

T H E G R E E N M I L E

Screenplay by Frank Darabont

from the novel by Stephen King

First Draft

11/4/97

"We each owe a death, there are no exceptions..."

Victrola:

A SONG BEGINS, distant as a faded memory on an old

against
can

Once I built a railroad, made it run... Made it race
time...Once I built a railroad, now it's done...Brother,
you spare a dime...

Opening credit sequence

heading
in
their
riding
on
as
nation's

plays against footage of the Great Depression, images
haunting and sepia-toned, defining an era. The bread
lines...the soup kitchens...the dust bowl refugees
west with their possessions on their backs and no hope
their eyes...the strutting gangster royalty flaunting
bootleg riches...an entire generation of lost youth
the rials...the U.S. army troops raining truncheon blows
the half-starved and forgotten veterans of World War One
"Hooverville" is set afire in the very shadow of the
capitol...

so

All these faces, all these lives, in a world not really
very long ago...

EXT. FIELD - DAY (SLOW MOTION)

scrap

...where cattails sway in the sepia-toned heat. A small

languidly...

of fabric is snagged in the nettles, fluttering

dragonflies

COLOR BLEEDS SLOWLY IN as mosquitoes swarm and
skitter, showing the fabric scrap to be pale yellow...

the

Suddenly, a MAN WITH A SHOTGUN comes crashing through
cattails, wiping through frame and exiting...

above

...then ANOTHER MAN...and ANOTHER...armed with rifles,
plowing through the brush, exiting frame...

his

...and now comes KLAUS DETTERICK, a farmer one step
shirt-tail poor, a double-barrel shotgun in the crook of
arm. He pauses, horrified, seeing the scrap of cloth. He
pulls it loose, turns back, screaming something in

anguish...

by us

...and still more men come crashing into view, flooding
with dreamlike, slow-motion grace. ONE MAN is leading a
team of DOGS, trying to untangle the leads. DEPUTY ROB MCGEE
is shouting for everybody to stay together...

team

is

whisper:

...and under it all, we hear a sibilant, frightening

WHISPERING VOICE (V.O.)

You love your sister? You make any
noise, know what happens?

And off that horrible voice, we

CUT TO:

INT. GEORGIA PINES NURSING HOME - MORNING (PRESENT DAY)

A CLOCK RADIO spews the morning weather report, abruptly
pulling us into the present with a prediction of rain.

PAUL

EDGEComb, late 70's/early 80's, wakes to another day...

INT. PAUL'S ROOM - MORNING

buttoning

Paul stands at his bathroom mirror, meticulously

hair... his shirt. He picks up a hairbrush, starts tidying his

INT. CORRIDOR - MORNING

WOMAN THE OLD AND INFIRM haunt these corridors like ghosts. A
rolling inches along on a walker. A MAN shuffles by with a
occasional I.V. stand. The floor is a limey, institutional green.
Paul comes into view, spry for his age, murmurs an
greeting.

INT. BREAKFAST ROOM - MORNING

coffee DOZENS OF RETIREES are having breakfast, sipping weak
their or tea. Some chat and gossip, other are content to keep
own company, some just stare slackly into space.

other Paul enters, sees ELAINE CONNELLY sitting with a few
best ladies, sipping tea. She's 80, refined and elegant, his
gives her friend here. She gives him a good-morning smile. He
more. a rakish wink in return, which makes her smiles all the

two Paul reaches past the people at the counter and sneaks
tosses pieces of cold leftover toast off a serving plate. He
Elaine another look--catch ya later--and exits.

INT. HALLWAY PAST KITCHEN - MORNING

plastic Paul slips to the back door unnoticed. Identical red
one rain ponchos line the wall on pegs. He helps himself to
and eases outside, making good his escape.

EXT. NURSING HOME - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

rolling Nestled in a valley of wooded hills, a drizzly mist
over the treetops.

Paul appears f.g., coming up the ridge in his borrowed poncho. He looks back at the valley below, inhales

deeply--

this is a man who loves his walks.

He pulls a piece of toast from his pocket and starts to nibble as he presses up on the ridge...

Low angle: nursing home and ridge beyond

trudging up

...and we see Paul from a distance, just a speck

and

toward the treeline. A PICKUP TRUCK rumbles into frame

and

parks, a bumper sticker looming large: "I Have Seen God

His Name Is Newt Gingrich".

30's,

BRAD DOLAN gets out, an orderly in his late 20's/early

gazes

arriving for work in jeans and cheesy plaid shirt. He

up toward the ridge, scowling and muttering softly:

BRAD

Old fuck.

He slams the door and heads for the nursing home...

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

looking

...as CAMERA BOOMS DOWN through the trees to find Paul wandering a wooded path, munching a tidbit of toast,

poncho.

for all the world like Red Riding Hood in his plastic

are

It's silent here, like a church. The only sounds we hear

the twittering of the birds and the hammering of the woodpecker.

A RUSTLING SOUND makes Paul freeze. He turns, becomes transfixed. Softly:

PAUL

Oh, my...

Reverse angle

reveals a magnificent BUCK, not twenty feet away, misty

other
breath punching the cold morning air. They watch each
for an endless moment, both standing stock still...
...and then the animal bounds away, vanishing into the
wonder.
foliage. Paul lets out a breath, shakes his head in
He takes another bite of toast, moves on...
...and WE PAN WITH HIM to reveal a pair of old wooden
storage
shacks along the path up ahead.

INT. SHACK - MORNING

approaching
Dark in here, cobwebby and decrepit. We see Paul
shades
outside the grimy window. He steps up to the glass and
his eyes, peering curiously in as we

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

He
Paul approaches the back door, returning from his walk.
gasping in
reaches for the knob...and a figure in white lunges from
behind the dumpster to grab his wrist. He whirls,
fright--it's Brad Dolan, wearing his orderly's uniform.

BRAD

Out for a little stroll, Paulie?

PAUL

Let go...

Paul tries to pull away, but Dolan's got him tight.

BRAD

What's with this poncho you got
on, huh? This isn't yours.

PAUL

I got it off the wall there.
There's a whole row of them.

BRAD

But not for you, Paulie, that's
the thing. Those are for the staff.

PAUL

I just borrowed it. Don't see what harm it does.

BRAD

It's not about harm, it's about rules. You probably don't think an old fart like you has to mind rules anymore, but that's just not true.

abusing Brad's eyes keep shifting--he obviously doesn't mind the elderly as long as he doesn't get caught doing it.

PAUL

I'm sorry if I broke the rules.

BRAD

You got no business up in those woods anyway, especially in the rain. What if you fall and bust a hip, huh? Who you think's gonna have to hoss your sorry old bacon back down here? Me, that's who.

PAUL

You're hurting me!

BRAD

What do you do up there, anyway? You're too old to go jerk off, so what do you do?

PAUL

Nothing. I just walk, that's all, I like to walk!

been Brad lashes out and grabs Paul's other hand, which he's holding tightly clenched shut.

BRAD

Come on. Open up. Let Poppa see.

of Paul uncurls his fingers, revealing the crushed remnants a bit of toast, his palm slick with a greasy oleo smear.

ELAINE (O.S.)

Paul?

with a
much
nothing:

They turn. Elaine stands just inside the screen door
cup of tea. Brad's eyes become calculated, wondering how
she's seen. Elaine keeps her tone level, betraying

ELAINE

I saw you coming back, thought
you'd like some tea.

(beat)

Are you coming in?

PAUL

Mr. Dolan and I were...chatting.
About the weather. I think we're
through now.

Brad lets Paul loose, leans close:

BRAD

Paulie? You tell anyone I squeezed
your po' ol' hand, I'll tell 'em
you're having senile delusions.
Who you think they'll believe?

door
her a

Brad walks off. Paul turns, watches him go. The screen
opens and Elaine steps out, her face pale. Paul gives
strained, though grateful, smile as we

CUT TO:

INT. TV ROOM - DAY

audience
watching
PETE

Jerry Springer's on the tube, whipping his studio
into a frenzy. PAN OFF TO REVEAL DOZENS OF OLD FOLKS
on couches and folding chairs. An old black fellow named
is grousing to a GROUP OF ELDERLY LADIES...

PETE

Why we always watch this crap?

ELDERLY LADY #1

It's interesting.

PETE

Interesting? Bunch'a inbred

trailer trash, all they ever talk
about is fucking...

near

...and WE CONTINUE PANNING to Paul and Elaine sitting
the back, talking quietly as Paul rubs his bruised hand:

ELAINE

We should report him.

PAUL

That might just provoke him all
the more, make things worse for
everybody.

ELAINE

It's not everybody he has it in
for, Paul. It's you.

(off his look)

What did you do to provoke him in
the first place? Nothing. He's
just an abusive bully, and should
be made to stop.

PAUL

Ellie, please...

Pete

is at the TV, switching channels while:

ELDERLY LADIES

...no, the Movie Classic channel
is further down...past the Home
Shopping...keep going...

old

He finds the Movie Classic channel, which is playing an

and

black and white musical--"Top Hat," with Fred Astaire

Ginger Rogers. A delighted reaction:

ELDERLY LADY #2

Oh! This is wonderful...

Paul

in

idly shifts his gaze to the TV...and his expression goes
slack with recognition and dismay. Elaine sees the look

his eyes.

out...but in
with
decides to

He glances away...even briefly considers walking
the end, he can't help himself. The past just caught up
him with a freight-train wallop, and, for one, he
ride the rails...

He looks back at the TV. On screen, Fred and Ginger have
begun their famous "Cheek to Cheek" number, with Astaire
singing in that sublime, easy-go-lucky way of his:

FRED ASTAIRE

Heaven, I'm in heaven...and my
heart beat so that I can hardly
speak...

eyes
than
concern:

SLOW PUSH IN on Paul, watching. He'd like to take his
off the screen, but the movie has him in a grip tighter
Brad Dolan's. Elaine is watching him with puzzled

ELAINE

Paul? What is it?

see
long

No response. All he can hear is that music, all he can
are those dancers. The figures on TV are gliding with
ghostlike grace in their silvery, phosphor-dot world of
ago...

Paul abruptly bursts into tears.

All
just

The room goes quiet, everything comes to a standstill.
eyes turn, some concerned, others merely curious. Paul
sits sobbing into his hands, shoulders heaving.

ELAINE

Paul...my God...

ORDERLY

(rushing over)
What is it? What's wrong?

PAUL

It's okay...I'll be okay...

Another orderly appears--Brad Dolan. He puts his hand on Paul's shoulder and leans close, feigning concern.

BRAD

S'matter, Paulie? Why the boo-hoo-hoo? Something nasty happen?

Elaine shoves his hand away, eyes flashing with anger.

ELAINE

Mr. Edgecomb will be perfectly fine without your help, thank you.

Elaine Brad back off with a "hey, suit yourself" gesture.
helps Paul to his feet and leads him out.

CUT TO:

INT. SUN ROOM - DAY

It's Paul is staring out the windows, pensive and drained.
Elaine raining now, pattering the glass and the lawn beyond.
waits across from him, wishing he would speak. Softly:

PAUL

I guess sometimes the past just catches up with you, whether you want it to or not. It's silly.

ELAINE

Was it the film?
(off his look)
It was, wasn't it?

PAUL

I haven't spoken of these things in a long time, Ellie. Over sixty years.

