, FLAGG'S boots and LLOYD'S shoes ECHOING.

FLAGG (happy)  
There's a lot to do, and we have to move fast. But we can do it, can't we, Lloyd?

Yes. You bet. LLOYD

You and me, Lloyd. You and me. FLAGG (ferocious grin)

They pass to the left of THE CAMERA and OUT OF FRAME. We  
DISSOLVE TO:

75 EXT. THE CORNER OF 7TH AVENUE AND 39TH STREET DAY 75

CU on a body which has been hung from a lamppost with a hood over its head. A placard with the word LOOTER printed on it has been hung around the neck of the corpse.

TITLE CARD: JULY 1

CAMERA PANS DOWN to a litter basket on the corner. A momcat is lying on top of it, suckling three or four kittens. Pasted to the side of the trash container is a show poster for... Cats, what else? LARRY UNDERWOOD stops next to it. He's wearing a pack on his back and a holstered revolver on his hip. He pats the cat, who stretches her neck and PURRS.

LARRY  
T.C.B.--right, sweetheart?

NADINE (voice)  
Wait! Do you have to go so fast?

He looks around at:

76 EXT. WEST 39TH STREET, WITH NADINE 76

She's wearing low heels--not a very intelligent choice for a cross-town hike--and a pack that is really too big for her. She's limping, out of breath, out of sorts. She reaches LARRY, who looks at her with a mixture of pity and the irritation.

LARRY  
I'm not going fast. It's those shoes.  
We're going to stop at the next sporting goods store we come to and--

NADINE (touchy)  
My shoes are fine!

LARRY  
You want blisters? Blood-poisoning?  
Then what? The nearest doctor could be a thousand miles away.

NADINE  
Spare me the lecture.

She turns away. He takes her by the shoulders and turns her back

LARRY (as gently as he can)  
I'm trying to take care of you.

NADINE'S anger collapses.

CONTINUES

76 CONTINUES

NADINE

I'm sorry. I didn't sleep very well last night.

LARRY

Yeah, tell me about it.

NADINE

What do you mean?

LARRY

You weren't just talking in your sleep; you were screaming in your sleep. And you said you don't dream.

NADINE

I don't!

LARRY

You mean you do and you don't remember.

NADINE

What I mean is I don't dream.

LARRY

You woke me up yelling "It's cold, it's so cold."

NADINE'S eyes widen.

77 EXT. THE DESERT NIGHT

77

We see NADINE'S terrified face looking up over FLAGG'S shoulder. In this dream her hair has turned ENTIRELY WHITE. There is a shaggy pelt of hair growing down FLAGG'S back.

FLAGG

Nadine...Nadine...how I love to love Nadine!

78 EXT. THE FULL MOON OVER THE DESERT, NADINE'S POV

78

As we watch, the bright silver circle begins to grow dark and red. It appears to be filling up with blood.

79 EXT. NADINE, LOOKING UP OVER FLAGG'S SHOULDER

79

The silvery light on her face TURNS A DIM RED. She is filled with horror...revulsion...and physical pain, I should think.

NADINE (moans)

Don't, oh please, it's cold, so cold, please don't...

80 EXT. RESUME LARRY AND NADINE ON WEST 39TH 80

NADINE  
I don't dream, I said!

LARRY  
Nadine--

NADINE  
Oh, shut up! Shut up and leave me alone!

She turns on her heel and goes around the corner. LARRY stands beside the trash container, stunned by her anger. He runs his hands through his hair and looks at the PURRING momcat.

LARRY (to the cat)  
I think I handled that pretty well,  
don't you?

81 EXT. NADINE, ON THE SIDEWALK 81

She's walking with her head down, angry. THE CAMERA TRACKS WITH HER, THEN STOPS, allowing her to clear the frame and disclosing TWO MEN standing under a restaurant canopy across the street.

82 EXT. BENEATH THE CANOPY, WITH ACE-HIGH AND THE RAT-MAN 82

RATTY we've seen before, of course, in the arcade. ACE-HIGH is a young white guy with his hat turned around backward, a la Axl Rose. Both men are decked out like urban Rambos--grenades, canteens, automatic rifles, pistols on hips.

ACE-HIGH  
That her?

RATTY  
That's her. And that her friend.

He points to someone ACE-HIGH has missed.

83 EXT. WEST 39th, FROM ACE-HIGH'S AND RATTY'S POV 83

LARRY comes hurrying after NADINE.

LARRY  
Nadine! Hey, Nadine! Wait!

He catches up to her. At first she won't turn. He takes her by the shoulder--gently--and finally gets her to look at him.

84 EXT. UNDER THE CANOPY, WITH ACE-HIGH AND RATTY 84

ACE-HIGH (unslings his rifle)  
She's a little honey...and I can  
pop him from right here, no sweat.

84 CONTINUES

He starts to raise the rifle. RATTY touches his hand.

RAT-MAN

She ain't his. She ain't mine. She ain't yours, either. She's his.

ACE-HIGH is unhappy at the thought of losing her, but RATTY has given him pause. He looks at RATTY hesitantly, uneasily.

ACE-HIGH

You really believe there is such a guy?

RAT-MAN

How we be dreamin the exact same dream if there ain't, Homes? And lemme ask you this...do you want to take the chance?

ACE-HIGH looks uneasily across the street at:

85 EXT. LARRY AND NADINE, ACE-HIGH'S AND RATTY'S POV 85

We can't hear what they're saying, but LARRY has managed to insinuate an arm around NADINE'S waist. He appears to be talking her around. At last they start off again together.

86 EXT. UNDER THE CANOPY, WITH ACE-HIGH AND RATTY 86

RAT-MAN

Dream-guy say we supposed to see she gets outta the city safe, not mess with her.

ACE-HIGH (sulking)

I want to mess with her. She's a fine-looking honey.

RATTY

Still plenty of honey left in the world, Homes. You see. Come on.

But at first ACE-HIGH won't. He's still sulking.

RATTY

Don't mess with the man, Ace. He not like Freddy Kruger. He real.

ACE-HIGH'S sulky look slowly gives way to one of uneasy fear. He slips his rifle back over his shoulder, and when the RAT-MAN starts away, ACE follows after him. THE CAMERA WATCHES as they trot across the street in the direction LARRY and NADINE have disappeared and we

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 2.

## ACT 3

87 EXT. LOOKING DOWN ON THE LINCOLN TUNNEL RAMP DAY 87

The traffic jam looks about the same as it did at the opening of Act 6 of Part I. It might be packed in a little tighter, but the only real difference is the quiet. No horns, no yelling, bad-tempered New Yorkers. They're all dead.

88 EXT. AT THE TOP OF THE RAMP, NEAR 11TH AVENUE 88

LARRY and NADINE stand there, looking down. NADINE is now wearing canvas walking shoes, but we can see her ankles are badly chafed. She's looking ██████ at the black maw of the tunnel with horror.

NADINE

I can't go down there.

LARRY

Yes you can. I'll be with you.

NADINE

You don't understand--I'm claustrophobic. I have been ever since I was a little girl. Tight, dark places... I go crazy.

LARRY

Oh, great! Why didn't you tell me that before we got sixty blocks or so from the George Washington Bridge?

NADINE

Because I thought I could do it. I really did.

LARRY

I don't believe it.

He's partly turned away from her. Now he turns back and sees she's taking her bottle of tranquilizers out of her purse.

LARRY

And you've had enough of that, too.

He snatches the bottle out of her hand.

NADINE

Give that back!

CONTINUES



88 CONTINUES

LARRY

No ma'am. I'm not going to stand here in the middle of eight million dead people and watch you pill yourself to death.

He throws the vial into the street. It disappears into a sewer grate. She SLAPS LARRY ACROSS THE FACE and turns away.

LARRY (startled)

Hey! Where are you going?

NADINE (walking)

The George Washington Bridge. Alone.

He looks after her, not sure how to proceed. He decides to go the Macho Man route. Wise choice. Not.

LARRY

I don't need this prima donna act, Nadine. I really don't.

[She keeps walking]

Have a good time getting raped and murdered back there on 7th Avenue, sweetheart.

NADINE hesitates. Then her step firms and she walks on. LARRY stares after her for a moment, unable to believe it. Then his own anger breaks free.

LARRY

The hell with you, then!

He wheels and starts down the ramp. He weaves briskly between the jammed-up cars at first, then slows. He stops entirely about ten feet from the mouth of the tunnel. His face lenses through about thirty different emotions in three seconds, then firms with decision--an amazingly adult decision, considering who we're dealing with here. He turns and runs back the way **he** came.

LARRY

Nadine! Hey, come on back! This is crazy! (Pauses) Hey, I'm sorry, okay?

He looks at:

89

EXT. 11TH AVENUE, LARRY'S POV

89

There's no sign of NADINE. The buildings frown down at him. DISTANT: An EXPLOSION and a MACHINE-GUN CLATTER. It's spooky... like being in the world's biggest haunted house.

90 EXT. LARRY

90

LARRY (calling)

If it has to be the bridge, okay!  
But don't go off on your own!

He waits. At first he shows a mixture of guilt and hope, but then his face hardens. LARRY can only manage caring in short bursts.

LARRY (muttering)

Hell with you.

He turns and starts down the ramp again.

91 EXT. LOOKING UP THE RAMP FROM THE TUNNEL'S MOUTH

91

LARRY approaches. Just outside the tunnel's mouth he stops and slips off his pack, putting it on the hood of a car and unbuckling the straps. He rummages inside and comes up with a FLASHLIGHT. He takes a few hopeful looks back as he does this, hoping to see NADINE, but no luck. He turns on the flashlight, checks the beam, nods. Then he reshoulders his pack while looking at:

92 EXT. THE MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL, LARRY'S POV

92

Gloomy, threatening, jammed with dead cars. Only the narrow walkway on the left side offers a possible way through.

93 EXT. LARRY

93

More uneasy than ever. He walks to the ████████ mouth of the tunnel, then looks back once more, hopeful that NADINE will show up at the very last minute. She's still not there, but as he turns back toward the tunnel, the beam of his flashlight strikes:

94 EXT. THE WINDOW OF A CADILLAC, LARRY'S POV

94

A DEAD WOMAN, her face bloated with the flu, stares out.

95 EXT. LARRY

95

He looks away quickly, wincing with disgust. It makes up his mind, though, and he hurries into the darkness with the FLASHLIGHT BEAM bobbing ahead of him.

96 EXT. A WEST SIDE NEW YORK STREET, WITH NADINE

96

She walks with her head lowered and for a moment or two doesn't see RATTY and ACE-HIGH standing at the intersection ahead of her

RAT-MAN

You must be lost, little honey--  
you headed in the wrong direction.

CONTINUES

96 CONTINUES

NADINE'S head jerks up. When she sees the two armed hoodlums, her face fills with terror.

RATTY

I am the Rat-Man--bold, black,  
and beautiful. This my associate,  
Mr. Ace-High...but you c'n just  
call him Ace.

ACE-HIGH giggles. NADINE turns to flee and RATTY unslings his rifle. The SOUND of him chambering a round is VERY LOUD.

RATTY

No, little honey--bad idea.

She says nothing, but gives up the idea of flight.

RATTY

We from him. The Walkin Dude.

Now her face begins to fill with understanding.

NADINE

He won't let me go...will he? Not ever.

RATTY

Me n Ace here, every now n then we get  
a call from him, you know? It's a  
special kind of 900 number that only  
rings when we're asleep. Right, Ace?

ACE-HIGH

Yeah. Guess so.

RATTY

Anyway, he told us about you. He said  
you might kinda get turned around.  
Headed in the wrong direction, as folks  
so often do in these evil days. He said  
if that happened, we was to get you  
headed right again. And headed right  
for you means that slice of Wonder  
Bread we seen you with.

NADINE

He yelled at me. And threw my medicine  
away.

RATTY (to ACE-HIGH)

He yelled at her!

ACE-HIGH (great dismay)

Oh!

CONTINUES

96 CONTINUES (2)

RATTY

And threw her medicine away!

ACE-HIGH

Ohhhh!

RATTY (to NADINE)

I don't care if he rubbed Krazy Glue  
in your hair n then set it on fire.  
You got two choices, lady: turn yo  
ass around or kiss yo ass goodbye.

NADINE stares at them, her eyes flicking back and forth.

RATTY (almost gentle)

Listen, bitch--don't you know who  
you belong to?

The three of them stare at each other silently.