She reaches out, gently takes his hand.

ELAINE

Paul. I'm your friend.

PAUL

Yes. Yes you are.

all Paul wonders if he's even up to talking about it after

this time...and decides that perhaps he is:

PAUL

I ever tell you I was a prison guard during the depression?

ELAINE

You've mentioned it.

PAUL

Did I mention I was in charge of death row? That I supervised all the executions?

This does come as a surprise. She shakes her head.

PAUL

They usually call death row the Last Mile, but we called ours the Green Mile, because the floor was the color of faded limes. We had the electric chair then. Old Sparky, we called it.

(beat)

I've lived a lot of years, Ellie, but 1935 takes the prize. That was the year I had the worst urinary infection of my life. That was also the year of John Coffey, and the two dead girls...

FADE TO BLACK

In blackness, a title card appears:

"The Two Dead Girls"

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGIA COUNTRYSIDE - DAY (1935)

HUNDREDS OF PRISONERS work the fields, pickaxes rising and falling in waves, a prison song being sung in cadence with the work. GUARDS patrol on horseback, rifles aimed at the sky.

A late 20's Ford PRISON TRUCK comes chugging into view along the road, kicking up a long trail of dust in the heat. It

seems to be riding unusually low on its rear suspension.

EXT. COLD MOUNTAIN PENITENTIARY - ESTABLISHING - DAY

sways
A Depression-era prison in the south. The prison truck
down the rutted dirt road toward the main gate...

INT. E BLOCK TOILET - DAY

is
...while Paul Edgecomb, early 40's, stands in a cramped
toilet in his guard's uniform, trying to piss. His face
pained, his forehead beaded with sweat.

INT. E BLOCK (THE GREEN MILE) - DAY

size,
the
viewing
at the
bottom,
softly.
BRUTUS HOWELL (nicknamed "Brutal" for his intimidating
but he's actually rather thoughtful by nature) stands at
entry door of the cellblock, peering out through a
slot. He sees the prison truck arrive at the main gate.
He turns and nods to fellow guard DEAN STANTON sitting
duty desk, then cross the Green Mile--a wide corridor of
faded green linoleum running some sixty paces top to
with four large cells to a side.
Brutal steps to the bathroom, listen a moment, knocks

BRUTAL

Paul? Prisoner.

PAUL (O.S.)

Christ. Gimme a minute.

hears
Brutal waits patiently, a bit embarrassed. He finally
a THIN TRICKLE, accompanied by a stifled groan of pain.

BRUTAL

You all right in there?

PAUL (O.S.)

For a man pissing razor blades.

The door opens, revealing Paul's pale and sweaty face.

BRUTAL

You should'a took the day off,
gone to see the doctor.

PAUL

With a new arrival? You know
better. Besides, it's not as bad
as it was. I think it's clearing
up.

Paul
down
the
second is

They hear the truck HONKING as it rumbles up outside.
gives them a nod to resume their positions. Paul walks
the Mile, passing the cells where two inmates reside--
first is ARLEN BITTERBUCK, a Washita Cherokee; the
EDUARD DELACROIX("DEL"), a skinny Cajun.

DEL

New boy coming in, boss?

PAUL

Never you mind, Del, you just keep
your nose quietly on your business.

at
violent
often...in

Paul arrives at the end of the Mile, takes up a position
an empty cell. (Down at this end, past the cells, is E
Block's version of the "hole" -- a padded room where
inmates are sent to cool off. It isn't used very
fact, at the moment, it's doubling as storage space.)
Brutal
peers out the viewing slot as the truck stops outside.

BRUTAL

Damn, they're riding on the axle.
What'd they do, bust the springs?

emerge

GUARDS PERCY WETMORE AND HARRY TERWILLIGER OF E BLOCK
from the back of the truck and step down, turn back...
Tighter angle on back of truck
We get our first glimpse of the new inmate as a pair of

rear of
belongs.

GIGANTIC BLACK FEET step down into the yard...and the
the truck bounces back up on its springs where it

Brutal

sees what's coming, eyes widening slightly.

BRUTAL

Paul? You might wanna reconsider
getting in the cell with this guy?

PAUL

Why's that?

BRUTAL

He's enormous.

PAUL

Can't be bigger than you.

open
look at:

Brutal tosses him a look--just wait. He swings the door
in a hot flood of daylight, giving us our first good

John coffey

his
ending

is a huge black man, nearly 7 feet tall and 300 pounds,
massive head shiny and bald, his skin a tapestry of old
scars, his prison overalls (the biggest size they had)

him
baton out

at mid-calf. He looks dull and confused, as if wondering
where he is and how he got there. Percy and Harry lead

toward E Block in shackles. Percy's got his hickory

of it custom-made holster, hollering:

PERCY

Dead man walking! Dead man walking
here!

Inside the cellblock

he can

Paul can't see them approach from where he stands, but
certainly hear Percy:

PAUL

Jeezus, pleeze-us, what the hell's
he yelling about?

Up by the door, Brutal just rolls his eyes. Percy is the
first one through the door, still hollering...

PERCY

Dead man walking!

shadow
the
yanking

...then Coffey enters, ducking low to get through, his
blotting out Brutal and Dean as his massive frame fills
door. Everything hangs suspended for a moment, a look of
"hold shit" written on everybody's faces. Percy keeps
on the big man's cuffs, leading him along with a cry of:

PERCY

Dead man walking! Dead man--

PAUL

Percy, that's enough.

it,
down

Percy falls reproachfully silent. Paul doesn't dignify
just motions for them to come on. The procession comes
the Mile, with Brutal and Dean bringing up rear.

BRUTAL

You sure you wanna be in there
with him?

PAUL

(looks to Coffey)
Am I gonna have trouble with you,
big boy?

on
with

Coffey shakes his head slowly. Paul takes the clipboard
transfer papers from Harry, turns and enters the cell.

Coffey just stands outside the cell and waits, as if he
doesn't understand the concept. Paul motions him to come
in. Coffey starts to comply, but Percy raps him smartly
the tip of his hickory baton to get him moving faster.

palm

Coffey flinches, enters the cell. Paul stares angrily at
Percy, who stands slapping his hickory baton against the

of his hand like a man with a toy he's itching to use.

PAUL

Percy. They're moving house over
in the infirmary. Why don't you go
see if they could use some help?

PERCY

They got all the men they need.

PAUL

Why don't you just go make sure?

(off his look)

I don't care where you go, Percy,
as long as it's not here at this
very moment.

looks
it and
Percy flushes red, the baton hovering near his palm. He
like he's about to say something, but thinks better of
stalks angrily up the Mile instead...

CRACK.
...and sees Del at his bars, smiling. Infuriated, Percy
swings his baton and smashes Del's fingers with a LOUD
Del jerks back, howling in pain:

DEL

OWW, GOD, HE BUS' MY FINGERS!

PERCY

Wiped that grin off your shitpoke
face, didn't I

PAUL

Goddamn it, Percy! Get the hell
off my block!

Percy throws Paul a look of disdain--your block, huh? He
swaggers out. Del's on his knees, weeping from the pain:

DEL

Oww, damn, boss, he done bus' my
fingers for true...

PAUL

We'll get it looked at, Del, now
keep yourself quiet like I said!

Del falls silent, moaning over his hand. Paul turns to
Coffey, who looks unsettled by all the commotion.

PAUL

If I let Harry take those chains
off you, you gonna be nice?

Coffey nods. Harry enters to remove Coffey's shackles.

PAUL

Your name is John Coffey.

COFFEY

(deep and quiet)

Yes, sir, boss, like the drink,
only not spelt the same.

PAUL

So you can spell, can you?

Coffey shakes his head. Harry steps out.

PAUL

My name is Paul Edgecomb. If I'm
not here, you can ask for Mr.
Terwilliger, Mr. Howell, or Mr.
Stanton...those gentlemen there.

(beat)

This isn't like the rest of the
prison. It's a quiet place, we
like to keep it that way.

Coffey considers this carefully, puzzled.

COFFEY

It weren't me making all the
noise, boss.

PAUL

(eyes narrowing)

You having a joke on me, John
Coffey?

COFFEY

No, sir.

Paul sees he isn't joking, continues:

PAUL

Your time here can be easy or
hard, depends on you. If you
behave, you get to walk in the
exercise yard every day.

We might even play some music on
the radio from time to time.
Questions?

ask: Coffey doesn't miss a beat, as if he's been waiting to

COFFEY

Do you leave a light on after
bedtime?

smiles Paul blinks. It's the last thing he expected. Coffey
uneasily, as if they might think him foolish for asking.

COFFEY

Because I get a little scared in
the dark sometimes. If it's a
strange place.

Paul looks to his men. The guards are trading glances.

PAUL

It's pretty bright in here all
night long. We keep half the
lights burning in the corridor.

COFFEY

Cor'der.

the Coffey looks confused. Paul points to the lights lining
ceiling of the Green Mile in wire mesh cages.

PAUL

Right out there.

Paul Coffey nods, relieved. Then he surprises everybody by
offering Paul his hand, as if to show proper manners.

more by Paul hesitates, oddly touched, then surprised his men even
gently, accepting. Coffey's hand swallows his. Coffey shakes
lets go.

locks Paul steps from the cell. Brutal slides the door shut,
it. Coffey stands a moment as if unsure what to do, then
sinks onto the cot with his hands clasped between his

knees. He looks up at Paul, his voice soft as a whisper:

COFFEY

Couldn't help it, boss. I tried to take it back, but it was too late.

Paul turns, leads his men up the Mile...

PAUL'S INNER OFFICE

but ...and they enter a few moments later. Paul is furious, keeping a lid on his temper:

PAUL

Dean, run Delacroix up to the infirmary and see if his fingers are broken.

BRUTAL

Course they're broken, I heard the damn bones crack. Goddamn Percy.

HARRY

You hear what he was yelling when we brought the big dummy in?

PAUL

How could I miss it, Harry? The whole prison heard.

others This makes Brutal snort, breaking the tension--the can't help smiling.

BRUTAL

You'll probably have to answer for sending him off the Mile. He's gonna cause you trouble over this, you mark me.

PAUL

I'll chew that food when I have to. Right now I wanna hear about the new inmate...aside from how big he is, okay?

BRUTAL

(smiles)
Monstrous big. Damn.

PAUL

Seems meek enough. Looks like they

sent us an imbecile to execute.

HARRY

Imbecile or not, he deserves to fry for what he done. Here...

rubber

Harry tosses a pair of manila envelopes bound with bands on the desk before Paul--Coffey's file.

HARRY

...make your blood curdle.

CUT TO:

EXT. E BLOCK PRISON YARD - DAY

from

perimeter

A small area reserved for inmates of the Mile, fenced-off the main prison yard. Arlen Bitterbuck walks the under the watchful eyes of guard BILL DODGE.

brown-

We find Paul sitting by himself on the bleachers with Coffey's file on his knees, thoughtfully unwrapping his bagged sandwich. PUSH SLOWLY IN as he begins to read...

EXT. DETTERICK FARM - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

barn

brightening

...and we see Klaus Detterick walk from his house to the with a milking pail, a solitary figure against a horizon. He disappears into the barn...

yard...

...and we hold for a long moment, the house silent b.g., chickens clucking and scratching in the front

house...

...until a WOMAN'S SCREAM shatters the silence. Klaus reappears, dropping the pail, running toward the

PAUL ON BLEACHERS

...as Paul turns the page, keeps reading...

INT. DETTERICK HOUSE - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

absolutely

...and Klaus bursts in to find his wife MARJORIE

frantic with terror:

KLAUS
WHAT? GOD SAKES, WHAT?

MARJORIE
THE GIRLS! THE GIRLS ARE GONE!

area
She drags him through the house to a screened-off porch
shouting-- where their 12 year old son HOWIE is pointing and

HOWIE
Papa! Papa, look! The blood!

spattered on --and Klaus freezes there, stunned to see blood
the floor and the screen door hanging off its hinges...

KLAUS
Oh my God.

PAUL ON BLEACHERS

not ...as Paul absently takes another bite of his sandwich,
really tasting it, keeps reading...

INT. DETTERICK HOUSE - DAWN (FLASHBACK)

grabbing ...plunging us back into the screaming chaos: Klaus
for up shotgun shells, Howie loading the .22 rifle he got
Christmas, Marjorie sobbing incoherently...

KLAUS
GODDAMN IT, WOMAN, GET ON THE
PHONE NOW! YOU TELL 'EM WE HEADED
WEST! MIND WHAT I'M SAYING! WEST,
Y'HEAR?

for the ...and she goes stumbling through the house, grabbing
phone as her men disappear toward the porch b.g.:

MARJORIE
Central! Central, are you on the
line? Oh, God, please, somebody
took my little girls...

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

spatters of Klaus and his son race from the house, following blood across the yard...

PAUL ON THE BLEACHERS

...as Paul lets out a long breath, turns the page...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD/FIELD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

out ---and we see CARS AND TRUCKS pulling up, MEN jumping where with rifles, pouring down the incline toward the field comes Klaus is hollering and waving his arms. Deputy McGee his sliding down from the road, taking charge at the top of lungs--

McGEE

**I WANT ALL THE WEAPONS UNLOADED,
Y'HEAR? TAKE OUT YOUR SHELLS, I
WON'T HAVE A MAN SHOT BY ACCIDENT
TODAY! BOBO, WHERE THEM DOGS?**

--and the dogs come bounding out of the back of a truck, howling down the incline to lead the chase...

VARIOUS ANGLES

bulrushes...to the ...which takes us through the cattails and spot where Klaus finds the little scrap of pale yellow fabric, turns and screams...

KLAUS

Oh, Lord, this belongs to my Katie...

A ...and they keep going, stopping abruptly as they find: bloody blood-drenched area of tramped grass. A little girl's these nightgown hangs in the low branches of a tree. Some of strong men look like they might throw up or faint at the sight of it. Their blood freezes in their veins as an

INHUMAN

ever
HOWLING commences up ahead. It's like nothing they've
heard before, raising the hackles of men and dogs alike.

PAUL ON BLEACHERS

head...
...as Paul quietly turns another page, shaking his

PAUL

Jesus.

EXT. FIELD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

McGee
The men reload their weapons. Everybody's terrified.
starts off, the other following his lead toward--

THE RIVER

closer to
--where they emerge from the treeline, drawing ever
the source of that INHUMAN HOWLING...

...and they stop, gazing in horror:

his
inhuman
John Coffey sits on the riverbank in bloody overalls,
huge feet splayed out before him. He's making that
howling sound, face twisted in monstrous grief, pausing
occasionally to take in a great hitching breath of air.

hair now
Curled in his massive arms are the naked bodies of
Detterick's 9 year-old twin girls, their once-blonde
matted to their heads with blood.

A tableau. The men staring. John Coffey howling. A train
puffing smoke across the landscape.

riverbank
shrugs
Coffey
Klaus Detterick breaks the moment, lunging down the
in a headlong rush. The others try to grab him, but he
them off and throws himself on Coffey with a scream of
inarticulate rage, kicking and punching, fists flying.
barely seems to notice.

to his
The others catch up with Klaus, drag him off. He falls

runs to
knees on the riverbank, sobbing into his hands. Howie
him, throws himself into his father's arm. They hug each
other tightly, overwhelmed with grief.
A semblance of quiet descends, except for Coffey's
heartbroken wailing. A ring of rifle toting men forms
around
him, though he hardly seems aware of it. McGee steps
forward,
uncertain:

McGEE

Mister.

Coffey goes quiet at once, eyes still streaming tears.

McGEE

Mister? Can you hear me?

(Coffey nods)

You have a name?

COFFEY

John Coffey. Like the drink, only
not spelt the same.

McGee hunkers carefully down, watching for any sudden
moves.

McGEE

What happened here, John Coffey?

You want to tell me that?

COFFEY

I couldn't help it. I tried to
take it back, but it was too late.

McGEE

(pause)

Boy, you are under arrest for
murder.

McGee spits in Coffey's face...

PAUL ON BLEACHERS

...as Paul looks up with a slight start, jarred from his
reading to find WARDEN HAL MOORES standing before him.

HAL

I interrupt?

PAUL

I'm just about done.

Paul stows the file as Hal settles onto the bleachers.

PAUL

How's that pretty gal of yours?

HAL

Melinda's not so well, Paul. Not so well at all. Got laid up with another headache yesterday. Worst one yet. She's also developed this weakness in her right hand.

PAUL

Doctor still think it's migraines?

Hal gives a slight shake of his head.

HAL

I'll be taking her up to Indianola next day or so for some tests. Had X-rays and the like. She is scared to death. Truth to tell, so am I.

PAUL

If it's something they can see with an X-ray, maybe it's something they can fix.

HAL

Maybe.

He pulls a letter, hands it to Paul.

HAL

This just came in. D.O.E. on Bitterbuck.

Paul glances toward Bitterbuck, scans the letter, nods.

PAUL

You didn't come all the way down here just to hand me a D.O.E.

HAL

No. I had an angry call from the state capital about twenty minutes ago. Is it true you ordered Percy Wetmore off the block.

PAUL

It is.

HAL

I'm sure you had reason, but like it or not, the wife of the governor of this state has only one nephew, and his name happens to be Percy Wetmore. I need to tell you how this lays out?

PAUL

Little Percy called his aunt and squealed like a schoolroom sissy.

(Hal nods)

He also mention he assaulted a prisoner this morning out of sheer petulance? Broke three fingers on Eduard Delacroix's left hand.

HAL

I didn't hear that part. I'm sure she didn't either.

PAUL

The man is mean, careless, and stupid. Bad combination in a place like this. Sooner or later, he's gonna get somebody hurt. Or worse.

HAL

You and Brutus Howell will make sure that doesn't happen.

PAUL

Easy enough to say. We can't watch him every minute, Hal.

HAL

Stick with it. May not be much longer. I have it on good authority that Percy has an application in at Briar Ridge.

PAUL

The mental hospital?

HAL

(nods)

Administration job. Better pay.

PAUL

Then why's he still here? He could get that application pushed through...hell, with his connections, he could have any state job he wants.

Hal has no answer. Paul look off toward Bitterbuck.

PAUL

Tell you what I think. I think he just wants to see one cook up close.

Hal follows Paul's gaze, takes his meaning.

HAL

Well, he'll get his chance then, won't he? Maybe then he'll be satisfied and move on. In the meantime, you'll keep the peace.

PAUL

Of course.

HAL

Thank you, Paul.

Hal rises, slapping yard dust off his trousers.

PAUL

You give Melinda my love, okay? I bet that X-ray turns out to be nothing at all.

world
Hal walks off looking like he's got the weight of the
on his shoulders. Paul looks at the letter again...

TIGHT ON LETTER

...which is head: Date Of Execution."

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

morning,
radio.
Paul is at the kitchen table in the wee hours of the
drinking buttermilk and listening to SOFT MUSIC on the
JANICE EDGECOMB appears, shuffling sleepily downstairs.

JAN

Paul?

PAUL

Hey, you. Music too loud?

JAN

No. There's just this big empty spot in the bed where my husband usually sleeps.

PAUL

He said to tell you he's having a little trouble with that tonight.

easy She comes into the kitchen, strokes his hair. There's an familiarity and a deep love between these two.

JAN

Worried about Melinda and Hal? Is that what's got you up?

PAUL

Yeah, that. Things.

JAN

Things.

you're not She sits on his lap and gives him a crooked smile-- getting off that easily.

PAUL

Got a new inmate today. Big, simple-minded fella.

JAN

Do I want to hear what he did?

PAUL

No. One sleepless member of this family's enough.

(softly)

The things that happen in this world. It's a wonder God allows it.

that She gives him a tiny kiss above his left eyebrow, in special spot that makes him prickle.

JAN

Why don't you come to bed? I've got something to help you sleep, and you can have all you want.

PAUL

Don't I wish. I've still got something wrong with my waterworks, I don't want to pass it on.

JAN

You see Doc Sadler yet?

PAUL

No, because he'll want me to take sulfa tablets and I'll spend the rest of the week puking in every corner of my office. It'll run its course all by itself, thank you very much for your concern.

She kisses that spot above his eyebrow again. He smiles.

JAN

Poor old guy...

DISSOLVE TO:

IN TIGHT ANGLES: Copper plugs are cleaned, switches are oiled, circuits are tested...

INT. EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

HAY
plug.
in
...as maintenance is performed on Old Sparky by JACK VAN
and a small crew. Paul is carefully sanding a connector
Dean is waxing Old Sparky's wooden arms to a gleam.
Paul and Dean pause, thinking they hear a LAUGH drifting
from E Block...and then Brutal calls softly to them:

BRUTAL (O.S.)

Paul? Dean?

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

the
his
Paul and Dean enter to find Brutal trying not to wake
cons in their cells by laughing too loudly. They follows

crazy. gaze down the Mile, see nothing, turn to him like he's

BRUTAL

I guess the legislature loosened those purse-strings enough to hire on a new guard.

(off their looks)

Look again. He's right there.

Paul and Dean look again and this time they see it:

short
snoring
spurt. A tiny brown mouse is coming up the Mile. It trots a distance, peers right and left as if checking the inmates in their cells, then makes another forward

PAUL

He's doing a cell check.

ever This gets them all trying not to laugh. The mouse draws closer. Dean starts to look worried.

DEAN

It ain't normal for a mouse to come up on people that way. Maybe it's rabid.

BRUTAL

Oh, my Christ. The big mouse expert. The Mouse Man. You see it foaming at the mouth, Mouse Man?

DEAN

(dubious)

I don't see its mouth at all.

mouse That does it--Paul and Brutal burst out laughing. The mouse stops before them and peers up, curling its tail primly around its paws as if to wait. The guards fall silent, fascinated. Bitterbuck stirs in his cell, sits up to watch.

mouse Brutal tears off a piece of his half-eaten corned beef sandwich, holds it delicately out with two fingers. The mouse rises up, appraising the morsel with shiny black eyes.

DEAN

Aw, Brutal, no! We'll be hip-deep
in mice around here...

BRUTAL

(to Paul)

I just wanna see what he'll do. In
the interests of science, like.

and Paul shrugs. Brutal drops the scrap. The mouse grabs it
eats, sitting up like a dog doing a trick.

vanishing The mouse turns and scurries back down the Mile,
throws under the restraint room door at the far end. Dean
Paul an "I told you so" look.