97 INT. THE LINCOLN TUNNEL, WITH LARRY

97

It's VERY DIM--the tunnel's Manhattan entrance is only a white semi-circle far in the b.g. LARRY is just a SHAPE on the walkway, shuffling along behind a BRIGHT CIRCLE OF LIGHT. Off to the left, we can see the tunnel's bore jammed with cars.

LARRY stops, swings his flashlight toward the frozen traffic, and looks at:

98 INT. TRAFFIC LANES, LARRY'S POV

98

The beam plays over cars that have become loaded hearses.

99 INT. LARRY, ON THE WALKWAY

99

He looks away quickly, wincing.

LARRY (mutters)

Don't look at em, stupid.

ECHO

"...attum, stupid...oopid..."

LARRY gasps, then realizes it's just an echo. He turns the light hastily away from the gruesome traffic jam and starts walking again. He makes about half a dozen steps, then stops again. All those dead folks in all those dead cars cast an unhealthy fascination over him. He shines the light at:

100 TRAFFIC LANES, LARRY'S POV 100

More mummified corpses. Then one of them suddenly SNAPS ITS HEAD AROUND and GRINS at LARRY. It's FLAGG.

101 LARRY 101

LARRY (shock)

What the hell--!

At the same time, he drops the flashlight. There's a TINKLE OF BREAKING GLASS and we're in COMPLETE DARKNESS.

ECHO

"...the hell...hell...ell...ell..."

SOUND: LARRY'S HARSH, PANICKY BREATHING. SHUFFLING SOUNDS. Then we see SPARKS as LARRY flicks his Bic. At last the wick catches, and he looks around wildly, now on the edge of total panic. He looks at:

102 TRAFFIC LANES, LARRY'S POV 102

The light thrown by his Bic is dim, but the guy who moved and grinned is clearly dead and clearly not FLAGG.

103 LARRY 103

Relieved...but still scared. He lowers his hand and lets the lighter go out. He begins walking again.

SOUND: A THUMP as LARRY'S foot strikes something in the dark.

LARRY (voice)

Huh?

ECHO

"Uh...uh...uh..."

The lighter FLICKERS BACK INTO LIFE, shedding a sickly yellow circle of light. LARRY is squatting down, holding the lighter up much as the Statue of Liberty holds up her torch. It discloses a small party of orthodox Jews sprawled on the walkway. Their clothes are bullet-torn and there are splashes of dried blood--black in the light of LARRY'S Bic--on the tile wall of the tunnel. Their eyes stare at LARRY with expressions of surprise and glazed accusation.

LARRY

Oh my God.

And suddenly, through the ECHO, we hear two SOUNDS that aren't echoes: A FOOTFALL, and AN INTAKE OF BREATH.

104 ANGLE ON LARRY

104

He leaps up, lighter held high, face terrified. With his free hand he yanks his pistol from its holster and points it in the direction of the SOUNDS--the direction he's come from.

LARRY

Who's there? Identify your--

LARRY GASPS WITH PAIN and drops the lighter as it burns him. There's a soft BONK as it hits the hood of one of the cars below. Now LARRY is just a shape in the gloom.

SOUND: SOFT, GRITTING FOOTSTEP.

LARRY (screaming)

Who's there? Answer or I'll shoot!

ECHOES wrap his words. Without waiting for a response, he blasts six rounds into the dark. GUNFLASHES light his terrified face. RICHOCHETS WHINE OFF TILE. The shots end; the RICHOCHETS FADE OUT. Now the only SOUND is LARRY PANTING.

NADINE (screaming voice)

Larry! Larry, please, for God's sake  
stop shooting!

A beat of silence.

LARRY (shocked; stunned)

Nadine! Stay where you are!  
Do you hear me?

His only answer is HYSTERICAL SOBBING. LARRY stumbles back the way he has come.

105 INT. THE WALKWAY, WITH NADINE

105

She illuminates the scene with a SMALL KEYCHAIN FLASHLIGHT. It shows her huddled on the walkway, WEEPING. LARRY finds his way to her, kneels down, embraces her. He hugs her for a moment, then runs his hands over her face, exploring.

LARRY

Did I hurt you? Are you shot?

NADINE (crying)

No...but one went by so close I felt  
the wind of it...and chips of tile...  
on my face...here...

She moves his hand to her left cheek, and LARRY feels blood.

CONTINUES

105 CONTINUES

LARRY

Oh my God, I'm sorry. I was freaking out in here...the dark...the echo...and I lost my lighter. Why didn't you call?

NADINE

I wasn't sure it was you! I went about three blocks and decided I was being crazy...turned around to come back... and...and...well...

LARRY

What? What, Nadine?

NADINE looks down at her hands for a moment before looking back up at him with frightened eyes which brim with tears.

NADINE

Are you still mad about the pills?

LARRY (hugs her)

No. Of course I'm not.

NADINE

I won't take them anymore, Larry... it's just that sometimes I get so scared...that's really why I didn't answer you...I tried, but when I opened my mouth, nothing would come out...

He hugs her and she hugs back, but when he can no longer see her, her face empties of emotion and becomes the face of a zombie.

NADINE

Once you started shooting, I forgot all about my claustrophobia.

He pushes her back so he can look into her face, and she immediately turns on the emotional kleigs again. She gives him a weak little smile and a shrug.

NADINE

Miracle cure, huh?

He takes a handkerchief out of his back pocket and wipes the tears off her cheeks with it. He is shaken by the narrowness of her escape--and his.

LARRY

Yeah, I'd call it a miracle. Want to get out of here? What do you say?

CONTINUES

105 CONTINUES (2)

NADINE

I say yes--right away.

He helps her to her feet.

LARRY

There's some dead people on the walkway up ahead. We'll have to step over them. Okay?

NADINE

I'll be fine as long as you're with me. You'll stay with me now, Larry? Won't you? If I don't take any more pills you'll stay with me?

LARRY

I'll stay with you no matter what. Come on.

He puts an arm around her.

106 EXT. THE JERSEY SIDE OF THE LINCOLN TUNNEL

106

It's a TANGLE OF VEHICLES, army and civilian mixed together, and many of them nothing but burned-out hulks. Army guys in respirators lie among the lovers and housewives and businessmen; the carrion-birds, always the great democrats, feed on all of them. When LARRY and NADINE stagger out of the tunnel with their arms around each others' waists, THE BIRDS TAKE WING IN A CLOUD.

They stand, staring with wide eyes and stunned faces at the carnage.

NADINE

Oh, Larry. Oh, my God.

LARRY

Yeah. One thing about it, though...

NADINE

What?

LARRY

New Jersey never smelled so good. Come on.

He leads her up the ramp toward the shattered toll-booths.



107 EXT. A HIGHWAY IN NEW ENGLAND DAY

107

A man of about seventy is sitting peacefully beside the road, working on a canvas set up on an easel. He's wearing jeans and a paint-smearred Duke basketball shirt. Rimless specs propped up on his balding dome. He looks like Ray Walston, at least in my imagination. His paints are set on a crate beside him and he's sitting on a piano-stool. Nearby is a bike with a small two-wheeled trailer attached. A BROOK BABBLES; a DOG BARKS.

TITLE CARD: SOUTH RYEGATE, NEW HAMPSHIRE JULY 1

GLEN BATEMAN (sings as he paints)

"Baby, can you dig your man...  
Da-da-dum-dum if anyone can...  
He's got some righteous glands,  
So can'tcha tell me--"

A man-shaped shadow falls over GLEN'S BACK and his painting.

STU (amused voice)

I don't think you're singin that just right.

GLEN wheels around, hitting the crate and knocking his paints into the dust. His face is full of surprise and cautious pleasure as he sees STU REMAN standing there. There's a rifle slung over his shoulder, but he holds his hands out peaceably enough.

STU

Take it easy--I'm friendly.

GLEN reaches up with his thumb and drops his glasses down into place on his nose to get a better look at STU.

GLEN

I certainly hope so.

A BIG GERMAN SHEPHERD comes running out of the woods by the brook, wagging his tail. This is KOJAK. He leaps up on STU, almost knocking him flat. The dog's tail wags aimiably, and STU strokes his head.

GLEN

Kojak! You're getting mud all over his shirt! Sit! Miserable dog!

KOJAK sits. He's basically a good-tempered, good-mannered dog, but he's really glad to see another human being--another master. STU scratches between his ears.

STU

Don't be too hard on him. He's the only dog I've seen since...well, since the third week of June, I guess.

107 CONTINUES

GLEN

Yes. The superflu took most of the dogs along with their idiot masters. Most unfair. That rifle you're carrying--

STU

Think of it as home defense while on the road.

GLEN (relieved)

Glad to hear it. Glen Bateman, at your service.

He holds out his hand. STU shakes it.

STU

Stu Redman. Originally from east Texas.

He bends forward to look at GLEN'S picture.

108 PICTURE, INSERT

108

We can tell it's the woods beside the road, but they're all blurry. There might be a blurry KOJAK in the picture, too.

109 EXT. STU, GLEN, KOJAK

109

STU

Might not be such a bad idea if you was to paint with your glasses on.

GLEN (dry)

Not when you paint like I do, friend. My place is about three miles from here. Would you like to come back with me and have a meal? I'm not such a bad cook.

STU

Well...I suppose...

GLEN

Also, I play a mean game of cribbage.

STU (claps him on the shoulder)

On one condition--drop the Mr. Redman.

GLEN

It's a deal. Just give me a hand with my gear and we'll get going.

110 EXT. FURTHER UP THE HIGHWAY, WITH STU, GLEN, AND KOJAK 110

They are walking beneath an overarching canopy of old trees --very pretty. GLEN pushes his bike along; STU walks beside him with his pack riding easy on his back; KOJAK pads along to the rear. They pass a car with the dry-rotted driver lying face-down on the ground beside the open door, but otherwise the world is silent and pastoral.

GLEN

Tell me something, my east Texas friend: which one of the dreams are you having? Or are you still having both? And don't tell me you don't know what I'm talking about; I can see by your face that you know perfectly well.

STU (after a pause)

Both.

GLEN (nods)

She's somewhere in Nebraska. A town named Hileford or Homeford or something like that.

STU

It's Hemingford Home. I'm pretty sure of it. He's a lot further west. Out in the desert somewhere.

GLEN (strokes KOJAK)

Kojak's dreaming of him too, you know. Laugh if you want, but I know it's true. He was growling in his sleep the other night, with his teeth bared. I think the superflu might have been a lot more than just the flu. I think it might have been the instrument of some great force that wanted to weed out everyone incapable of dreaming these special dreams.

STU (uneasy)

That's crazy.

GLEN

Isn't it.

He starts to push his bike again, then stops and looks at STU.

GLEN

It's not over, you know. It's just beginning.

He starts walking again. After a few moments, STU follows him.

111 EXT. A CORNFIELD, AT NIGHT 111

Somewhere nearby, a GUITAR is picking out the tune of "What A Friend We Have in Jesus." CRICKETS HUM. THE CAMERA PUSHES THROUGH the corn, bending the high plants ahead of it, and the MUSIC GROWS LOUDER. At last we enter the clearing which contains Mother Abigail's house. ABBY sits on her porch, calmly playing her guitar. When she sees THE CAMERA, she stops.

ABBY

You come and see me. You and all your friends.

112 EXT. STU, AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING 112

He stands just beyond the last row of corn, naked and confused.

STU

Who are you? Who are you really?

113 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL 113

ABBY

Your last hope. You're bein called, Stuart. You come on along and see me. You and all your friends. If you miss me here in Hemin'ford Home, we'll be movin on to Colorado. I think you know where.

114 EXT. STU 114

STU

Yes, Boulder. But--

All at once he hears SQUEAKING and looks down at:

115 EXT. STU'S BARE FEET 115

Well, they're really not bare anymore. They're dressed in writing, squeaking RATS.

116 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, CU 116

ABBY (alarm, terror)

The rats are his!

117 EXT. STU 117

He flees into the corn, panicked by the rats, and bursts through a wall of green into a LONG CORRIDOR lit by flourescents. It's the Stovington hallway STU passed through on his way out. It's lined with offices: DR. HALL, RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS, THIS WAY TO COBALT URNS, FAX AND PHOTOCOPY, LASER ARMORY, SIDEWINDER MISSILES, NURSES' STAFF ROOM, PLAGUE STORAGE.

## 117 CONTINUES

STU walks down this hall with his footfalls ECHOING DREAMILY (of course; it is a dream), past bodies, overturned carts, abandoned gurneys. He again passes the JANITOR who's not quite dead, and once again the JANITOR grabs his ankle. STU looks down at him.