DEAN

He's in the damn restraint room.
You know he's gonna be chewing the
padding out of walls and making
himself a nice little nest.

Brutal give Paul a sheepish look--well? Paul sighs.

PAUL

All right. Let's get the damn
mouse.

door, They stride grimly down the Mile to the restraint room
men on a mission. Coffey's awake now, peering from his
cot.

COFFEY

Saw me a mouse go by.

PAUL

It was a dream. Go back to sleep.

COFFEY

Weren't no dream. It was a mouse
all right.

PAUL

Can't put anything over on you.

with Paul unlocks the door, revealing a padded room filled
storage: cleaning supplies, buckets of paint, mops and

ladders, you name it. Brutal shrugs off his jacket. Paul grabs a mop from a steel bucket, hands it to Dean.

PAUL

Dean, watch the door. He tries to get past you, whack him.

DEAN

Brutal or the mouse?

BRUTAL

Har har, Mouse Man.

an Brutal and Paul start doing the heavy lifting, muscling unused filing cabinet out the door...

DISSOLVE:

paint ...and they finally relay the last few heavy buckets of scanning onto the Mile. Paul and Brutal catch their breath, Dean. the empty restraint room. Their eyes go glaringly to

PAUL

You let him get past you.

DEAN

No I didn't, I was here all the time!

BRUTAL

Then where the hell is he?

and They move slowly into the room, peering into every nook cranny, utterly mystified. Brutal shakes his head.

BRUTAL

Three grown men. Outsmarted by a mouse.

DEAN

Well, bright side is, all this commotion probably scared him off for good.

PAUL

Yeah, that's right. That's the last we'll see of him...

FADE TO BLACK

IN BLACKNESS, A TITLE CARD APPEARS:

"The Mouse on the Mile"

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

Harry
and
the

A low, static shot. Green floor stretching before us.
and Bill Dodge are at the desk b.g., doing paperwork and
filing chores. Percy is idling nearby, whistling softly
combing his hair...
...and into this quiet shot, deep in foreground, creeps
mouse. He starts walking the Mile as before...
...right toward Percy.

COFFEY

stares through his bars as the mouse goes by...

PERCY

keeps combing his hair, unaware...

DEL

appears
turns

sits quietly picking his nose in his cell. The mouse
outside the bars, cruising inexorably up the Mile. Del
slowly, watches the mouse go by...

PERCY

still grooming himself, still unaware...

THE MOUSE

through

keeps coming closer. ANGLE UP to Bitterbuck peering
his bars, watching him go by...

PERCY

TINY

keeps working that comb--and freezes at the sound of a SQUEAK. His head swivels slowly...

...and there's the mouse. Staring at him.

time

That moment of eye contact reveals an enmity older than itself. If mice have a natural enemy, Percy is it.

PAUL

You little son of a bitch.

Harry and Bill glance up from their work.

HARRY

Well, I'll be damned. There he is, big as Billy-be-frigged. I thought Brutal was pulling my leg.

BILL

That's a goddamn mouse.

HARRY

Yeah. Brute said he was in here last night begging for food, came right up to the desk.

BILL

My ass. Give him some room, Percy, see what he does.

the

Percy takes a few careful steps back, eyes never leaving mouse. (Percy's hand starts easing toward the handle of baton.) The mouse comes up to the desk as before.

his

HARRY

Brave little bastard, gotta give him that.

The

Harry breaks off a small piece of cracker and drops it. mouse picks it up, starts to eat. (Percy's hand inches closer to his baton).

ever

BILL

Here, lemme try.

Bill drops a piece of cracker. The mouse ignores it

(Percy's

completely, keeping its beady little eyes on Harry.
hand starts easing his baton from its holster.)

BILL

Maybe he's full.

HARRY

(grins)

Maybe he knows you're just a floater. Gotta be an E Block regular to feed the E Block mouse, don'cha know...

starts

Harry drops another piece--and sure enough, the mouse
to eat. Harry's smile fades. He and Bill trade a look.

HARRY

I was just kidding ab--

launches

Percy lets rip a BELLOWING WAR CRY ("Yaaaahhh!") and
his baton like a spear, scaring the crap out of

everyone.

over

The mouse ducks (yes, actually ducks) and the baton sail
his head close enough to ruffle its fur, bouncing off
floor. Apparently remembering a pressing engagement
elsewhere, the mouse takes off in a flash toward the
restraint room.

the

trying

Percy roars with frustration and takes off after it,
to squash it with his heavy work shoes, leaping and
with great big galloping strides, missing the mouse by
inches...

stomping

stomping

...and thus is the Green Mile traversed, with Percy
and hollering like a spastic flamenco dancer, the
yelling at their bars, the mouse zigging and zagging
Thorpe heading for the endzone...

convicts

like Jim

room

The mouse wins, zipping to safety under the restraint

frustration: door. Percy pounds his fist against the door in

PERCY

FUCK!

the He fumbles with his keys, unlocks the door, yelling all while:

PERCY

**I'M GONNA RIP YOUR DISEASED HEAD
OFF, YOU LITTLE PIECE OF SHIT!**

OUTSIDE E BLOCK

hearing Paul and Brutal are arriving for work--they pause,
CONS in PERCY'S YELLS drifting from the windows. The regular
if a the yard are drifting curiously to the fence, wondering
riot's brewing. Paul and Brutal take off running--

INSIDE E BLOCK

--and rush in to find:

HARRY

Percy met your mouse.

wildly Harry points. Percy's down at the far end, rummaging
in the restraint room, tossing shit out onto the Mile.

PERCY

It's in here somewhere! I'm gonna
squish the little son of a bitch!

kicking He starts muscling the filing cabinet out the door,
buckets out of his way. Brutal calls out to him:

BRUTAL

Percy, we already tried that--

PERCY

What? Whad'ja say?

BRUTAL

I said--

Paul stops Brutal with a look--don't you dare stop him.

BRUTAL

--uh, knock yourself out. Hope you
nail the bastard.

desk
Paul crosses his arms and smiles, leans back against the
to wait...

DISSOLVE:

He
...and Percy hauls the last of the stuff out, exhausted.
there's no
steps back in and looks around, unable to believe
corridor.
mouse cowering in the corner. Paul and the men approach,
keeping straight faces, navigating the crap in the

BRUTAL

Gosh. Ain't in there, huh? Don't
that beat the mousie band?

look
Percy keeps scanning the restraint room. The others all
to Paul, waiting for him to speak--you're the boss.

PAUL

Percy. You want to think about
what you were doing just now.

PERCY

(turns, glaring)
I know what I was doing. Trying to
get the mouse. You blind?

HARRY

You also scared the living crap
out of me and Bill. And them.

He cocks a thumb at the inmates in their cells.

PERCY

So what? They aren't in cradle-
school, case you didn't notice...

(directed at Paul)
...although you treat them that
way half the time.

BRUTAL

We don't scare 'em any more than we have to, Percy. They're under enough strain as it is.

PAUL

Men under strain can snap. Hurt themselves. Hurt others. That's why our job is talking, not yelling. You'll do better to think of this place like an intensive care ward in a hospital--

PERCY

I think of it as a bucket of piss to drown rats in. That's all.

(scans their faces)

Anybody doesn't like it can kiss my ass. How's that sit?

brutal steps forward, wanting to slug the little bastard.

Percy shies back, but keeps his bravado up:

PERCY

Try it. You'll be on the bread lines before the week is out.

PAUL

We all know who your connections are, Percy...

(steps close)

...but you ever threaten a man on this block again, we're all gonna have a go. Job be damned.

PERCY

Big talk. You done?

PAUL

Get all this shit back in the restraint room. You're cluttering up my Mile.

They turn and walk away, leaving Percy as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

A SLOW TRACKING SHOT OF THE GREEN FLOOR takes us past a

tiny

mousetrap scrap of break...and then another...and then past a primed with a scrap of bacon...

and ...and we keep following a long trail of bread scraps mousetraps until we come to Percy, alone on the Mile, carefully laying the last mousetrap down...

and ...and he scoots back against the desk to wait, crouched holding his breath, eyes riveted to the restraint room door for any sign of his furry nemesis...

down to ...and CAMERA BOOMS SLOWLY DOWN off his face, dipping floor level...

in the ...where the mouse is revealed under the desk, peering same direction as Percy, wondering what the hell's so interesting down there. It hops further out to see...

ANGLE OF PERCY FROM FLOOR LEVEL

steps, ...and the mouse enters frame, hopping out a few more mouse and man staring in the same direction.

mouse A long beat. Percy turns, looks down at the mouse. The turns, looks up at Percy...

as ...and all hell breaks loose again. They race the Mile before, Percy hollering and stomping all the way, mousetraps snapping and flying up into frame as they go charging wildly past the cells.

Coffey The mouse wins again. Percy pauses, furious...and sees staring at him from his cell.

COFFEY

Saw me a mouse go by.

door Percy loses it, kicking and punching the restraint room in a screaming rage as we

FADE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

Paul appears at Bitterbuck's bars with a group of guards.

PAUL

Arlen? Your daughter and her family are here.

Bitterbuck steps from his cell. Bill Dodge escorts him off the block. The moment they're gone:

PAUL

Let's move. I want at least two rehearsals before he gets back.

INT. VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Bitterbuck is led in. His DAUGHTER rises...an awkward hesitation...and she touches his face, kisses him. He takes her hands, kisses them, tries not to cry. The rest of the family is there: SON-IN-LAW, GRANDCHILDREN, COUSINS. They form around him, murmuring hellos, shaking hands...

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

...while TOOT-TOOT takes Bitterbuck's place in the cell. He's a wiry and toothless old trusty, crazy as a tick. He sits:

TOOT

Sittin' down, sittin' down,
rehearsing now! Everybody settle!

He glances to Paul--okay, hit it.

PAUL

Arlen Bitterbuck, step forward.

Toot springs to his feet and steps from the cell.

TOOT

I'm steppin' forward, I'm steppin'
forward, I'm steppin' forward...

Toot turns, shows the top of his head to Dean.

PAUL

Is his head properly shaved?

DEAN

No, it's dandruffy and it smells.

PAUL

I'll take that for a yes. All right, Arlen, let's go.

Toot starts up the corridor, ringed by guards.

TOOT

I'm walkin' the Mile, I'm walkin' the Mile, I'm walkin' the Mile...

PAUL'S INNER OFFICE

Toot throws himself to his knees as soon as they enter:

TOOT

I'm prayin', I'm prayin', I'm prayin'. The Lord is my shepherd, so on an' so forth...

PAUL

Toot, you have to wait till I tell you to pray.

(Toot waits)

Okay, pray.

TOOT

Still prayin', still prayin'...

HARRY

Paul, we're not gonna have some Cherokee medicine man in here whoopin' and hollerin' and shaking his dick, are we?

PAUL

Well, actually--

TOOT

Still prayin', prayin', gettin' right with Jesus...

HARRY

Do it quietly, you old gink!

Harry slaps Toot upside the head to shut him up.

PAUL

As I was saying, I don't believe they actually shake their dicks, Harry. Be that as it may, Mr. Bitterbuck is a Christian, so we got Reverend Schuster coming in.

DEAN

Oh, he's good. Fast, too. Doesn't get 'em worked up.

PAUL

On your feet, Toot. You've prayed enough for one day.

TOOT

Gettin' to my feet, walkin' again, walkin' on the Green Mile...

EXECUTION CHAMBER

They enter. Brutal is waiting for them, gun drawn. Percy peers out from behind the partition wall from the switch room.

PERCY

What do I do?

PAUL

Watch and learn.

Paul motions Percy behind the wall. Percy sighs, takes his spot next to Jack Van Hay, peers through the wire mesh as Toot plops into Old Sparky, wriggling his skinny ass to get comfy.

TOOT

Sittin' down, sittin' down, takin' a seat in Old Sparky's lap...

Paul and Dean kneel to apply the ankle clamps. Brutal steps in from the side, pressing down on the condemned man's left arm to keep him in place until the ankle clamps are secure.

arm
Harry moves in from the other side, securing the right
clamp.

TOOT

Gettin' clamped, gettin' clamped,
gettin'--ow, shit, watch the skin!

pistol,
Paul signals "ankles secure." Brutal holsters his
applies the final clamp to the left arm.

BRUTAL

Roll on one.

BEHIND THE PARTITION

Van Hay mimes turning the generator knob up, whispering:

VAN HAY

"Roll on one" means I turn the
generator up full. You'll see the
lights go brighter in half the
prison...

RESUME MAIN CHAMBER

as Brutal steps before the "condemned" and pronounces:

BRUTAL

Arlen Bitterbuck, you have been
condemned to die by a jury of your
peers, sentence imposed by a judge
in good standing in this state.

Do you have anything to say before
the sentence is carried out?

TOOT

(gleefully)

Yeah! I want a fried chicken
dinner with gravy on the taters,
I want to shit in your hat, and I
got to have Mae West sit on my
face, because I am one horny
motherfucker!

up.
Even
Brutal tries to hold on, but it's impossible--he cracks
Everybody falls apart, howling helplessly with laughter.
Jack Van Hay is guffawing behind his partition.

go
then:
Only Paul is reining it in--he's a little too pissed to
with it. He waits until the laughing fit starts to pass,

PAUL

Shut up, Brutal. That goes for everybody. I want quiet in here.

(turns)

Toot, another remark like that, I'll have Van Hay roll on two for real.

BRUTAL

(beat, gently)

It was pretty funny.

PAUL

That's why I don't like it. Tomorrow night we're doing this for real. I don't want somebody remembering a stupid joke like that and getting going again.

(off their looks)

Ever try not laughing in church once something funny gets stuck in your head. Same goddamn thing.

BRUTAL

Sorry, Paul. You're right. Let's keep going. Harry...

head,
a
it...
Harry takes a black mask and snugs it down over Toot's
leaving only the crown of his head exposed. Brutal takes
large sponge, dips it in a steel bucket, mimes soaking

BEHIND THE PARTITION

PERCY

What's with the sponge?

VAN HAY

You soak it in brine, get it good and wet. Conducts the electricity directly to the brain, fast like a bullet. You don't ever want to throw the switch on a man without that.

RESUME MAIN CHAMBER

lowers

as the sponge is placed atop Toot's head. Harry now
the steel cap and Brutal secures the straps.

BRUTAL

Arlen Bitterbuck, electricity
shall now be passed through your
body until you are dead, in
accordance with the state law. God
have mercy on your soul.

(to Van Hay)

Roll on two.

BEHIND THE PARTITION

Van Hay mimes flipping the switch, looks to Percy:

VAN HAY

And that's that.

RESUME MAIN CHAMBER

Toot can't resist--he starts bucking and flailing:

TOOT

Now I'm fryin'! Fryin'! Geeaaah!
Fryin' like a done tom turkey!

past

Paul rolls his eyes at Brutal. Brutal shifts his gaze
him and nods--look behind you.

BRUTAL

One of the witnesses showed up a
day early.

room:

Paul turns. Sitting on the door sill, watching them with
beady eyes, is the mouse. Paul turns back, addresses the

PAUL

All right, let's go again and do
it right this time! Get that idiot
out of the chair...

HIGH WIDE ANGLE OF EXECUTION CHAMBER

Brutal and Harry start undoing Toot's clamps. Everybody
relaxes, drifting from their positions...

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME ANGLE AS ABOVE - NEXT NIGHT

...and the room is now quietly filling up with WITNESSES trickling in. People speak in whispers, if at all.

INT. BITTERBUCK'S CELL - NIGHT

Bitterbuck, the top of his head now shaved, is speaking quietly as Paul listens:

BITTERBUCK

You think if a man sincerely repents on what he done wrong, he might get to go back to the time that was happiest for him and live there forever? Could that be what heaven is like?

needs

Paul doesn't think so--but that's not what Bitterbuck to hear, so the lie comes easy:

PAUL

I just about believe that very thing.

Pause. Bitterbuck smiles.

BITTERBUCK

Had me a young wife when I was eighteen. Spent our first summer in the mountains. Made love every night. She'd just lie there after, bare-breasted in the firelight, and we'd talk sometimes till the sun come up.

(beat)

That was my best time.

to

Brutal appears at the door, checks his pocketwatch, nods

ready.

Paul. Bitterbuck takes a deep breath, getting himself

PAUL

It'll be fine. You'll do fine.

INT. EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

brine,
places it
the
is
faster

THE SPONGE is pulled sopping wet from the bucket of
dripping a trail of water across the floor. Brutal
atop Bitterbuck's head. Water courses down the sides of
condemned man's mask and neck, pooling on the floor.
The cap is lowered, the straps secured. All we hear now
the sound of Bitterbuck's BREATHING growing louder and
under the mask...until, softly:

BRUTAL

Roll on two.

against
eye
with

WHAM! The switch is thrown. Bitterbuck surges forward
the straps, riding the powerful current.
Some witnesses turn away. Paul and Brutal maintain grim
contact with each other, waiting.
Behind the partition, Percy watches through the mesh
gleaming eyes, wishing he could see better.

DOCTOR

Van Hay kills the current. Bitterbuck goes limp. A
steps forward, checks for a heartbeat, shakes his head.

BRUTAL

Again.

forward

The switch is thrown a second time. Bitterbuck surges
again, riding the current all the way...

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK ACCESS TUNNEL - NIGHT

hand

Bitterbuck's dead face stares up at us from a gurney. A
reaches down, gives his cheek a squeeze. TILT UP to:

PERCY

Adios, Chief. Drop us a card from
hell, let us know if it's hot
enough.

Brutal knocks Percy's hand away, shoves him aside.

BRUTAL

He's paid what he's owed. He's square with the house again, so keep your goddamn hands off him.

gurney
He draws the sheet over Bitterbuck's face, wheels the
down the tunnel. Percy throws a look to Paul.

PERCY

What's up his ass?

PAUL

You, Percy. Always you.

Paul brushes past him, but:

PERCY

You gotta hate the new boy? That the way it is around here?

PAUL

(turns back)

Why not just move on? Go to Briar Ridge.

(off his look)

Yeah, I know about it. Sounds like a good job.

PERCY

I might take it, too. Soon as you put me out front.

Paul cocks his head--excuse me?

PERCY

You heard me. I want Brutal's spot for the next execution.

PAUL

(beat)

What's with you? Seeing a man die isn't enough? You gotta be close enough to smell his nuts cook?

PERCY

I wanna be out front, is all. Just one time. Then you'll be rid of me.

PAUL

If I say no?

PERCY

I might just stick around for
good, make me a career of this.

Paul just shakes his head in wonder and walks away.

FADE TO:

INT. COFFEY'S CELL - DAY

stirs at
through
Coffey's lying on his bunk, weeping quiet tears. He
the sound of GIGGLING. He sits up, peers curiously
the bars. Softly:

COFFEY

Del?

AT THE GUARD STATION

now.
Paul glances up from writing in the daily log. Silence
He goes back to writing--and the GIGGLING comes again.

PAUL

Delacroix? That you?

the
the
No answer. Just more giggling. Paul rises, walks down
Mile to Delacroix's cell--and stops, staring in through
bars.

PAUL'S INNER OFFICE

in.
Brutal and Dean are having lunch. Paul pokes his head

PAUL

You are not gonna believe this.

RESUME E BLOCK

CAACKLING
gone
The men follow Paul onto the Mile. By now, Del is
WILDLY in his cell. Brutal shoots Paul a look--has he
insane? Paul gestures "see for yourself."

Del's
Christmas.

They arrive at the bars...and find the mouse sitting on
shoulder. Del looks up, giggling like a kid at

DEL

Look! I done tame me dat mouse!

PAUL

We see that.

DEL

Watch dis! Watch what he do!

top

He stretches out his left arm. The mouse crawls over the
of his head, scampers along his arm to the wrist, turns
around and scampers back. The guards just stand there,
staring.

DEL

Ain't he sumpthin now? Ain't Mr.
Jingles smart?

PAUL

Mr. Jingles?

DEL

Dat his name. He whisper it in my
ear. Cap'n, can I have a box for
my mouse so he can sleep in here
wi' me?

PAUL

I notice your English gets better
when you want something.

DEL

Wanna see what else he can do?
Watch, watch, watch...

spool.
race.

He puts the mouse on the floor, grabs a small wooden
The mouse sees it, poises like a man getting ready for a

DEL

We play fetch, Mr. Jingles? We
play fetch?

the
and
its

He tosses the spool across the floor, bounces it against wall. The mouse goes after it like a dog after a stick--proceeds to push it back to the bunk, rolling it with front paws all the way to Delacroix's feet.

funny

By now, the guard's jaws are hanging open. Paul's got a little chill running up his spine.

DEL

He fetch it ever' time. Smart as hell, ain't he? We do da trick again, watch, watch, watch...

it,
his

Again he throws the spool. Again the mouse goes after starts rolling it back. Del howls with laughter, claps hands like a kid. Brutal murmurs to the others:

BRUTAL

Who's training who here?

COFFEY

That's some smart mouse, Del. Like he's a circus mouse or something.

DEL

A circus mouse! Dat jus' what he is, too! A circus mouse! I get outta here, he make me rich, see if he don't!

tosses

He picks up the spool again, makes a drumroll sound, it. The mouse does its thing, rolling the spool back...

and
He

...as Percy enters the scene. Del catches sight of him scoops up his mouse, drawing fearfully back on his bunk.

head,
eyes.

tries to hide Mr. Jingles in his hands--but the mouse wriggles from his grasp and scampers up on top of his head, where he regards Percy with mistrustful, beady mouse eyes.

PERCY

Well, well. Looks like you found

yourself a new friend, Eddie.

is: Del tries to offer some defiance--but all he can manage

DEL

Don' hurt him, 'kay? 'kay?

Paul. Percy shrugs as if to say "no skin off me", looks to

PERCY

That the one I chased?

PAUL

(level)

Yes, that's the one. Only Del says his name is Mr. Jingles.

PERCY

Is that so?

just Paul trades a look with the others, everybody wondering what the hell's going through Percy's mind.

PAUL

Del was just asking for a box. He thinks the mouse will sleep in it, I guess. That he might keep it for a pet. What do you think?

PERCY

I think it'll shit up his nose some night and run away, but I guess that's Del's lookout.

(beat)

We oughtta find a cigar box. Get some cotton batting from he dispensary to line it with. That should do real nice.

the Percy walks away, leaving them dumbstruck. Paul turns to others. Of all the things they've seen in the last few minutes, Percy being nice is the most amazing of all.