JANITOR (gurgles)

Stay away from her, east Texas.  
Stay away or you'll all die.

BLACK, TARRY GOO gouts from his mouth. Freaked, STU pulls free and RUNS. Less than three strides down the hall, a door marked DR. FLAGG pops open and FLAGG jumps RIGHT INTO STU'S face, grinning with RAZOR FANGS. Should be a fine scare. He's wearing a white coverall and a nose-filter. He pulls the latter free and BLACK, TARRY GOO runs from his nostrils. He SCREAMS DIRECTLY INTO STU'S FACE...but he's also LAUGHING.

FLAGG

The plaque! The horror! Oh, the horror!

118 INT. A BEDROOM IN GLEN BATEMAN'S HOUSE

118

STU bolts to a sitting position, gasping, sweaty, shivering.

ABBY (echoing voice)

You come on along and see me. You and all your friends.

He's <sup>been</sup> sleeping on top of the sheet. Now he looks down at something caught between his toes. He plucks it and looks at it.

119 STU'S HAND, INSERT

119

He's holding a corn-leaf and some strands of corn-silk.

120 INT. STU, CU

120

His **face** is thoughtful...beginning to believe.

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 3.

## ACT 4

121 EXT. A TWO-MAN TENT NEAR A COUNTRY ROAD NIGHT 121

TITLE CARD: PIPERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA JULY 2

As THE CAMERA MOVES IN, we hear the LOW BUT UNMISTAKABLE SOUNDS of LOVEMAKING...the preliminaries, in any case. Then:

NADINE (voice)

No, Larry.

LARRY (voice)

It's okay. It'll be fine. We'll be fine.

SOUND of a KISS and a LOW MOAN...half-passion, half-protest.

122 INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE 122

The only light is a Coleman lantern turned down to a bare thread of flame. There are two sleeping-bags, side by side. LARRY and NADINE are on top of one, making out passionately. They're dressed in not much.

LARRY's totally into it, but NADINE'S behavior is more complex. She wants him, yet she doesn't. Part of her is afraid, and as he continues trying to melt her, fear begins to get the upper hand.

NADINE

No, Larry--not now--I can't.

LARRY

Sure you can.

He kisses her neck and slides a hand up to her breast. She sits up, almost bucking him off.

NADINE (very upset)

I said I can't.

He's shocked by the angry desperation in her voice. He tries to embrace her again. She shrinks away. LARRY'S first reaction to this is the usual impatient anger, but the tunnel really did change him. He takes a breath and tries a little tenderness.

LARRY

I want you, Nadine.

NADINE

I know, but--

CONTINUES

122 CONTINUES

LARRY

--and you want me. I know you do. So what's wrong?

NADINE

It's just...too soon.

LARRY (gently)

Is it the dreams?

NADINE (freezing)

I told you: I don't dream.

LARRY

Okay; you don't dream. You just scream in your sleep for fun.

She gives him a little hug, her face pleading.

NADINE

I don't know about that--all I know is that I need some time. Please give it to me, Larry.

LARRY thinks it over. Then he shrugs, smiles, and hugs her back.

LARRY

Sure. Time I got.

NADINE (smiles)

Thank you.

He gives her a kiss. A chaste one.

123 EXT. THE TENT BY THE ROAD LATER THAT NIGHT

123

The moon has come up. FAINT, GHOSTLY, we hear a GUITAR playing "What A Friend We Have in Jesus."

124 INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

124

NADINE is MOANING in her sleep, obviously having a bad dream. LARRY is sleeping more easily. As THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON HIM, THE SOUND OF THE GUITAR GROWS LOUDER.

LARRY (in his sleep)

Who are you?

125 EXT. LARRY, STANDING BY THE TREE IN ABBY'S YARD NIGHT

125

He's wearing whatever he was wearing when we saw him making out with NADINE. He looks toward:

126 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, LARRY'S POV

126

She's sitting in her rocking chair on the porch with her guitar in her lap. She looks at LARRY with compassion and interest.

ABBY

Folks round these parts just call me Mother Abigail. You'll be coming along to see me, won't you, Larry?

127 EXT. LARRY, SLEEPING IN THE TENT

127

LARRY (in his sleep)

Yes. Hemingford Home or Boulder... one place or the other...

NADINE MOANS MORE LOUDLY, and THE CAMERA moves SLOWLY across to her.

NADINE (sleeping)

Please...it's so cold...

FLAGG (persuasive voice)

No, it's not...it's warm.

NADINE (sleeping)

Warm...

128 EXT. IN THE DESERT, WITH NADINE AND FLAGG NIGHT

128

We've been here before, with the full moon floating overhead. NADINE is wearing whatever she was wearing during her makeout session with Larry (#122)--not much, in other words. FLAGG appears to be naked. He has his arms around her. A campfire the size of a Guy Fawkes Night bonfire roars into the desert sky not far away, but NADINE still shivers in FLAGG'S embrace and tries to pull away.

NADINE

He's warm. Not you.

FLAGG (pulls her back)

Remember who you belong to, Nadine. You are the promised one.

NADINE (struggling)

Why me? Who promised?

FLAGG

I don't recall, sweetheart. But it's true. We both know it...don't we?

CONTINUES



128 CONTINUES

Her struggles weaken as he ██████ kisses her with a passion LARRY could never manage. When the kiss ends she looks at him with drugged, passive eyes.

FLAGG

Nadine. My love.

She plants kisses all over his chest, shuddering as she does it.

FLAGG

You know where you're supposed to go and what you're supposed to do. As long as you hide your mind from the old woman, you'll be fine.

NADINE

Yes. I'll be fine.

FLAGG

Then come to me. And we'll be--

NADINE and FLAGG

--married.

NADINE (dreamily)

Married in the desert. With a billion stars all around. My love.

FLAGG

But I want you to get away from that idiot you're travelling with. Tonight was all too close.

NADINE

I can handle Larry. I--

FLAGG

It's better if you leave him. Safer. I can't use damaged goods.

He turns away. She reaches for his bare shoulder.

NADINE

He's nothing but a boy--

He wheels back...and he is horrible--barely human. His eyes are black pools, his teeth razor fangs, his hair shiny crow feathers

FLAGG

Leave him, do you hear me? LEAVE HIM!

Her face fills with horror, she screams--

129 INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

129

She sits up with a gasp. Beside her, LARRY is sleeping deeply; his dream is over.

FLAGG (dim, echoing voice)  
You know where...and what you're supposed to do when you get there.

She feels something around her neck: a fine gold chain that wasn't there earlier. Hanging at the end of it is a small black stone with a RED FLAW in it. It's a twin of the one FLAGG gave LLOYD.

As NADINE looks at it, the RED FLAW seems to roll like a bloody eye in a puffy socket.

FLAGG (dim, echoing voice)  
Nadine...

She drops the stone as if it had burned her. She looks nervously around, as if expecting FLAGG to come leaping through the canvas of the tent. Then, moving quietly and stealthily, she gets out of the sleeping bag, opens her pack, and removes a few clothes. She also takes out a pen and a pad of paper. She flips the pad open and prepares to write.

Beside her, LARRY MUTTERS in his sleep. NADINE freezes, looking at him with eyes full of caution and guilt. He rolls over and sleeps deeply again. NADINE begins to write, shooting occasional nervous glances LARRY'S way as she does.

130 EXT. THE TENT NIGHT

130

NADINE slips out, her clothes in one hand and her sneakers in the other. She looks back at the closed flap with worry and real sorrow. Whatever forces are ascendent in her, we should remember that part of her does love LARRY UNDERWOOD. She looks up at:

131 EXT. THE MOON, NADINE'S POV

131

It's full...and as we watch, it begins to DARKEN and GROW BLOODY

FLAGG (dim, echoey voice)  
Remember who you belong to, Nadine...

132 EXT. NADINE

132

She looks up a few moments longer, entranced, then glances back at the tent again. There's still regret on her face, but now it is muted and distant.

CONTINUES

132 CONTINUES

NADINE (low)  
I'm sorry--but what has to be  
has to be.

She begins to dress in travelling clothes.

133 EXT. PIPERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA EARLY MORNING 133

THE CAMERA SLOWLY PANS a beautiful summer landscape--lush hills sloping off into a 7 A.M. haze. There's no movement anywhere, and no traffic on the roads we can see.

THE PAN ENDS on the tent. The flap shakes, and LARRY crawls out in a pair of jeans and nothing else. He stands up and looks around, digging the beautiful summer morning. He doesn't have the slightest idea NADINE'S made like an amoeba and split--not yet. An idea strikes him and he starts to grin. Then he draws a breath and begins to sing.

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN to CU.

LARRY (sings)  
"Summertime...and the livin is easy.  
Fish are jumpin...and the cotton is high.  
Your Daddy's rich and your Ma is good-lookin,  
So hush, little baby, don't you cry."

His grin widens as he sings. He's assuming he has an audience.

LARRY  
Larry Underwood, lounge lizard extra-  
ordinary, wishes you a happy d--

He's turning to address her as he speaks. Now he stops cold.

134 EXT. LARRY, A NEW ANGLE (WITH THE TENT) 134

The flap is still closed; the expected audience hasn't appeared. Here's something we haven't noticed before, though: A bottle of pills lying in the grass beside the tent flap. Looks like NADINE'S Valium. Uh-oh. He picks up the bottle, shakes it, then pops the cap. Two blue pills--only two--spill out into his hand.

LARRY  
Nadine!

He drops to his knees and shoots back into the tent.

135 INT. THE TENT 135

He looks at her sleeping bag, his dread growing. It's zipped up again, and it certainly looks like somebody is in there.

LARRY

Nadine?

No response. LARRY nerves himself, then pulls the zipper partway down and flips back the top of the bag. All he finds is her pack, placed to look like her head. A note is attached to it. LARRY pulls it free.

136 THE NOTE, INSERT 136

Larry,

By the time you read this, I'll be gone. If I stay, we'll end up going to bed together, and I can't let that happen. Don't ask me why when we meet again--I have my reasons. Thanks for being there.

Much love,

Nadine

137 INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY 137

He's puzzled, hurt, and angry. He turns the note over, not really expecting anything, but finding it just the same.

138 THE NOTE, INSERT 138

Scrawled across the back: You were right about the dreams.

139 INT. LARRY 139

He crumples the note in his fist, then looks toward the tent flap with a what-do-I-do-next expression on his face.

DISSOLVE TO:

140 EXT. THE SOUTH RYEGATE TOWN COMMON DAY 140

We're HIGH UP, looking down at the centerpiece of a town which is completely dead except for STU and GLEN. They're on the bandstand, but we can't see them at first because the roof is in the way.

STU (voice)

The damn dreams are going to drive me crazy if I don't go, so I'm goin. You want to come with me?

CONTINUES

140 CONTINUES

GLEN (voice)

Why not? Always assuming we can find a motorcycle with a sidecar; I'm not leaving Kojak.

THE CAMERA BOOMS SLOWLY DOWN, revealing the men sitting on the bandstand steps. KOJAK lies between them, his nose on his paws.

STU

You don't sound very enthusiastic.

GLEN

I've been a sociologist for thirty years, Stu--a cheap ego-trip, but mine own--and I know that the curse of the human race is its chumminess. Maybe what the Bible should have said is, "Wherever two or three of you are gathered, thou shalt band together to kick the crap out of some poor shmuck just standing around and mind-ing his own business."

STU

Pretty cynical, baldly.

LARRY goes to the bandstand railing and looks out over the silent town. He sees a few crashed cars, but that's all. They died politely out here.

GLEN

When I lose sleep, I get cranky.

STU (sympathetic)

Bad dreams?

GLEN

Yeah. His name is Flagg. The guy in the desert. And I the think he's crucifying people who get in his way.

STU joins GLEN at the rail.

STU

Let's say we get out there to Nebraska and the old woman's there--

GLEN (sour)

"Folks round these parts call me Mother Abigail. I'm a hundred and six and still make my own bread."

CONTINUES

140 CONTINUES (2)

STU

That's her. Let's say we find her.  
What then?

GLEN

Well, it's obvious she's some sort of magnet...so I suppose we start building the whole sorry business up again, using her as magnetic north. Just think, east Texas--maybe in fifteen or twenty years, we can work up a lame-ass nuclear exchange between the surviving Baptists and Catholics.

STU

You are cynical, aren't you?