PAUL

Man said get a cigar box.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

Paul comes up the stairs to the warden's office...

INT. WARDEN MOORES' OFFICE - DAY

...and enters to find Hal staring out the window.

PAUL

Hal? You wanted to see me?

HAL

Yeah. Paul. Close the door.

Hal's speech is halting, his thoughts disjointed and
slow:

HAL

Uh. So you know. You got a new
prisoner coming in tomorrow.
William Wharton. Young kid. Wild
as hell, judging from this...

He picks up the report, trying to focus his thoughts:

HAL

...been rambling all over the
state last few years, causing all
kinds of trouble. Finally hit big
time. Killed three people in a
holdup, including a pregnant
woman. Got "Billy the Kid"
tattooed on his left arm...bad
news all around...

Paul is
He trails off, no longer able to focus on the words.
shocked to see tears spill silently down his cheeks.

PAUL

Hal?

HAL

It's a tumor, Paul. A brain tumor.

Paul doesn't know what to say. Hal looks at him.

HAL

They got X-ray pictures of it.
It's the size of a lemon, they
said, and way down deep inside
where they can't operate. They say

she'll be dead by Christmas. I haven't told her. I can't think how. For the life of me, Paul, I can't think how to tell my wife she's going to die.

ever
gasping
Hal Moores, one of the toughest and steadiest men you'd meets, starts to cry. He dissolves into great big sobs, losing all control.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

not
to
his
Paul lies awake, watching Jan sleep. He looks troubled--to mention feverish. It occurs to him how badly he has pee. He sits up, clutching at a queasy stab of pain in groin...

LIVING ROOM STAIRS

himself...
...and comes hurrying down the steps, clutching

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

make
...and he's moving even faster as he exits the kitchen, racing for the outhouse. He realizes he's not going to it, stops to piss near the woodpile at the corner of the house...

of
flailing
face-
mouth
falls
the
...and as he does, he's hit with the most stunning pain his life. He buckles to his knees--it's only his hand against the woodpile that prevents him from going first into his own piss. He crams his other hand to his in an enormous effort not to scream and wake his wife. He manages to ride it out until his bladder empties. He onto his side, rolls over on the grass, and stares up at sky with both hands pressed to his groin.

PAUL

...oh God...oh God...

FADE TO BLACK

IN BLACKNESS, A TITLE CARD APPEARS:

"Coffey's Hands"

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - MORNING

uniform
knowing
Paul looks feverish and clammy as he buttons up his
jacket. Jan is packing his lunch, throwing him looks,
how sick he is.

PAUL

I'm going.

JAN

What?

PAUL

To the doctor. I'm going.
(off her look)

Today. Just as soon as we get the
new inmate squares away.

JAN

That bad?

PAUL

Oh yeah.

She hands him his brown-bagged lunch, kisses his face.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIAR RIDGE MENTAL HOSPITAL - MORNING

WHARTON
face
We see a tattoo: "Billy the Kid." TILT UP to WILLIAM
staring out the window, wearing a hospital gown, his
utterly blank. He looks heavily medicated.

keeps
Harry, Dean, and Percy enter. Billy doesn't react, just

staring out. Harry waves his fingers in Billy's face.

HARRY

Boy's doped to the gills. Dean,
hand me them clothes...

Dean relays some folded prison clothes to Harry.

HARRY

William Wharton! Hey! I'm talking
to you! Put these clothes on!

fumbles
the
Billy turns with a vacant look, takes the clothes. He
with the shirt, drops the pants. Harry and Dean sigh.
They strip Billy's hospital gown off and proceed to put
shirt on him, guiding his limp arms through the sleeves.

PERCY

Hellraiser, huh? Looks more like
a limp noodle to me. Hey! Hey, you!

Billy looks up, meets Percy's eyes.

PERCY

You been declared competent! Know
what that means? Mean's you're
gonna ride the lightning, son!

jerking
Percy does a quick impression of a man jittering and
in the electric chair.

PERCY

Bzzzzzzzt-zap! Just like that!
How's it feel to know you're gonna
die with your knees bent?

DEAN

C'mon, Percy, give us a hand.

Laughing, Percy picks up the pants. They proceed to help
Billy into them one leg at a time...

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK TOILET - DAY

the
Paul is trying to piss. Except for a few drops hitting

gives
face...
bowl, excruciating pain seems to be the only result. He
up, grabs a towel, wipes the sweat from his feverish

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

...and steps gingerly from the toilet. Del's watching.

DEL

Don' look so good, boss. Look like
you runnin' you a fever.

voice
Paul shoots him a baleful look--no kidding. Another
calls softly from further down the Mile:

COFFEY (O.S.)

Boss Edgecomb? Needs ta see you
down here, boss.

PAUL

Got things to tend to just now,
John Coffey. You be still in your
cell now, y'hear?

peers
with...
Coffey falls silent. Paul goes to the entrance door and
through the viewing slot, anxious to have this over

EXT. COLD MOUNTAIN PENITENTIARY - DAY

road...
The prison truck appears, swaying along the rutted

IN THE TRUCK

from
...while Billy Wharton stares at nothing, drool dripping
his slack mouth in long strings.

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

slot,
Paul watches the truck pull in. He draws away from the
proceeds toward the empty cell which used to be
Bitterbuck's...

ANGLE ON TRUCK

Percy The rear doors are swung open. Harry emerges. Dean and
are guiding Billy by the arm, helping him down...

INSIDE E BLOCK

at Paul waits at the empty cell. ANGLE PANS TIGHT to Coffey
fear his bars, eyes widening in a blossoming of some nameless
or dread. Something bad's coming. A whisper:

COFFEY

Careful.

OUTSIDE E BLOCK

starts to Billy is brought to the door. Dean pulls his keys,
unlock it. We PUSH IN on Billy's face, where the tiniest
trace of a smile is starting to grow...

INSIDE E BLOCK

face to ...and Coffey's unease grows with it. he presses his
the bars, his whispering becoming more urgent:

COFFEY

Careful. Careful.

Coffey's Paul hears him, glances back with a puzzled look.
gaze is directed at the door, which is being unlocked...

THE DOOR

face ...and opened. In that moment, the slack look on Billy's
his gives way to a wild grin. A CRAZED SCREECH leaps from
throat, a cross between a rebel yell and a dog being
tortured, freezing everybody's blood in their veins--

BILLY

Yeeeeeeehaaaawwwwwrooooo!

jerks --and he drops his wrist-chain down over Dean's head,
Billy it tight, begins to strangle him. Dean lurches forward,
riding/propelling him through the door onto the Mile.

shoves him
off
Percy stands frozen in the doorway, stunned. Harry
aside and jumps on Billy from behind, trying to get him
Dean. Dean is choking, turning purple.

whirls,
bladder
himself
scream.
Paul rushes from the cell to join the fray. Billy
delivering a stunning kick to Paul's groin. Paul's
pain goes nuclear--he falls back in agony, clutching
and sucking air through his teeth, unable even to

sprawling
while:
Billy rams an elbow into Harry's face, knocks him
on the desk, screaming and laughing and howling all the

BILLY
WHOOOEE, BOYS! AIN'T THIS A PARTY,
NOW? IS IT, OR WHAT?

draws
down on Billy...
Paul forces himself to his feet, pulls his revolver,

PAUL
LET HIM GO!

...but Billy jerks Dean around, using him as a shield...

BILLY
G'WAN, SHOOT! SEE WHO YA HIT!

for
the
Dean is choking, dying. Paul is shifting his aim, trying
a clear shot, not getting one. Percy's still just inside
doorway, pressed against the wall with fear...

PAUL
HIT HIM, PERCY! GODDAMN IT, HIT
HIM!

BILLY
C'MON, PERCY, HIT ME! HIT ME, YOU
LIMP NOODLE, HIT ME! YEEHAWWW!

out ...and suddenly a hand comes in, grabs the hickory stick
of Percy's grasp, raises it high--
baton --it's Brutal coming through the door. He swings the
force and lands an awesome blow to Billy's head--THUMP! The
back. of it spins Billy off his feet and slams him flat on his

Amazingly, Dean crawls away, gulping ragged breaths of air.
laughs: Billy's still conscious--he looks up at Brutal and

BILLY

Big fucker. Snuck up on me. No
fair.

whacks Still laughing, he makes another grab at Dean. Brutal
to him again, turning his lights out for good. Brutal drops
Dean's side, helping him hack air back into his lungs:

BRUTAL

Breathe...breathe...that's it...

Harry. Everybody's reining in their adrenaline. Paul glares at

HARRY

We thought he was doped.
(to Percy)
Didn't we? Didn't we all of us
think he was doped?

Percy nods, still numb. Paul is furious:

PAUL

You didn't ask? I guess that's not
a mistake you'll be need to make
again anytime soon, is it?

feet. Harry shakes his head miserably. Paul grabs Billy by the

PAUL

Grab his arms! You too, Percy!
(off Percy's
hesitation)

Percy, goddamn it, get your feet
out of cement and help us out here!

up in
They
and
Percy finally unfreezes. The three of them hoist Billy
a dead-lift, get him in his cell, toss him on the cot.
step out, slam the door, lock it. Paul looks to Harry
Brutal.

PAUL

Get Dean looked at right away,
make sure he's all right.

Percy, you go make a report to the
warden for me. Start off by saying
the situation is under control--
it's not a story, he won't
appreciate you drawing out the
suspense.

BRUTAL

What about you? You look about
ready to collapse.

PAUL

I've got the Mile till you all get
back. Go on now.

the
face
A
They all exit. As soon as he's alone, Paul gives in to
pain, holding his crotch and sinking to his knees with a
moan. It's so bad he actually lays down on the Mile,
pressed against the cool linoleum, wishing he were dead.
stretch of silence...and then:

COFFEY (O.S.)

Boss? Needs ta see ya down here.

PAUL

This is not a good time, John
Coffey. Not a good time at all.

COFFEY (O.S.)

But I needs ta see ya, boss. I
needs ta talk t'ya.

Paul sighs. Things couldn't get much worse than this. He

Mile... rises with a supreme effort, walks painfully down the

COFFEY'S CELL

...and finds Coffey waiting at his bars.

COFFEY

Closer.

PAUL

I'm alone here right now, John.
Figure this is close enough.

COFFEY

Boss, please. I got to whisper in
your ear.

tries Paul blinks. Maybe it's the fever clouding his brain, or
maybe...hell, is this what being hypnotized is like? He
to shake the sensation off, comes a little closer.

DEL

Boss? You know you not s'pose to
do dat.

PAUL

Mind your business, Del. What do
you want, John Coffey?

COFFEY

Just to help.

grip His hand shoots out, grabs Paul by the collar, jerks him
drifts close. Paul makes a panic-grab for his revolver...

...but Coffey lays his free hand atop Paul's, eases his
from the gun--no need for that. Coffey's hand then
slowly down, easing to Paul's crotch...

PAUL

(stunned, frozen)
What are you...doing?

arches ...and something goes WHUMP through Paul's body. He
rush of back with his mouth agape and arms outstretched as a
energy seems to pass from Paul through Coffey's hand...

world,
cell:
...and then it's over. Paul comes back to the real
weak against the bars, realizes Del is hollering in his

DEL
HELP! JOHN COFFEY'S KILLING BOSS
EDGECOMB! HELP!