GLEN

In this case, I prefer to think of it as realism. All that stuff's still lying around, just waiting for someone to pick it up, you know. Bombs and missiles and guns, oh-my. And this guy Flagg, somewhere out west like a spider sitting in the middle of its web--

STU

Vegas. I think he's in Las Vegas.

GLEN

If he even matters...or her. The <sup>names</sup> ~~names~~ change, but I've been people-watching too long to believe that human nature ever does. We get in each others' faces. It's what we're all about.

STU

Maybe things have changed. These dreams...when's the last time you heard of different people sharin the same dream like this?

GLEN

Well--

STU (holds up his hand)

Shh! Hear that?

GLEN doesn't at first, but KOJAK does, and so do we: MOTOR-CYCLES APPROACHING. KOJAK gets to his feet and BARKS.

141 EXT. SOUTH RYEGATE, MAIN STREET

141

STU, GLEN, and KOJAK approach the edge of the town common as two cycles sweep around the far corner and come up Main Street, swerving to avoid a few wrecks. It's FRAN and HAROLD. When she sees STU and GLEN, FRAN slows to a stop at once. HAROLD stops because she does. There's a degree of caution on both sides (as befits people who have been dreaming about that authentic American boogeyman RANDY FLAGG), but it runs the spectrum from FRAN, who is delighted to see living people (she's thinking a lot about her baby now, and the society which will be necessary to protect it), to HAROLD, who looks upon STU and GLEN (maybe KOJAK, too) as potential rapists.

FRAN (happy)  
People! And a dog, Harold!

HAROLD (looks pointedly at STU)  
I see it.

She looks at him, her smile--and her happiness--wavering a bit. Then she looks back at STU and GLEN, and her good sense reasserts herself. Her outlook is not warped by insecurity, as HAROLD'S is, and she does not believe these men are dangerous.

STU  
Stu Redman. This is Glen Bateman. The  
furry one's Kojak. We're glad to meet you.

He offers his hand to FRAN, who gives the glowering HAROLD one more hesitant glance...and then shakes it warmly.

FRAN  
And we're so glad to see you.  
Aren't we, Harold?

HAROLD  
How do we know they're all right?  
Just because they remember how to  
shake hands?

His reaction causes her to look doubtful all over again. GLEN, who's seen everything, takes HAROLD'S reaction as a matter of course. In a way, HAROLD'S surliness just proves the things he's just been saying.

STU  
No harm intended here, Mr.--?

HAROLD  
Lauder. HaroldLauder.

CONTINUES

141 CONTINUES

He can't ignore STU'S outstretched hand any longer. He shakes with STU and GLEN. FRAN, meanwhile, is dismounting her bike. She stretches.

FRAN

Ouuu, I'm never going to get the calluses off my fanny, Harold.

HAROLD frowns at this cavalier reference to the Divine Buttocks in the presence of strangers. FRAN bends to pat KOJAK, who wags his tail happily. HAROLD shuts down his own bike and gets off.

GLEN

Where are you folks headed?

FRAN

Nebraska.

HAROLD

Stovington, Vermont.

STU steps back, his face showing a moment of deep dismay before closing up like a clam. HAROLD sees it.

HAROLD

What's wrong?

STU

Going to Stovington would be a waste of your time.

HAROLD

I hardly think you're the best judge--

GLEN

He was there. And he knows. They tried to kill him.

FRAN looks at STU with wide eyes. HAROLD notices--of course.

STU

Look--Glen and I were about ready to head west...the dreams...

HAROLD (a little shrill)

The dreams are an aberration!

STU

Maybe so...but we're all headed in the same direction, just the same. Let's go together.

HAROLD (with no thought)

No!

CONTINUES



141 CONTINUES (2)

FRAN (shocked)

Harold!

HAROLD

I don't like their looks. This one in particular.

And STU suddenly realizes what this is all about.

142 EXT. STU AND HAROLD, CLOSE

142

He grips HAROLD'S upper arm. HAROLD looks terrified--maybe he even reaches for his shootin' iron. All his high school horrors have come back to haunt him. STU, however, has no intention of hurting him. He speaks quietly, so that only HAROLD can hear.

STU

Relax, my friend. I don't want to cut in on your dance. That's the last thing in the world I want.

HAROLD looks up at STU, suddenly very young, very vulnerable, and very scared. He wants to believe.

STU (with emphasis)

Last thing in the world.

143 EXT. FRAN, SQUATTING BESIDE KOJAK

143

She's looking anxiously at the two men. GLEN stands off to one side, presumably taking mental notes.

144 RESUME HAROLD AND STU

144

HAROLD

You...mean it?

STU

I mean it.

HAROLD looks at him, trying to decide if he can trust STU.

145 EXT. ON THE PORCH OF GLEN'S HOUSE LATE AFTERNOON

145

FRAN and HAROLD are sitting in a couple of wicker chairs. GLEN sits on the porch steps, listening to a Walkman. STU comes out with a six-pack and gives one to GLEN, who nods his thanks and continues to bop to the beat pouring out of the Walkman. STU goes to FRAN and HAROLD. HAROLD'S attitude toward STU is still wary, but warmer than it was; he has decided to take STU'S promise at face-value. FRAN and HAROLD each take a beer.

CONTINUES

145 CONTINUES

FRAN (drinks deeply)  
Oh, that's good--thank you, Stu.

HAROLD twitches with instinctive displeasure at her use of his name, but he takes the offered beer and sips.

HAROLD  
It is good. Cold.

STU  
There's a creek runs practically right through baldy's back yard. I stuck em in that.

He sits nearby and drinks deeply from his own can.

HAROLD  
I still want to check Stovington.

FRAN  
Harold, why?

HAROLD  
Let's just say I'm Missouri. And that I don't always take the word of people I just met as gospel.

STU (sighs)  
Well...it's on the way. But you're not going to find anything there you want to see.

146 THE STOVINGTON DISEASE CENTER EVENING

146

Four motorcycles--one with a sidecar--are parked on the gravel drive. They are loaded down with camping gear. The big brick building which looms behind them has a brooding, deserted air. A haunted air, one might say.

STU hasn't gone in with the others. He sits on the grass with KOJAK, just waiting to get away from this awful place. For him, the place is haunted. He glances toward one of the formal flower-beds and sees:

147 EXT. THE FLOWER-BED, STU'S POV

147

Legs clad in white stockings--the legs of a nurse--stick out of the rosebushes.

148 RESUME STU

148

He looks away quickly, wincing with disgust and dismay. He gazes back toward the building and sees:

149 EXT. STOVINGTON MAIN ENTRANCE, STU'S POV

149

FRAN, HAROLD, and GLEN come out. They look like people who have seen the kind of thing that can change one's basic outlook forever. HAROLD has a comforting arm around a stunned and unbelieving FRAN, but HAROLD actually looks like he could use some comforting himself. GLEN, pale and silent, follows the younger people.

HAROLD abruptly breaks away from FRAN, goes to the rose-bushes, and falls on his knees to vomit. GLEN steps into HAROLD's role as comforter, and rather more convincingly.

150 EXT. HAROLD, CLOSER

150

As he starts to get up he sees those legs sticking out of the roses. Bugs and beetles run up and down the dead woman's legs and under the hem of her white nurse's skirt.

HAROLD whirls around and STU is standing right there. It startles the hell out of HAROLD...and us, too.

STU

You still from Missouri?

151 EXT. THE STOVINGTON DRIVEWAY EVENING

151

HAROLD, FRAN, and STU mount their motorcycles and start them up. GLEN goes to the one with the sidecar.

GLEN

Kojak! Up, boy!

The dog jumps into the sidecar and sits there looking pleased with himself. GLEN starts his own bike and pulls up beside STU.

GLEN

"So are the mighty fallen; so have  
the hearts of the proud been broken."

STU

It fits.

FRAN

Can't we please get out of here?

STU

Yeah--let's go.

They pull out, leaving Stovington to its dead scientist-kings.

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 4.

## ACT 5

152 EXT. MAIN STREET OF A DUSTY LITTLE TOWN DAY 152

This is the archetypal one-stoplight burg in the lower gut of the American midwest. Main Street consists of a dozen storefronts sandwiched between a dull town park and a be-shitted war memorial; there's one major intersection, and (probably) a railroad track heading off into the prairie. The only prominent sign of the plague is the marquee of the Bijou Theater. It reads: THE TIME OF JUDGEMENT IS NOW ATSEPT JESUS AS YOU'RE PERSONAL SAVIOR BEFORE ITS TWO LATE WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY??

TITLE CARD: MAY, OKLAHOMA JULY 4

A ten-speed bike comes around the corner from the direction of the park. It's NICK, now bare-chested (with handkerchiefs tucked under the straps of the pack to keep them from chafing) in deference to the heat, but otherwise looking the same as when we last saw him, in Act 6 of Part I.

He heads down Main at a good speed, looking at the various signs of destruction and disintegration but not really ogling them; NICK has seen a lot of dead little towns since Shoyo. Then, as he's approaching the war memorial marking the end of town, he sees something that pops his eyes wide.

153 EXT. IN FRONT OF THE MAY DINER, NICK'S POV 153

There's a jukebox on the sidewalk. A man and a woman in evening clothes appear to be dancing in front of it, but they are frozen in place and their smiling faces are weirdly blank. After a moment we realize they are department store dummies.

TOM CULLEN (voice)

Hey, mister! Where you goin?

154 EXT. NICK, STILL SPEEDING ALONG 154

He's craning his head further and further around to keep the bizarre tableau in front of the diner in view, and of course he can't hear Tom.

TOM (alarmed voice)

Hey, mister! Watch out!

NICK faces forward again, and his eyes WIDEN WITH ALARM.

155 EXT. NICK AND TOM

155

A man is standing in the middle of the street, looking both alarmed and confused--too confused to get out of NICK'S way. This husky blond bull is TOM CULLEN. He might be twenty-five; he might be forty. It's hard to tell. TOM is mentally retarded.

NICK swerves to avoid him, overbalances, and goes crashing into the street. He struggles to a sitting position, pushing his bike to one side. He's dazed and not really sure what's happened. He's also sustained some minor cuts.

TOM helps him up, then takes a bandanna (probably none too clean) from the back pocket of his biballs and begins mopping at the blood on NICK'S forehead.

TOM

Holy gee, mister, but you took a tumble.  
Didn't you just? My laws!

NICK winces back from the hand scrubbing his forehead.

TOM

I didn't mean to scare you, but  
you scared me, too. Laws, yes!  
You're the first person I've seen  
in just about forever!

NICK nods to show it's okay, then gently plucks the bandanna from TOM'S hand and finishes cleaning up the blood on his own. The odd tableau in front of the diner catches his eye again, and he walks toward it.

TOM

You like it, mister? I made it, me,  
Tom Cullen, laws, yes!

156 EXT. IN FRONT OF THE DINER WITH TOM, NICK, MANNEQUINS

156

NICK looks the display over carefully, then turns to TOM. He's not aware of TOM'S last comment because his back was turned. He points at the dummies, then at TOM. Then he raises his eyebrows questioningly.

TOM

You bet! I got them dummies from the  
window of Landon's, on the highway  
to Okie City. I thought a few  
decorations would cheer up Main  
Street--it's been awful sad with  
everyone gone.

[With some anxiety]

Do you like em?

CONTINUES

156 CONTINUES

NICK nods, both amused and appreciative, then holds out his hands in TOM'S direction and MIMES APPLAUSE.

TOM (very pleased)  
Thanks! Decoration is my hobby.  
M-O-O-N, that spells hobby.

NICK nods and laughs silently.

TOM  
You want to go up the street and get a Band-Aid from the drug store? We can just take it, if we want--everyone's gone, so it's not like stealing.

Still smiling, NICK shakes his head and makes a couple of thumb-and-forefinger circles to show he's okay.

TOM  
Sure don't talk much, do you?

NICK takes his trusty shorthand pad out of his hip pocket, his pen from his breast pocket, and starts to write.

TOM  
I'm sorry, but I can't read.

NICK goes on writing. TOM looks puzzled, then taps him on the arm. NICK looks up.

TOM  
Just a few little words is all.  
I made it to the third grade, but  
by then I was sixteen and daddy  
pulled me out. He said I was too  
big. I could read some Curious  
George books when I left,  
but since then I kinda forgot.

He looks momentarily ashamed, but soon he's smiling again--no negative emotion lives long inside TOM CULLEN'S heart. NICK, on the other hand, looks confused and unsure, and why not? What basis of communication can there be between them? He can't talk and TOM can't read.

Slowly, NICK raises his hand to his mouth and covers it. Then he puts both hands over his ears. He does this a couple of times, but TOM only looks more and more puzzled.

CONTINUES

156 CONTINUES (2)

TOM (at last)

I don't getcha, mister--sorry.

Frustrated, NICK starts to walk slowly up the street. The park bench in front of the May Five and Dime is his destination. TOM walks beside him and THE CAMERA TRACKS ALONG.

TOM

My Daddy always said I was a little slow on the upchuck. That's a joke. My Daddy was always jokin around and--

TOM breaks off as something in the window of the Five and Dime catches his eye. NICK sits down on the bench and stares into the street, totally out of ideas, while TOM stares with hypnotic intensity at:

157 EXT. THE WINDOW OF THE FIVE AND DIME, TOM'S POV 157

The featured item on display is a large ceramic version of The Three Wise Monkeys--See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil.

158 EXT. TOM AT THE WINDOW, NICK IN B.G. 158

The light of understanding breaks like a sunrise on TOM'S good-natured simpleton's face. He rushes back to NICK, shouting at the top of his lungs (not that NICK can hear him). TOM finally has to grab NICK and shake him by the shoulder to get his eye.

TOM

I got it, mister! I got it!

[He mimics NICK's gestures]

You're just like old Albion Packalotte's hired man, and Tom knows what that is!  
M-O-O-N, that spells deaf and dumb!!

NICK nods and grins, unable to think when (if ever) his disability has given someone such obvious pleasure. TOM shakes his clenched fists over his head like a victorious boxer. Then he lowers them and just looks at NICK, the happiness running out of him like water through sand. He looks down the street with doubtful, distressed eyes.

TOM

When do you think they'll come back, mister?

NICK shakes his head, not understanding what TOM means. TOM sits next to him on the bench. Every so often he turns his head away from NICK as he talks, and each time he does this, NICK patiently touches his shoulder, making him turn back.

CONTINUES

158 CONTINUES

TOM

I know where they went, laws yes. They up n went to Kansas City. Everyone always talks about what a dull town this is--since the roller rink went bust, there's only the drive-in out on Route 61, and that don't show nothin but them diddly-daddly pitchers, and those are all rated X, M-O-O-N, that spells rated X. So I guess they all went to Kansas City. Except for Mamma. She caught a cold and died and I put her in the cemetery my own self. So she didn't go to Kansas City with the rest of em. She went to heaven to eat the bread of life with Jesus.

Big tears are coursing down TOM'S cheeks. NICK, moved by his grief, puts an arm around his shoulders (and a mighty long reach it is).

TOM

If you're goin to Kansas City, mister, could I go too? I ain't never been, and I don't want to stay here anymore. It's lonely. Also scary at night.

NICK looks at him thoughtfully. Then he points to TOM, and to a car parked at the curb. Looks a question at TOM. TOM doesn't understand, so NICK sits up straighter on the bench and prentends to be operating an invisible steering wheel. This time TOM gets it.

TOM

Tom Cullen drive a car? Laws, no! I guess you can't drive either, huh, mister?

NICK shakes his head.

TOM

Guess we're stuck, huh?

But NICK looks like he has the beginnings of an idea.

159 EXT. IN FRONT OF THE MAY DRUGSTORE

159

A new figure has been added--a lady mannequin sitting in a soda shoppe chair and appearing to watch the dancers. Standing on its kickstand nearby is NICK'S ten-speed--TOM'S proof that NICK hasn't gone to Kansas City with everyone else.

CONTINUES



159 CONTINUES

TOM (approaching voice)  
I got just the thing, ma'am!

TOM appears with a large doll-baby. He's placed an Okie State pennant in one of its plastic hands. Now, working as carefully as any big-league dresser who ever did the window at Saks, TOM places the doll in the outstretched arms of the seated dummy. At last he steps back, pleased with his work.

SOUND: THE OOGAH-OOGAH of an old-fashioned bike horn.

160 EXT. MAIN STREET, WITH NICK 160

He's wheeling a bike--not a ten-speed like his but a pretty respectable three-speed--up the street.

161 EXT. TOM 161

He grins and runs to meet NICK.

TOM  
Hey mister, nice bike! My laws, yes!  
But you already got a bike.

NICK points to TOM, then to the bike. Waves goodbye. TOM looks puzzled. NICK repeats the dumb-show, but this time he raises TOM'S hand and makes him wave goodbye.

TOM (the light dawns)  
Want me to go with you?  
[NICK nods]  
To Kansas City?  
[NICK shakes his head]

TOM  
To see the old black lady?

This catches NICK completely by surprise. After a moment's consideration he mimes playing a guitar and looks at TOM questioningly.

TOM  
That's right! She lives in a little house in the corn and plays her guitar on the porch. I don't mind going to see her. But we won't go see the other one, will we? The one that turns into a crow and flies away?

NICK looks more thoughtful than ever. He cocks his head over to one side and gives TOM a "Tell me more" look.

CONTINUES

161 CONTINUES

TOM

He wears jeans and cowboy boots. A jacket with special buttons on it. Face-buttons. I think one of em's Jesus Christ-Our-Lord. He looks like a man, but I don't think he's really a man. We won't go near him, will we, mister?

NICK shakes his head. TOM looks deeply relieved. He gets on the bike NICK has brought.

TOM

Okay, mister--let's go. I'm ready, laws, yes--M-O-O-N, that spells ready.

NICK laughs silently as he watches TOM turning big circles in the street. As he gets on his own bike, however, we see a sense of weariness in him. Traveling with TOM is going to be a bitch-kitty, and NICK is smart enough to know it.

MUSIC: Some sort of ACOUSTIC GUITAR SHUFFLE. Travelling music.

162 EXT. THE ROAD LEADING OUT OF MAY AFTERNOON 162

MUSIC, UP TO FULL.

In the extreme f.g. we can see the top of the war memorial marking the lower end of Main Street. NICK and TOM appear, riding out of town. NICK'S pack has been replenished, and TOM is wearing a large biker's pack on his bull back. He's also pedaling like a demon, quickly pulling ahead of NICK.

TOM

YAHOOO! M-O-O-N, THAT SPELLS  
NEBRASKA!

DISSOLVE TO:

163 EXT. A BARN DUSK 163

TITLE CARD: HEMINFORD HOME, NEBRASKA...JULY 9

SOUND: CLUCKING CHICKENS as the TRAVELLING MUSIC FADES OUT.

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)

Lord, I've made these six miles and the chickens was here, just like You said they would be. I've got me four of em; I only need one more.

SOUND: LOUD SQUAWKING as ABBY seizes that fifth chicken.

CONTINUES

163 CONTINUES

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)  
 You brought Moses and the Iraelites  
 safe out of Egypt, Lord; You shut  
 the mouths of the lions when Daniel  
 was cast into the lion's den. If You  
 can do all that, I reckon you c'n  
 keep me from choppin my damn hand  
 off with this Son House one last  
 time. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"Amen" is quickly followed by the THUMP of the hatchet biting  
 through a chicken's neck and into the chopping block beneath.

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)  
 Five good-sized fryers in the sack and  
 I ain't bleedin noplace. Praise God.

She shuffles slowly out through the barn door, carrying a  
 blood-spotted burlap sack with the chickens stowed away  
 inside it. In her other hand is a cane. When she reaches  
 THE CAMERA, she puts the towsack down between her bloody,  
 blocky old-lady workshoes and looks up at the darkening sky,  
 once again addressing God directly.

ABBY  
 I'm off, Lord--and in the cool of  
 the evenin, just like You told me.  
 I'll be goin slow, don't reckon to  
 get home until midnight or so, but  
 the Book says to fear neither the  
 terror which creepeth by night or  
 that which flieth by noonday. That's  
 fine...but if You decide You want  
 to send a taxi, that be fine, too.

She cackles at her own wit, then clamps one gnarled hand  
 around the neck of the towsack and starts down the driveway  
 toward the ~~road~~ <sup>road</sup>. As she goes, she begins to sing a hymn.

164 EXT. A DIRT ROAD, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL NIGHT

16

It's hemmed in by corn a lot higher than ABBY'S head on both  
 sides. She's still singing...except she's more puffing the  
 words than singing them now, and her feet are scuffing in the  
 dust. Her towsack drags along behind. She's almost done in,  
 and why not? It's a twelve-mile round trip, and she's a hun-  
 dred and six years old. She stops altogether and looks up  
 into the starry sky.

CONTINUES

164 CONTINUES

ABBY

Almost there, Lord...I'll be goin on directly. Just need to stop n catch my breath. Whew!

FLAGG (low, echoing voice)

Your blood is in my fists, Mother.

ABBY looks around, her eyes glittering with surprise and fear. She stares into the corn.

ABBY

Get away! My strength's in the Lord!  
Do you hear m--

The townsack JERKS VICIOUSLY in her grip.

ABBY

Hi!

165 EXT. THE TOWSACK, ABBY'S POV

165

There's a rip in the bottom. Something furry is SCAMPERING back into the corn. A RAT.

FLAGG (soft, echoing voice)

You were right, old woman--

166 RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL

166

She's trying to hang tough, but she's clearly terrified.

FLAGG (voice continues)

--there are rats in the corn.

ABBY looks at the side of the road and sees:

167 EXT. THE CORN LINING THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

167

The dusty verge between the corn and the farm-road is lined with SQUIRMING, RED-EYED RATS. They SQUEAK AND CHITTER EAGERLY. As we look, more and more of them come scurrying out of the corn.

168 RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL

168

More terrified than ever, she looks the other way and sees:

169 EXT. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

169

More rats. One rushes forward and snatches at the townsack again. A few of its compatriots join it.

170 RESUME ABBY

170

Her face firms up as her faith in her Lord resurfaces.

ABBY

It's chickens, all right, but it's for my  
comp'ny n you can't have em!

But there are more rats than ever now, and they are moving in.  
Is there a human shape standing in the corn behind them like a  
malign scarecrow? Perhaps. Perhaps.

FLAGG (soft, echoing voice)

Your blood is in my fists.

ABBY (closes her eyes)

Help me, Lord--be my sword and my shield.

The tip of her cane starts to GLOW, and although her eyes are  
closed, she feels it. She opens her eyes and looks at the  
cane, now GLOWING WITH FIERCE BLUE FIRE.

ABBY

Be my staff!

She turns and begins whacking at the rats with her cane.  
Each time the cane comes down, it leaves a blot of dim blue fire.  
One rat is hit and dies at once. The others flee, SQUEAKING.

She lets up, breathing hard. She looks around at:

171 ONE SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

171

The rats are gone.

172 RESUME ABBY

172

Still breathing hard, she looks on the other side.

173 THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

173

Only corn lit by ghostly moonlight. No rats.

174 RESUME ABBY

174

ABBY

Thank You, Lord--thank You.

She bends over creakily and picks the dead rat up by the tail.  
She looks at it, shakes her head in disgust, then takes it to  
the side of the road and tosses it into the corn. As she starts  
to turn away, something else catches her eye. She bends down.

175 EXT...THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV 175

There are two clear tracks here. Cowboy boots.

176 RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL 176

ABBY

He was here...he was here. Help  
me, Lord. Help all of us.

She collects her towsack, pauses for another look into the rustling corn, then begins to walk again. THE CAMERA TURNS TO FOLLOW her retreating back. And as she continues her slow way back home, she starts singing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 5.

## ACT 6

177 EXT. THE CORNER OF ANOTHER SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET DAY 177

TOM and NICK'S bikes are parked side by side in a slant parking space. Around them are the by-now-usual leavings of the superflu. NICK is helping TOM to a nearby sidewalk bench. Although the two men are back to THE CAMERA, we can see at once that TOM isn't well. He's walking slowly, and sort of bent over at the middle. He doesn't so much sit on the bench as collapse onto it.

TITLE CARD: PRATT, KANSAS...JULY 10

178 EXT. THE BENCH, WITH NICK AND TOM 178

TOM is pale and sweaty. NICK expresses concern, irritation... a tiny touch of amusement, as well. TOM grimaces and clutches his belly as a cramp hits, then looks up apologetically as it passes.

TOM

You was right--I never should have eaten all those apples, laws, no.

He breaks off as another cramp hits his belly. NICK puts an arm around him, then looks up at:

179 EXT. PRATT DRUGSTORE, NICK'S POV 179

It's right across the street.

180 RESUME NICK AND TOM 180

NICK gets up.

TOM

Where you goin?

NICK points across the street. Then he points to TOM and pushes his palms at him: "Stay right where you are."