PAUL
Del, Chrissake, settle down, I'm
fine...

is
throat.
It dawns on him that he really is fine. Fever's gone. So
the pain in his groin. John Coffey, though, seems to be
having trouble. He sits down on his bunk, bends forward,
gagging like a man with a chicken bone caught in his

PAUL
John? John, what's wrong?

open
stronger
as
godawful
black
Softly:
Paul fumbles his keys to the lock, unsure if he should
the door, watching the big man's contortions grow
like a cat trying to cough up a hairball...
...and then comes an unpleasant, gagging/retching sound
Coffey's lips draw back from his teeth in a kind of
sneer...and he exhales a cloud of what look like tiny
insects. They swirl furiously in front of his face, turn
white...and disappear. Paul just stares, stunned.

PAUL
What did you do, big boy? What did
you do to me?

COFFEY
I helped it. Didn't I help it?

PAUL
Yes, but...how?

Coffey shrugs--it's something that just is.

COFFEY

Just took it back, is all. Awful
tired now, boss. Dog tired.

at
stiffness
He rolls onto his bunk, faces the wall. Paul just stares
him, stunned. He turns and walks up the Mile, his
and pain now gone. Del watches him go by, also stunned:

DEL

What dat man do to you? He throw
some gris-gris on you?
(off Paul's look)
You look diff'int! Even walk
diff'int. Like y'all better!

PAUL

You're imagining thing. Lie down,
Del. Get you some rest.

Paul continues up the Mile...

E BLOCK TOILET

deep
bowl.
...and steps back into the toilet. Not trusting this
situation for even a moment, Paul opens his fly, takes a
breath to prepare himself for the pain, starts to pee...
...and we hear a healthy stream of water hitting the
The look on Paul's face says it all--blessed relief.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DUSK

whole
counter,
Paul comes home from work, still looking numb about the
thing. He drifts to the kitchen door. Jan's at the
slicing vegetables for dinner. She glances at him.

JAN

Hi, honey. How are you feeling?

PAUL

Um...not too bad.

ass.
She turns back. Paul's eyes drift down to admire her

JAN

What did the doctor say?

No response. He's too busy staring. She turns again--he glances hastily up.

PAUL

Oh, you know doctors. Gobble-de-gook mostly.

eyeing
hips.
She turns back, keeps working. He crosses the room, her ass all the way...and surprised her by pressing up against her from behind, running his hands along her

JAN

Paul? What are you doing?

her
pleasant shivers, murmuring:
He starts laying kisses on the back of her neck, giving

PAUL

What's it feel like?

JAN

I know what it feels like...it feels great...but...Paul...

they
before
He's getting her breathless. She turns into his arms and get into some passionate kissing. It's not too long they're frantically peeling each other's clothes off...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

both
him
...and we find them having a wild tumble in the sheets, moaning and groaning, sweating and panting. She pushes flat on the bed, pauses to catch her breath...

JAN

Those must've been some pills.

...and they keep going, rutting like crazed weasels...

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

...as their moans go drifting into the night...

FADE TO:

SAME ANGLE AS ABOVE - DAWN

up.
...and they're still moaning up there as the sun creeps

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Jan falls back, exhausted after the latest go-round. She catches her breath, looks over at Paul, and finally:

JAN

Paul? Not that I'm complaining.
But we haven't gone four times in
one night since we were nineteen.

(off his look)

You wanna tell me just what the
hell's going on?

PAUL

Well...thing is...I never actually
got to the doctor yesterday...

She gives him a look--oh?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Paul is on the phone:

PAUL

Brutal? Listen...I'm thinking of
taking the morning off sick. You
cover the fort for me?

(beat)

That's swell. Thanks. Yeah, I'm
sure I'll feel better. Okay.

He hangs up, turns to Jan.

JAN

You sure you ought to do this?

PAUL

I'm not sure what I'm sure of.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD TO TEFTON - DAY

sign: Paul's model T comes putt-putting up the road past a
"Trapingus County Welcomes You."

EXT. HOUSE IN TEFTON - BACK PORCH - DAY

sits BURT HAMMERSMITH, public defender for Trapingus County,
CHILDREN with a cold soda and a magazine, watching his TWO
screen playing on a swing at the far end of the backyard. The
door opens and CYNTHIA HAMMERSMITH ushers Paul out.

CYNTHIA

I offer you a cold drink?

PAUL

Yes, ma'am, a cold drink would be fine. Thank you.

She goes back inside. Burt rises.

PAUL

Mr. Hammersmith. Your office said I'd find you at home today. I hope I'm not troubling you.

BURT

That depends, Mr.--?

PAUL

Paul Edgecomb. I'm the E Block superintendant at Cold Mountain.

BURT

The Green Mile. I've heard of it. Lost a few clients your way.

PAUL

That's why I'm here. I'd like to ask you about one of them.

Burt settles back down, motions "please sit".

BURT

Which client? Now you got my curiosity aroused.

PAUL

John Coffey.

BURT

Ah, Coffey. He causing you problems?

PAUL

No, can't say he is. He doesn't like the dark. He cries on occasion. Other than that...

BURT

Cries, does he? Well, he's got a lot to cry about, I'd say. You know what he did.

PAUL

(nods)

I read the court transcripts.

Cynthia reappears, hands Paul a cold root beer.

PAUL

Thank you, Missus.

CYNTHIA

My pleasure. Kids! Lunch is about ready! Y'all come on up!

tear She goes back inside, but the kids aren't quite able to themselves away from their play.

BURT

What exactly are you trying to find out? Satisfy my curiosity, I'll see if I can satisfy yours.

PAUL

I've wondered if he ever did anything like that before.

BURT

Why? Has he said anything?

PAUL

No. But a man who does a thing like that has often developed a taste for it over time. Occurred to me it might be easy enough to follow his backtrail and find out. A man his size, and colored to

boot, can't be that hard to trace.

BURT

You'd think so, but you'd be wrong. Believe me, we tried. It's like he dropped out of the sky.

PAUL

How do you explain that?

BURT

We're in a Depression. A third of the country's out of work.

People are drifting by the thousands, looking for work, looking for that greener grass. Even a giant like Coffey wouldn't get noticed everywhere he goes... not until he kills a couple of little girls.

PAUL

He's...strange, I admit. But there doesn't seem to be any real violence in him. I know violent men, Mr. Hammersmith. I deal with 'em day in and day out.

Burt smiles, realizing:

BURT

You didn't come up here to ask me whether he might have killed before. You came up here to see if I think he did it at all. That's it, isn't it?

PAUL

Do you?

BURT

One seldom sees a less ambiguous case. He was found with the victims in his arms. Blurted out a confession right then and there.

PAUL

Yet you defended him.

BURT

Everyone is entitled to a defense.

Cynthia hollers from an open window:

CYNTHIA

Kids! Lunch!

BURT

Y'all listen to your Momma, now!

The kids start this way. Burt turns back to Paul.

BURT

Tell you something. You listen close, too, because it might be something you need to know.

PAUL

I'm listening.

BURT

We had us a dog. No particular breed, but gentle. Ready to lick your hand or fetch a stick. Just a sweet mongrel, you know the kind.

(Paul nods)

In many way, a good mongrel dog is like you negro. You get to know it, and often you get to love it. It is of no particular use, but you keep it around because you think it loves you. If you're lucky, Mr. Edgecomb, you never have to find out any different. My wife and I were not so lucky. Caleb. Come here for a second.

tires The little boy comes to him, staring at his feet. Burt
to raise the boy's chin. The boy resists for a moment...

BURT

Please, son.

on ...and then his face comes around. He's horribly scarred
that side, the eye missing.

BURT

He has the one eye. I suppose he's lucky not to be blind. We get down on our knees and thank God for that much at least. Right Caleb?

(the boy nods shyly)
Okay, go on in now.

Burt's
unoccupied

The boy races inside after his sister. Paul follows
gaze off toward the rear of the property, where an
doghouse stands weathered and sad in the weeds.

BURT

That dog attacked my boy for no
reason. Just got it into his mind
one day. Same with John Coffey. He
was sorry afterwards, of that I
have no doubt...but those little
girls stayed raped and murdered
nonetheless. Maybe he's never done
it before--my dog never bit
before, but I didn't concern
myself with that. I went out there
with my rifle and grabbed his
collar and blew his brains out.

PAUL

I'm sorry for your trouble.

Burt acknowledges the condolence with a gracious nod.

BURT

I'm as enlightened as the next
man, Mr. Edgecomb. I would not
bring back slavery for all the tea
in China. I believe we have to be
humane and generous in our efforts
to solve the race problem. But we
have to remember that the negro
will bite if he gets the chance,
just like a mongrel dog will bite
if it crosses its mind to do so.

(beat)

Is Coffey guilty? Yes, he is.
Don't you doubt it, and don't you
turn your back on him. You might
get away with it once or even a
hundred times...but in the end...

fingers.
He raises his hand, making biting motions with his

BURT

You understand?

Paul says nothing. Burt gazes out again. Softly:

BURT

I'm gonna have to tear that old
doghouse down one of these days.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S MODEL T - DAY

Paul drives back to Cold Mountain, his heart
conflicted...

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

...and he walks onto the Mile with a bundle wrapped in a
dish
air.
towel. Brutal glances up from the desk, sniffing the

PAUL

No, it's not for you.

Paul continues down the Mile. Whatever he's carrying,
the
comes
smell of it brings Del to his bars. Even Mr. Jingles
skittering out of his cigar box, sniffing.

DEL

Oh. Oh my.

Paul arrives at Coffey's cell. Coffey's on his bunk
facing
sits
Paul.
the wall. His head comes around, drawn by the aroma. He
up, wipes the tears leaking from his eyes, looks at

COFFEY

I'm smelling me some cornbread.

Paul speaks softly so the others can't hear:

PAUL

It's from my missus. She wanted to
thank you.

Coffey nods thoughtfully, absorbing this notion. Then:

COFFEY

Thank me for what?

PAUL

You know. For helping me.

COFFEY

Helping you with what?

Paul motions discreetly to his crotch.

COFFEY

Ohhh.

(beat)

Was your missus pleased?

PAUL

Several times.

it, Paul hands him the bundle through the bars. Coffey takes
uncovers the cornbread reverently, gazes back up.

COFFEY

This all for me?

longingly Paul nods. Across the way, Del is pressing his face
shoulder. through the bars while Mr. Jingles crawls on his

DEL

Oh my. John, I can smell it from
here. I surely can.

COFFEY

(looks to Paul)

Can I give some to Del?

PAUL

It's yours, John. You do with it
as you please.

his John carefully scoops a big chunk of cornbread out with
enormous hand, holds it through the bars to Paul.

COFFEY

Here's for Del and Mr. Jingles
then.

BILLY

Hey! What about me? I'm'a get some
too, ain't I

Coffey looks to Paul--do I have to?

PAUL

It's yours, John. As you please.

COFFEY

Well. Fine. I think I'll keep the rest, then.

Paul
He smiles like a big kid, digging in with his fingers.
crosses the Mile to Del's cell, hands him his share.

PAUL

Courtesy of the gentleman across the way.

DEL

Oh, John. So very fine of you. So very kind. Mr. Jingles t'ank you.