TOM

Don't worry--I ain't going nowhere. My legs feel all funny.

NICK trots across the street, headed for the drugstore.

181 INT. NICK, FROM THE DOOR OF THE DRUGSTORE 181

We pick him up as he approaches the door. In the b.g. we hear SOUNDS in the drugstore itself: the CLICK of things being put down on glass countertops, mostly. THE SOUNDS STOP as NICK opens the door and comes into the drugstore.

He looks around, then crosses to the aisle with the sign reading INDIGESTION. He starts examining the bottles. As he does, a SHADOW crosses his face. He looks up, startled, at:

182 INT. THE FAR SIDE OF THE DRUGSTORE, NICK'S POV 182

There's a large perfume display here, and three female mannequins holding up bottles of scent. This time, however, the middle dummy is real. It's JULIE LAWRY.

THE CAMERA--NICK'S gaze--moves away from her...then abruptly back as the "mannequin" unfreezes and takes a step forward.

183 INT. NICK 183

There's a bottle of Pepto-Bismol in his hand and a look of shock on his face.

184 INT. JULIE 184

She's about nineteen, with lots of big hair and a Club-MTV outfit. Her sling-back, spike-heeled shoes are the final touch. To say she looks out of place in a Kansas drugstore three weeks after the end of the world is putting it mildly.

JULIE  
My God, are you real?

185 RESUME NICK 185

He's still stunned, but now there's an element of happiness--joy might not be too strong a word--there, as well. He nods "yes" to her question.

186 INT. NICK AND JULIE 186

JULIE  
If you ain't a ghost, say somethin.

But already JULIE is losing her fear and slipping into the role with which she is most comfortable and familiar--that of the seductive little tart. She's no more than okay-looking, but she's got a lot of what you might call "rock-concert sexuality."

NICK does his dumb-show routine. JULIE appears to be fascinated, moving closer and continuing to do her patented Barbarella-in-love routine. At last she gets it.

CONTINUES



186 CONTINUES

JULIE

You a deaf-mute?

NICK nods, and JULIE caws incredulous laughter.

JULIE

Somebody finally shows up in this crappy little town and it turns out to be a deaf-mute?

NICK shrugs and gives her a little smile, but we can see he's starting to have his doubts.

JULIE

My name's Julie Lawry. You can't tell me yours, can you? Poor you.

But she giggles--she's the kind of girl giggles at just about everything. NICK shifts the bottle of pink stuff to his other hand in order to get his pad out of his back pocket, and she notices it.

JULIE (giggling, of course)

Little distress of the lower tract?

NICK shakes his head and points out the window before dipping into his pocket for the pad. JULIE is interested at once. She goes to the window and looks out as NICK begins to scribble on his pad. She looks out at:

187 TOM, THOUGH THE DUSTY WINDOW, JULIE'S POV 187

He's still sitting disconsolately on the bench.

188 RESUME NICK AND JULIE 188

JULIE (still looking out)

He's a moose, ain't he?

NICK rips a sheet off his pad and hands it to her. JULIE looks down at it.

189 NOTE, INSERT 189

I'm Nick Andros. My friend is Tom Cullen. He's lightly retarded. We're on our way to Nebraska. Come along, if you want.

190 RESUME NICK AND JULIE 190

JULIE (mostly to herself)

A feeb and a deaf-mute. Just my luck.

CONTINUES

190 CONTINUES

NICK grasps her shoulders gently and turns her toward him so he can read her lips. He's wearing a pistol on one hip, and it bumps her waist when he turns her. She looks down at it, then touches the gun-butt with the tips of her fingers. She keeps her wide eyes on him as she fondles it.

JULIE

Do all deaf-mutes have such big guns?

It's getting a little heavy for NICK. He pushes her gently but firmly back into her own space, then holds up the bottle of stomach medicine. He points through the window. JULIE is undaunted. She steps forward again, this time sliding her arms around NICK'S waist.

JULIE

He can wait. Hold me a little first. I've been so lonely.

He holds her for a moment. <sup>meant</sup> She wriggles against him in a way that suggests she may have ~~meant~~ "horny" instead of "lonely." Then NICK pushes her gently away again (although he's getting a little hot and bothered in spite of himself) and starts toward the door. JULIE is starting to look a little frustrated. Things sure didn't go this way after the last Guns n Roses concert she attended.

JULIE

He can wait. Retards don't feel things the way the rest of us do. Really.

That does it. NICK pulls out of her grasp and heads for the door. JULIE'S face twists into an expression of childish fury.

JULIE (childish fury)

Dummy!

NICK, of course, cannot "hear" her; his back is turned.

191 EXT. THE SIDEWALK BENCH, WITH TOM

191

He's sitting there apathetically in his biballs, with sweat trickling down his round face and darkening his t-shirt. He looks up at the SOUND OF APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS and smiles wearily at NICK.

TOM

It was the apples--laws, yes.

NICK holds up the bottle of medicine. Instead of looking grateful, TOM looks afraid...and stubborn. It's a child's reaction.

CONTINUES

191 CONTINUES

TOM

I don't want it, no sir! I...Say!  
Who's that?

He points, NICK turns, and both of them look at:

192 EXT. PRATT MAIN STREET, WITH JULIE

192

Her expression is narrow, suspicious, and assessing...until she sees the men looking at her. Then she becomes Miss Congenialty, waving and smiling as she runs toward the bench.

JULIE (to TOM)

How you doin, cutie-pie? Not so  
good, huh? Your name's Tom, right?

TOM looks dazed by her. Part of it's undoubtedly feeling sick, but I have a feeling he would find JULIE a little overwhelming under any circumstances. Also, hers is the first human voice he's heard since everyone packed up and went to Kansas City.

TOM

Uh, yeah...Tom Cullen. M-O-O-N,  
that spells Tom Cullen.

[To NICK]

I don't like medicine, mister--  
laws, no.

NICK turns to JULIE, asking for her help with raised eyebrows. JULIE sees a chance to get back at him for his rejection of her come-on in the drugstore. She gives TOM a mean little smile.

JULIE

That's right--it's poison.

NICK stares at her, utterly amazed. JULIE stares back with her **hands** on her hips and a smile on her lips. "Let's see what you can do about that, dummy," the smile says.

NICK'S eyes blaze with anger. He turns back to TOM, unscrews the cap on the bottle, and drinks from it himself. It's a good effort, but it only serves to frighten TOM more.

TOM

No sir, Tom Cullen doesn't drink  
poison! Daddy said don't you ever!  
Daddy said if it'd kill the rats in  
the barn it'd kill me. Please don't  
make Tom drink poison!

Tom starts to weep with fear...and JULIE laughs. It's an ill-natured caw, and NICK'S probably lucky he can't hear it.

192 CONTINUES

JULIE  
God, ain't he funny! Cryin  
just like a ba--

NICK slaps her so hard he almost knocks her over. JULIE reacts with amazement and fury.

JULIE  
You dummy freak bastard!

She lunges at him, claws out. NICK shoves her away and this time she does fall down, landing on her butt. She looks up at him with eyes hot enough to melt steel. As she prepares to spring to her feet, NICK pulls the gun on his hip partway out of its holster...a delicate threat, but clear enough.

JULIE  
You wouldn't dare.

But she gets to her feet very slowly and very carefully as NICK digs into his back pocket for his pad again and begins to scribble quickly.

TOM twitches at his shirt until NICK gives him a quick glance.

TOM  
Don't fight--please don't. I...I feel better now. I can keep on goin. See?

TOM springs up off the bench and flexes his arms to show he's capable of whipping his weight in wildcats, but it's not very convincing. His eyes keep darting back and forth between NICK and JULIE.

NICK gives TOM a quick thumbs-up, then tears the note off his pad with a harsh snap. He holds it out. When JULIE won't take it, NICK takes a step toward her, meaning to make her. She snatches the sheet of paper.

JULIE  
All right! I'll read your crappy note!

She looks down at:

193 NOTE, INSERT

We don't need you.

194 EXT. ON THE STREETCORNER, WITH JULIE, NICK AND TOM

JULIE (can't believe it)  
It was just a joke, you stupid dummy!

194 CONTINUES

NICK draws his pistol and points down the street. JULIE'S disbelief subsides into rage again...but she knows she is beaten, at least for the time being.

JULIE

I'll make you sorry, you stupid freak.

[She begins to back away]

I will.

She turns and begins to run. On the other side of the street, she turns and yells back one last time.

JULIE

I'll make you BOTH sorry!

She disappears from sight. NICK turns back to TOM CULLEN.

195 EXT...TOM AND NICK ON THE BENCH

195

TOM is crying and looking fearfully at the bottle NICK is still holding in his hand. NICK looks at it, then makes a predictable choice between soothing TOM'S stomach and his troubled heart. He throws the bottle into the street, where it shatters. Then he sits down on the bench and puts his arm around TOM.

196 INT. A PRATT SPORTING GOODS SHOP DAY

196

It's been looted, but there are a few pistols left in one of the glass cases. JULIE, still pissed like a bear, enters, looks around, and goes to this case. She begins to rummage.

197 EXT. ON THE BENCH, WITH NICK AND TOM

197

TOM (sniffling)

I'm sorry, mister, I cried just like a baby, but she scared me--laws, yes.

NICK points a finger at himself.

TOM (surprised)

You too?

NICK nods, then gets up and points to the bikes. He follows this up with a questioning look at TOM.

TOM (eager)

Laws, yes! Let's get out of this town before she comes back!

NICK grins--it's what he wanted to hear--and they get up.

CONTINUES

197 CONTINUES

Suddenly, from down the street, comes the CRACK of a gunshot. Woodchips fly from the end of the bench. TOM jumps and stares around, but NICK doesn't hear the gun or feel the thud of the bullet driving into the wood. He does register TOM'S sudden movement, however, and looks at him, puzzled.

TOM

She's shootin at us!

TOM runs for his life. NICK still looks puzzled.

BLAM! This time NICK'S shirt TWITCHES and a bullet-hole appears in it. Amazed, NICK turns to look at:

198 EXT. THE INTERSECTING STREET, NICK'S POV

198

From the window above the sporting-goods shop comes another GUNSHOT and a muzzle-flash from the darkness inside.

JULIE (voice)

Come on! Come on, let's see YOU run!

Another CRACK; another GUNFLASH.

199 EXT. THE CORNER OF MAIN STREET, WITH NICK AND TOM

199

TOM has already mounted his bike. He's wants to bolt, but he holds on, waiting for NICK. NICK cringes as another SHOT echoes down the street. The drugstore window shatters.

TOM

Come on, mister! Come on!

NICK runs to his bike and jumps on. Another GUNSHOT SCREAMS OFF THE PAVEMENT as he and TOM turn their bikes and start pedaling up Pratt's Main Street, busting their buns to get out of JULIE LAWRY'S free-fire zone.

200 EXT. JULIE, LOOKING OUT OF THE SECOND-FLOOR WINDOW

200

JULIE (screaming)

If either of you ever gets in my face again, you're dead! Hear me? YOU'RE DEAD! DEAD! You both are!

201 EXT. KANSAS HIGHWAY 49, EXTREME LONG SHOT...DAY

201

The road SHIMMERS in the broiling heat of a Kansas noonday. In the extreme distance we can see two figures toiling along, pushing a couple of bikes--NICK ANDROS and TOM CULLEN.

TITLE CARD: 50 MILES WEST OF PRATT...JULY 11

202 EXT. TOM AND NICK, CLOSER

202

Both are wearing bandannas around their foreheads to keep the sweat out of their eyes. TOM is shirtless beneath his biballs, the skin on his shoulders somewhere between blush-pink and lobster-red. NICK is wearing a blue workshirt, but it's now almost black with sweat. They stop near THE CAMERA, one on each side of the broken yellow line. NICK unstraps his canteen while TOM squints up at the sun.

TOM

Hot! Laws, yes!

NICK drinks and passes the canteen to TOM. TOM starts to raise it to his own lips, then freezes.

TOM (points down the road)

What's that, mister?

NICK looks in the direction of TOM'S pointing finger and sees:

203 EXT. HIGHWAY, EXTREMELY LONG, NICK'S AND TOM'S POV

203

At the extreme shimmery limits of vision, we see the sun reflecting a BRIGHT STARPOINT OF LIGHT off a motor vehicle that might still be ten miles away. This is a clear summer day on the Kansas flatlands, remember.

204 EXT. TOM AND NICK

204

TOM (awed)

What is it?

NICK makes driving gestures. TOM is immediately terrified. He hops on his bike, the blazing heat of the sun forgotten.

TOM

We gotta get out of here, mister! That might be her! We gotta hide!

NICK touches TOM'S arm and shakes his head. He cocks a thumb back over his shoulder, in the opposite direction from the approaching car. TOM'S still looks afraid.

TOM

She was back there, laws, yes, Tom knows that, but--

He looks doubtfully forward, at:

205 EXT. THE HIGHWAY AHEAD, NICK'S AND TOM'S POV

205

The reflection is closer now, tearing toward them.

206 EXT. NICK AND TOM

206

TOM (finishes)  
--that one coming might be like her.

NICK points to TOM, to himself, and then in the direction of the approaching vehicle. TOM understands but looks doubtful.

TOM (hesitant)  
He might be like us? Nice like us?

NICK flashes him a thumb-and-forefinger circle.

TOM  
Nice like us. M-O-O-N, that spells  
nice like us.

They get on their bikes and PEDAL SLOWLY OUT OF THE FRAME.

207 EXT. FURTHER UP THE ROAD WITH NICK AND TOM

207

This time they're riding their bikes instead of walking them. As they near THE CAMERA, we hear the SOUND OF AN APPROACHING ENGINE. NICK and TOM dismount and stand on the side of the road, waiting with mingled hope and fear.

A dusty Chevrolet pick-up of ancient vintage pulls up. The man driving is RALPH BRENTNER, a sweet-natured guy with a battered straw hat clapped on his head and a good-natured Ben Johnson grin on his face. Sitting on the passenger side is a man with a bookish look, probably a white-collar dude in spite of his jeans and work shirt. This is DICK ELLIS. Sitting between them is a girl of eight with one arm in a cast-and-sling combo--GINA McCONE. She looks at NICK and TOM with wide-eyed wonder.

DICK ELLIS has got a pistol in his hand. TOM sees it and his eyes go wide.

RALPH  
Put it away, Dick--you won't need it.  
These boys're all right.

DICK  
How do you know?

RALPH  
Be dog if I could tell you.

He extends one work-calloused hand out the window to either... to both. Beside him, DICK puts his gun away.

CONTINUES



207 CONTINUES

RALPH

If you boys are headed for Nebraska, sling your bikes in the back and climb right in after 'em. Or leave 'em beside the road, if you don't mind litterin. Bikes're goin cheap in Kansas this summer. Ralph Brentner.

NICK shakes, then immediately dives for his pad. Looking puzzled, RALPH turns his attention to TOM, who seizes his hand and works it with the enthusiasm of a thirsty man working a pump handle.

TOM

I'm Tom Cullen. M-O-O-N, that spells Tom Cullen. This here is--

GINA (giggling)

M-O-O-N spells moon!

TOM (grinning)

Laws, yes! Tom Cullen knows that, everybody knows that, but it spells Tom Cullen, too. This is my friend. He can't talk or hear and I can't read, so I don't know his name. But I sure wish I did, laws, yes!

DICK (to NICK)

Are you headed for the old woman in Nebraska? Because if it's the other one, you can go to the devil.

NICK tears the sheet off his pad and hands it through the driver's side window to RALPH, who looks down at it:

208 NOTE, INSERT

208

The name's Nick Andros. Yes, we're headed for Nebraska, but you're going north.

209 EXT. BY RALPH'S TRUCK

209

RALPH

We'll head west again when we hit Route 46. We tried the interstate, but it's jammed.

[To TOM]

Your friend's name is Nick Andros, Tommy. M-O-O-N...I guess that spells Nick.

CONTINUES

209 CONTINUES

GINA giggles as TOM seizes NICK'S hand and starts to flag it as enthusiastically as he flagged RALPH'S.

TOM

Nick Andros! How you doin, Nick?

Laughing silently, NICK flashes him the familiar thumb-and-forefinger circle.

TOM

You were right--they're nice, like us!

DICK

Better climb on up, boys--we got to turn some miles before dark. Dick Ellis. I was a pretty good vet before the world went to hell.

NICK reaches through and shakes with him. So does TOM (bonking his head a damned good one on the cab of the truck in the process). Then NICK leads TOM around to the back.

RALPH

All aboard for Nebraska--right, doc?

DICK (a trifle prissy)

I wish you'd stop calling me that.

RALPH

Closest thing we got this summer.

[Out the window]

What do you say, boys--all ready?

210 EXT. LOOKING DOWN THE HIGHWAY

210

In the f.g. are NICK'S and TOM'S abandoned bikes. As the truck pulls away, GINA starts singing "Children of the Lord" (known to the heathen among you as "The Arky-Arky Song," words available from the screenwriter for a reasonable fee). RALPH joins in...then DICK...then, from his place behind the cab, TOM. THE CAMERA HOLDS as the truck heads off into the vast flatlands which lie at the heart of the country and we

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 6.

## ACT 7

211 EXT. LARRY UNDERWOOD, CU

211

He's playing acoustic guitar and singing "Eve of Destruction."

LARRY (sings)

"Can't you feel the fear that I'm feelin today?  
Can't you understand what I'm tryin to say?  
If the button is pushed there'll be  
no runnin away,  
and no one to save with the world in its grave.  
Take a look round you, boy,  
it's bound to scare you, boy,  
but you tell me, over and over and over  
again, my friend,  
how you don't believe  
we're on the eve of destruction."

As he sings, THE CAMERA PULLS SLOWLY BACK and shows us that he's sitting on the hood of a car. MORE PULLBACK shows us the car is but one of a huge turnpike jam that dwindles into the distance. More cars fill the eastbound lanes.

Now THE CAMERA SLOWLY SWINGS AROUND to show us what LARRY is looking at as he sings, and we see that P.F. Sloane's antique apocalypse is fitting music. On the horizon (again, courtesy of a good matte artist) is a city which lies in SMOULDERING RUINS.

TITLE CARD: DES MOINES, IOWA JULY 11

LARRY (sings)

"Look at all the hate there is in Red China,  
then take a look around at Selma, Ala--"

LUCY (trembling voice)

Excuse me?

The effect on LARRY is nothing short of galvanic. His eyes pop wide open and he swings around to see:

212 EXT. LUCY SWANN AND JOE, LARRY'S POV

212

They have just crossed the median strip from the eastbound lanes of I-80. LUCY is about LARRY'S age, very pretty in a country-girl way. JOE is about eleven, dressed in jeans and a t-shirt. He looks at LARRY with undisguised distrust and fear.

CONTINUES

212 CONTINUES

LUCY

Thank God! I'm--we're--so glad  
to see someone else...aren't we, Joe?

JOE makes an INARTICULATE HOOTING SOUND. LUCY leads him between the jammed-up cars, and as she draws nearer, it becomes clear that she's more than glad to see LARRY; she's damn near overwhelmed.

LARRY puts the guitar down beside the Harley that's he's been riding. He straightens up just in time to catch LUCY in his arms.

LUCY (sobbing)

I'm so pleased to...to meet you...

LARRY

Same here, believe me.

He turns to JOE and holds out his hand.

LARRY

Hello, son.

JOE gives an alarmed HOOT and pulls back. He dives into his pocket, brings out a Swiss Army knife, and flips the blade out. He jabs it at LARRY.

LARRY

Whoa, son! I surrender!

LUCY

Joe! Put that away!

He gives her a questioning look. LUCY nods adamantly. Very slowly, JOE closes the knife, gives LARRY one last defiant HOOT, then wanders away to sit on the bumper of a car and keep an eye on developments.

LARRY

Nice kid. Has he had his rabies shots?

LUCY

I'm sorry about that, but he's been badly traumatized.

LARRY

Haven't we all?

CONTINUES

212 CONTINUES (2)

LUCY

I'm Lucy Swann. The boy...I found him in a supermarket in Iowa City. He was just wandering around and eating stuff. Back then he was almost feral.

LARRY

And you took him with you anyway?

LUCY

He would have died on his own.

She gives him a funny look, and LARRY glances away. It was the old LARRY there for a minute, and LARRY knows it. He glances toward the horizon, wanting a second or two to regain his poise.

LARRY

What do you suppose it was? Lightning?

LUCY

It happened four...no, five nights ago. We've been camped here for quite awhile, hoping for...listen, you are going to Nebraska, aren't you?

LARRY

Yes. What about that?

He points toward the smouldering skyline.

LUCY

It started around dusk--a whole series of explosions on the west side of town, where the tank farms are. There was a wind, and the rest of the city was gone by morning. I'd say it was set.

LARRY

You think someone deliberately burned Des Moines to the ground.

LUCY

Yes.

LARRY

Tell me I'm crazy. That I'm in a nuthouse someplace, wearing a coat that buttons up the back and hallucinating all this.

CONTINUES

212 CONTINUES (3)

LUCY (smiles a little)

I can't.

JOE strolls forward and snatches LARRY'S guitar from where it has been resting against the side of his Harley.

LARRY

Hey, kid! That's a valuable musical--

JOE plays a tricky blues riff up the neck of the guitar--one that would do credit to Steve Vye or Eric Clapton.

LARRY (lame)

--instrument.

LUCY smiles fondly and LARRY stares, gape-jawed, as JOE finishes the riff and then sets the guitar down again.

LARRY

Didn't I see this kid in  
Deliverance?

LUCY

I beg pardon?

LARRY picks up the guitar and plays the first phrase of the guitar part of "Duelling Banjos."

LARRY

Never mind.

[Looks off toward the skyline]

Who'd want to burn a whole city to the ground, for God's sake?

LUCY

I don't know. But later on that night, I heard...at first I thought it was a ghost. Then I thought it might be the man with no face. The man in the cowboy boots. Do you dream about him?

LARRY

Yes. I do. Never mind him now; tell me what you heard later on that night.

LUCY

Screaming. Like a lost soul. Or someone in terrible pain. It went away in that direction.

[She points]

West.

They look at each other, and we

213 EXT. A DESERT HIGHWAY NOON

213

On both sides of the road are fantastic, wind-carved rock shapes; buttes, mesas, cols, ridges like dinosaur spines.

TRASHCAN MAN (voice)  
Ci-a-bola, Ci-a-bola, bumpty-bumpty-BUMP!

TITLE CARD: THE UTAH BADLANDS JULY 11

The road skirts a hairpin turn at the base of a sandstone bluff. TRASHCAN MAN comes around the bend (in more ways than one). What a mess! One wrist wrapped in a dirty, unravelling bandage, the hand below it pulled into a Quasimodo claw; the left arm and left side of his face a mass of oozing burn tissue; hair and eyebrows burned off. Yet he is grinning.

TRASHY  
Ci-a-bola, Ci-a-bola, bumpty-bumpty-BUMP!

A pack hangs on his back by one strap. On his feet are a pair of elderly sneakers. As he reaches THE CAMERA he stares at:

214 EXT. FURTHER ALONG THE ROAD, TRASH'S POV

214

A VISION shimmers into being far out in the heat-struck badlands, a fabulous city of minarets and spires. It is either Bagdahd or Las Vegas. It grows BRIGHTER for a moment...then FADES OUT.

215 EXT. TRASH

215

TRASHY (transported)  
SI-AAAA-BO-LAAAAAAA!

FLAGG (whispered voice)  
I will set you high in my councils...  
and I will set you to burn.

TRASH looks left, toward:

216 EXT. THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, TRASH'S POV

216

In the shadow of a red rock (come in under the shadow of this red rock) a Vespa rests on its kickstand. Beside it is the owner, now dried to a sweatless, grinning doll in a UNLV sweatshirt. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON the keys in the ignition.

217 EXT. TRASH

217

He's a mess of ruination...but he's also exalted.

TRASH  
My life for you! Bumpty-bumpty-bump!  
My life for you! Bumpty-bumpty-bump!

217 CONTINUES

MUSIC: ACOUSTIC GUITAR, playing "Eve of Destruction" as TRASH starts walking toward the Vespa motor-scooter.

218 EXT. SIZZLING UTAH BADLANDS AFTERNOON 218

MUSIC IS LOUDER. In the f.g., the CROW is perched on a spur of red rock, watching the highway.

SOUND BELOW MUSIC: The WASP-WHINE of an APPROACHING SCOOTER, and then TRASHY SWEEPS INTO VIEW. Imagine Karloff as Im-Ho-Tep on a Vespa, and you've got an idea of what he looks like. TRASH'S bandages--not to mention little strips and tags of burnt skin --flap in the slipstream. He is unconscious of his aspect, however; his mind is fixed upon Cibola, the fabled City of Gold. It lies ahead. It, and FLAGG.

TRASHCAN MAN (long scream)

Si-aaaaaaa-bo-laaaaaaaa!

The CROW CAWS GRIMLY, as if in agreement, then flaps off. Acoustic guitar UP TO LOUD.

219 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S HOUSE DAY 219

We're high above it, looking down. There's a feeling of peace and quiet here, as if the plague has been shut out. As if time itself has been shut out.

TITLE CARD: HEMINGFORD HOME, NEBRASKA JULY 12

SOUNDS of a MEAL BEING PREPARED; DISHES RATTLE, CUTELRY CLASHES.

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)

Now, Lord...if only that red tea  
made up nice...

220 INT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S KITCHEN 220

It looks like Thanksgiving Day dinner about twenty minutes prior to lift-off. The counter is covered with serving dishes and pots steam on the stove. Three of the chickens ABBY fought so hard to save sit on the butcher's block, roasted to a turn.

At CAMERA LEFT, a door stands open and three or four steps go down to ABBY'S cold pantry. She comes STRUGGLING and PUFFING up them with a big glass jug of red tea.

ABBY

Please Lord keep me from droppin  
it on the floor, if it be Your will.

CONTINUES



220 CONTINUES

She CONTINUES TO AD-LIB PRAYERS as she sets the jug down and starts to pull pots off the stove.

SOUND, VERY FAINT: AN APPROACHING ENGINE.

MOTHER ABAGAIL

Now, Lord, I ain't got no corn yet,  
but I guess the men You're sendin--

She hears the APPROACHING MOTOR. Her face lights up with happiness and she heads for the door.

221 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S PORCH 221

She hurries out, shades her eyes, and looks at:

222 EXT. THE LANE LEADING TO ABBY'S HOUSE, PORCH POV 222

RALPH BRENTNER'S truck approaches, throwing up rooster-tails of dust. RALPH waves his battered straw hat.

RALPH

Yeehaw!

223 EXT. ABBY 223

She smiles and waves back. Tears of happiness fill her eyes and trickle down her ancient, wrinkled cheeks.

ABBY

Praise God for bringin em through.  
My Lord, I thank You so.

She descends the porch steps, clinging to the railing. The truck pulls into the dooryard and RALPH gets out at once. NICK and TOM are still in the bed of the truck. DICK ELLIS has joined them. Two newcomers, both women, are up front with GINA. OLIVIA WALKER, about fifty, has the little girl in her lap. The younger woman, a redhead, is JUNE BRINKMEYER.

RALPH

Hello, Mother--we never took a single  
wrong turn. Nick knew just how to come.

NICK is climbing down from the truck with TOM right behind him.

RALPH (continues)

Ralph Brentner. Pleased to meet you.

He starts to hold out his hand, then decides that won't do. He enfolds her in a gentle but enveloping bearhug instead.

CONTINUES

223 CONTINUES

RALPH (deep emotion)  
Good to see you, Mother.

TOM  
Laws, yes!

RALPH lets go of her, and MOTHER ABAGAIL immediately turns to NICK. There is great power in their combined glance.

ABBY  
Hello, Nick; glad to see you. God bless.

NICK is trying to convince himself all this isn't a dream. Then he hugs her and covers her cheeks with kisses. ABBY laughs through her tears. The others surround NICK and MOTHER ABAGAIL in a loose circle.

ABBY (just to NICK)  
You done it, Nick--you brought em through. And you're the first of many.

NICK looks at her questioningly.

ABBY  
Yes--they're all dreamin, and they'll either come to me--to us--or to him.

DICK  
Mother Abigail...that's your name?

ABBY  
Well, it's what people call me. And you're all welcome here. Our time is gonna be short, but we'll break bread together and have some fellowship, one with the other. There's a picnic table in the shed that'll do for all of us. Nick and Ralph, you bring it out. And this big fella here--

TOM  
Tom Cullen! I dreamed about you, ma'am!

ABBY  
Yes, I bet you did. You pick us some corn. These two women--

JUNE  
I'm June Brinkmeyer. This is Livvy Walker.

CONTINUES

223 CONTINUES (2)

ABBY

Good to meet you both. You can help me serve out. There's plenty, praise God. The earth's been bountiful this year, plague or no plague.

GINA

Grammylady?

ABBY

What, honey?

GINA

Are you the oldest lady in the world?

OLIVIA

Shhh, Gina! That's not polite!

ABBY laughs and hugs GINA.

ABBY

Mayhap so, sweetheart. Mayhap so.

224 EXT. EARLY EVENING, BEHIND MOTHER ABAGAIL'S HOUSE

224

A fat red sun hangs just over the horizon. The remains of a huge meal litters a picnic table covered with a homely checked tablecloth. ABBY and NICK sit at the head of the table. DICK, RALPH, JUNE, and OLIVIA make up the rest of the company. Off to one side, TOM is pushing a laughing GINA in the tire swing.

DICK (calls)

Not too high, Tom! She's got one broken wing already!

ABBY

They be fine. My great-grandson Jim replaced the rope on that thing just before the plague hit.

RALPH

That was one dilly of a meal, ma'am.

GINA runs over.

GINA

Can I sit on your lap, grammylady?

ABBY

Well, come on up n let's see.

GINA fits MOTHER ABAGAIL'S lap just about perfectly, it seems.

CONTINUES

224 CONTINUES

JUNE

Come on, Gina--time to get washed up and ready for bed.

ABBY

I made up a cot for her in the room upstairs. You and Livvy can bunk in there with her.

JUNE carries GINA away. NICK scribbles a note which he now hands to ABBY. She holds it at arms' length so she can read it.

225 NOTE, INSERT 225

How long have you known we were coming?

226 RESUME GROUP AT THE PICNIC TABLE 226

ABBY

Let me ask you one--how did you know to come here in the first place?

NICK touches his fingers to his forehead, then points to her.

RALPH

He dreamed of you, Mother. We all did. You and the other fella.

NICK writes something else, and this time she doesn't have to hold the note out to read it.

227 NOTE, INSERT 227

Big capital letters: DARK MAN.

228 RESUME GROUP AT THE PICNIC TABLE 228

MOTHER ABAGAIL looks up from the note and meets their eyes grimly, one by one--NICK last.

229 EXT. THE MOON (M-O-O-N, THAT SPELLS MOON) NIGHT 229

CRICKETS HUM LAZILY in the corn. Somewhere an OWL HOOTS.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY DOWN to ABBY'S porch. She's in her rocker. NICK sits in a kitchen chair beside her. RALPH leans against the porch rail; JUNE and DICK sit on the steps.

MOTHER ABAGAIL

I've been told that we'll be like a snowball rollin downhill, pickin up other people as we head west.

CONTINUES

229 CONTINUES

DICK

Told by who, Mother?

ABBY

Told by God. (Pauses) I tried not to hear what God had to tell me, but you see all the good it done. When God sends you your draft notice, it ain't no good askin for a deferment.

ABBY turns to NICK.

MOTHER ABAGAIL

You been drafted, too, Nick. God has put His finger on your heart. But He's got more fingers than one. There are others, as well. There's dark work for you chosen ones ahead, Nick--dark and bloody.

NICK tears a note off his pad and hands it to RALPH.

RALPH

Ma'am, Nick wants to know how much you know about this dark man.

ABBY

I know he's the purest evil left in the world. But he'll call the rest; he's started already.

DICK

Maybe he's not real. Maybe he's just...you know...a bogeyman.

ABBY

You dreamed of me; ain't I real?

DICK

Well...

ABBY

He's real enough, and if we give him time, he'll come for me and for the people who cleave to me. It's our lot to deal with him. Don't ask me why, either--God don't explain his will to the likes of Abby Freemantle.

RALPH

If this is God's way, Mother, I wish he'd retire and let someone younger take the wheel.

CONTINUES

229 CONTINUES (2)

NICK scribbles something else, tears off what he's written, and hands it to RALPH. RALPH reads it and looks embarrassed. ABBY smiles, though--she knows what this is about.

ABBY (to RALPH)

Well?

RALPH

He says...he says he don't believe in God.

OLIVIA, who has just come out, stops where she is. The others hold their breaths, waiting for the explosion. Only NICK is unafraid; he looks at her directly. ABBY bursts into hearty laughter and grasps NICK'S hand. She pats it.

ABBY

Bless you, Nick, but that don't matter. He believes in you.

NICK'S smile fades and he looks at her with an expression of surprise...and perhaps a little awe, as well. He pulls his hand free, and jots quickly on his pad. This time he doesn't bother to tear the note off, just hands the whole pad to RALPH.

RALPH

Nick says if you're sure, we better start for Boulder in the morning.

ABBY (mostly to NICK)

Amen.

230 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S DOORYARD AROUND MIDDAY

230

SOUND: The THUMP of a sledgehammer hitting a wooden post.

There are now two trucks parked in the yard. GINA and the women are in the cab of RALPH'S. Parked next to it is a new Chevrolet longbed which has been filled with a great many of ABBY'S possessions (most being brought along for reasons of strict practicality; the fact is, the old lady's got the best stuff for this strange new world). Sitting in a place of honor, roped down tight, is ABBY'S rocker.

DICK and RALPH stand next to the new truck. DICK is wearing the expression of a man who has finally gotten his dream truck.

DICK

Citizens' Band radio...four wheel drive  
...indie suspension...this baby's loaded!

RALPH grins and pats his rusty old truck.

CONTINUES

230 CONTINUES

RALPH

I'll stick with Lucille. We been around to the zeros twice together, and she never let me down yet. Tom! Hey, Tommy! Where you be?

TOM comes running out of the corn. Strands of cornsilk flutter from his shirt and his hair.

TOM

Here I am! I been scarin up crows!

RALPH (dry)

I bet. Get up in the back of mine, Tommy. Nick's gonna ride with Mother Abagail.

231 EXT. NICK, IN FRONT OF MOTHER ABAGAIL'S PORCH

231

His shirt is laid over the porch rail while he uses MOTHER ABAGAIL'S sledge to hammer home a signpost. The sign reads GONE ON TO BOULDER. MONITOR CITIZENS' BAND 14.

As NICK finishes and straightens up, he sees RALPH'S wave and returns it. MOTHER ABAGAIL comes out onto the porch. She's wearing a shawl and a mournful expression. She's holding her guitar as she starts down the steps.

NICK grabs his shirt, turns, and comes face to face with ABBY as she reaches the bottom of the steps. That sad, thoughtful look on her face is clearer than ever. NICK taps her forehead gently, then holds his hands out, miming "Are you all right?"

MOTHER ABAGAIL

I'm fine, Nick--just thinking about the home place.

She looks at:

232 EXT. A SEA OF CORN UNDER A SUMMER SKY, ABBY'S POV

232

It's beautiful--a perfect summer day in Nebraska.

ABBY (voice)

My daddy [REDACTED] owned all this once...as far as your eye can see.

233 EXT. NICK AND MOTHER ABAGAIL

233

ABBY

When he was gone, my brothers lost it, a piece at a time, until only the home place was left.

CONTINUES

33 CONTINUES

She starts to cry. NICK slowly buttons his shirt, watching her with concern and sympathy.

ABBY

And what I told myself was, "Don't worry, Ab--they can take the rest, foolish men that they are, but I'll hang onto the home place--come what may, I'll hold onto this. I'll live here, I'll die here, and I'll be buried here, under the Nebraska sky."

She finds a tissue in the pocket of her housedress and slowly wipes her eyes with it.

ABBY

And now lookit this! Lookit my things settin out in the back of that damn truck! Ain't that some hot sketch?

She bursts into bitter tears. NICK puts an arm around her.

ABBY

Oh Nick, I have harbored hate of the Lord in my heart. I've seen a world where good works are paid for in pain and evil rides over the roads in Rolls-Royces. I don't understand nothing, least of all why God has bent His eye on me. All I know is He says, "Abby, the time has come to bend n lift, and it don't matter that you're a hundred and six years old. And don't question Me, because I'm the foreman of this operation." And I say, "Yes, Lord, Thy will be done," but in my heart I curse him and ask why, why, why.

234 EXT. RALPH AND DICK

234

RALPH (shouts)

You guys comin? Daylight's wastin!

235 EXT. NICK AND MOTHER ABAGAIL

235

NICK waves back and turns his attention to ABBY again.

ABBY

The only answer I ever get is the same one Job got when God spoke to him out of the belly of the whirlwind--"Where were you when I made the world?" Don't question what you can't understand, in other words--just shut up n do your job.