COFFEY

(mouth full)

...wel'cm...

BILLY

Hey! What about me? Don't you hold out on me, ya big dummy nigger!

Paul's temper flares--he steps to Billy's cell.

PAUL

You'll keep a civil tongue on my block.

a big
as
belongs.
Beat. Billy spits in Paul's face and follows it up with grin--what are you gonna do about that? Paul is seething he wipes the spit off, but keeps his temper where it belongs.

PAUL

You get that one for free. But that's the last one.

Paul walks away. Billy laughs, hollering after him:

BILLY

That's it? Just that little bitty one? Guess I'll have to pay out

for the rest, huh?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

jotting on
his
howls

Harry is walking the Mile, doing a cell check and a clipboard. He pauses, making a notation...
...and a long stream of piss hits his leg. Billy's at bars, peeing on him. Harry jumps back, stunned. Billy with laughter, hosing his aim wildly from side to side.

BILLY

Yeehaaw! Good shot, weren't it?
Oh, the look on your face!

flabbergasted:

Paul and Brutal come running. Harry's just

HARRY

You believe this? Son of a bitch
pissed on me!

BILLY

Hey, d'jall like that? I'm
currently cooking some turds t'go
with it! Nice soft ones! I'll have
'em out t'yall tomorrow!

room.

Paul stays calm, turns to Brutal, nods at the restraint

PAUL

We've been looking to clear that
room out anyway.

TIMECUT:

restraint
the

A STREAM OF GUARDS comes toting the last of the
room stuff past Billy's cell while he heckles them from
bars...

BILLY

Hey! Whassit now, movin' day?
Y'all wanna come in and dust a
little? Y'can shine my knob for me

while yer at it!

Paul ...and he pauses as Paul and Brutal step to the bars.
has a canvas straitjacket. Brutal pulls his nightstick.

BILLY

You can come in here on your legs,
but you'll go out on your backs,
Billy the Kid guarantee ya that.

(motions to Brutal)

C'mon, fuckstick. No sneakin' up
on me this time. We'll go man to
man, see who's the better fel--

Brutal unlocks the cell--and sidesteps, revealing Harry
pointing a fire hose. The hose erupts, driving Billy
across the cell with bone-jarring force. They batter him half-
senseless, then cut the water. Billy collapses in a
heap.

Paul and Brutal drag him semi-conscious from his cell
and get the straitjacket on him. He comes around as they draw
the straps tight and pull him to his feet.

PAUL

C'mon, Wild Bill. Little walky
walky.

BILLY

Don't you call me that! Wild Bill
Hickock wasn't no range rider! He
was just a bushwackin' John Law!
Dumb sonovabitch sat with his back
to the door and kilt by a drunk!

BRUTAL

Oh, my suds and body! A history
lesson! You just never know what
you're gonna get when you come to
work everyday on the Green Mile.
Thank you, Wild Bill.

Brutal. Billy lets out a scream of rage and throws himself at
Brutal, bored, shoves him back toward Paul, who then
propels him down the Mile toward the open restraint room door.
Billy

sees where they intend to put him, resorts to pleading:

BILLY

Oh, not in there! C'mon now, I'll
be good! Honest Injun I will! No!
No! Ummmmh...urg...ah!

wildly,
He suddenly drops to the floor, bucking and jerking
spewing drool. Harry's eyes go wide.

HARRY

Holy Christ, he's pitchin' a fit!

Billy
Paul reaches down and unceremoniously starts dragging
kicking and writhing the rest of the way.

PAUL

He'll be fine, boys. Trust me on
this one.

room.
Brutal helps Paul toss Billy headlong into the padded
They slam the door...

RESTRAINT ROOM

the
...and Billy staggers to his feet in the straitjacket,
inarticulate with rage, starts throwing himself against
door, screaming at the top of his lungs.

BILLY

**ALL I WANTED ME WAS A LITTLE
CORNBREAD, YOU MUTHERFUCKERS!**

FADE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - NEXT DAY

up
Paul and Brutal unlock the restraint room. Billy looks
from the corner, pale and drained. Softly:

BILLY

I learnt my lesson. I'll be good.

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

is Billy's back in his cell, quiet for a change. Toot-Toot
outside the bars, mopping the floor. Billy notices a
chocolate Moon Pie in Toot's shirt pocket.

BILLY

Pssss. Hey. Give'ya nickel for
that Moon Pie.

the Toot looks around. Nobody's watching, and a nickel's a
nickel. He steps to Billy's bars, swaps the Moon Pie for
money.

sure Toot hurries away. Billy unwraps the Moon Pie, makes
his he's not being watched...and crams the entire thing into
mouth...

DISSOLVE:

a ...and here comes Brutal strolling down the Mile, doing
seeing: cell check and jotting on a clipboard. He pauses,

cheeks Billy at his bars. Just standing there staring. His
bulging way out.

Brutal steps closer, fascinated...what the fuck is that.
Billy waits until he's just a bit closer--

propelling --and he slams his fists against his own cheeks,
Brutal's a disgusting spew of liquefied chocolate sludge into
laughter: face. Billy falls back onto his bunk, shrieking with

BILLY

Li'l Black Sambo, yassuh, boss,
yassuh, howdoo you do?

BRUTAL

(beat, calmly)
Hope your bags are packed.

TIMECUT:

room,
slam the

...and once again, Billy gets dragged to the restraint
kicking and screaming all the way. They toss him in,
door. Brutal turns, still wiping traces of sludge off.

PAUL

The Moon Pie thing was pretty
original. Gotta give him that.

Brutal nods. They walk away as we

FADE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

Paul and Brutal appear at Del's bars with Harry and
Dean.

PAUL

Del, grab your things. Big day for
you and Mr. Jingles.

DEL

Whatchoo talkin' bout?

PAUL

Important folks heard about your
mouse, wanna see him perform. Not
just guards, either. One of them's
a politician all the way from the
state capital, I believe.

Mr.
Dean. Del swells with pride upon hearing this. He scrounges up
Jingles props, steps from his cell, looks to Harry and

DEL

You fellas comin'?

HARRY

We got other fish to fry just now,
Del, but you knock 'em for a loop.

Del nods, beaming happily, looks to Coffey in his cell.

COFFEY

You knock 'em for a loop like Mr.
Harry says, Del.

their
eyes
door...

hiding.

Brutal leads Del up the Mile, Paul and the others at
heels. Percy's at the duty desk. He smirks and rolls his
as Del goes by. The moment Brutal and Del are out the
...Toot emerges from Paul's office where he's been

PAUL

Let's move along briskly, folks.
There's not much time.

Toot hurries down to take his place in Del's cell.

TOOT

I'm sittin' down, I'm sittin'
down, I'm sittin' down.

INT. OFFICE/ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

fixing

A HALF DOZEN GUARDS are waiting. We find Bill Dodge
the tie of a fat good ol' boy named EARL.

EARL

Been sweepin' floors here ten
years, never had to wear no damn
tie before.

BILL

You're a V.I.P. today, Earl, so
just shut up.

ushered
his

A KNOCK at the door. Everybody takes a seat. Del is
in by Brutal. Del faces his audience, puts his hands to
chest in a "thank you" gesture worthy of Lillie Langtry
before her adoring public, then announces grandly:

DEL

Messieurs et mesdames! Bienvenue
au cirque de mousie!

INT. EXECUTION CHAMBER - DAY

The steel cap is lowered over Toot's head, the straps
tightened. TILT UP to Percy as:

PERCY

Roll on two.

Behind his partition, Van Hay mimes flipping the switch.

VAN HAY

That's that.

glances
A pause. Percy looks anxiously to Paul, who's trading
with the other guards. Finally:

PAUL

Very good. Very professional.

and
Percy smiles. Harry and Dean step up, slapping his back
shaking his hand...

INT. E BLOCK - DAY

waiting for
...and they're still chatting a short time later,
Del's return. Percy actually looks happy for a change,
feeling genuinely accepted for the first time...

Billy is watching from his cell. Just watching.

shoulder,
spool
The door opens. Del returns with Mr. Jingles on his
escorted by Brutal. Brutal is toting the cigar box and
like a magician's assistant carrying the boss' props.

PAUL

Well?

DEL

They love Mr. Jingles! They laugh
and cheer and clap they hands!

PERCY

Well, that's just aces. Pop back
in your cell, old-timer.

off
mistrust...
The generosity of Percy's tone catches Del completely
guard. Del gives him a look of almost comical

mock
...and the old Percy comes back. He bares his teeth in a

joke,
trips
clear,

snarl and curls his fingers as if to grab Del. It's a but Del doesn't know that--he jerks back in fear and over Brutal's big feet. Del goes down hard, hitting the linoleum with the back of his head. Mr. Jingles jumps goes squeaking down the Mile. Del sits up, painfully clutching his head. Brutal helps him up...

BRUTAL

Percy, you shit.

moved to
drifting

...and moves him toward his cell. Percy is actually apologize--he starts after them with a half-laugh, much too close to Wild Bill's side of the Mile...

PERCY

Del! Hey, you numb wit, I didn't mean nothin' by it! You all ri--

his
their
ear:

...and Wild Bill's arms thrust out, grabbing Percy and slamming him back against the bars with an arm around throat. Percy squeals like a pig in a slaughter-chute, thinking he's gonna die. The guards scramble, drawing clubs--as Billy strokes Percy's hair and whispers in his

BILLY

Ain't you sweet. Soft. Like a girl. I druther fuck your asshole than your sister's pussy, I think.

squeeze

Billy kisses Percy's ear--and his hand drops down to Percy's crotch. Paul pulls his sidearm, taking aim...

PAUL

Wharton!

raised,
cringes

...and Billy lets go, stepping back with his hands laughing. Percy darts across the Mile in terror and against the cell opposite, breathing so loud and fast it almost sounds like sobbing.

BILLY

I let 'im go, I'us just playin'
and I let 'im go! Never hurt a
hair on his purty head!
(grins at Percy)
Your noodle ain't limp at all,
loverboy! I think you sweet on ol'
Billy the Kid...
(sniffs his fingers)
...oooh, but smell you.

else
Down at his cell, Del starts laughing shrilly. Everybody
starts to realize it, including Percy himself...he looks
down, sees the huge dark stain spreading at his crotch.

DEL

Lookit, he done piss his pants!
Look what the big man done! He
bus' other people wid 'is stick,
mais oui some mauvais homme, but
someone touch him, he make water
in his pants jus' like a baby!

cell.
Percy just stares. Brutal shoves Delacroix into his

BRUTAL

Shut up, Del.

whispers:
Paul steps to Percy, puts a hand on his shoulder. Percy
shakes his hand off, looks around at their faces,

PERCY

You talk about this to anyone,
I'll get you all fired. I swear
that to God.

PAUL

What happens on the Mile, stays on
the Mile. Always has.

points
The men nod solemnly. Nobody's going to talk about this.
Percy looks at Delacroix still snorting in his cell,
at him.

PERCY

You keep laughing, you French-
fried faggot. You just keep
laughing.

Del falls silent. Percy turns and storms away as we

FADE TO BLACK

IN BLACKNESS, A TITLE CARD APPEARS:

"The Bad Death of Eduard Delacroix"

CUT TO:

INT. DEL'S CELL - DAY

Paul is sitting with Delacroix. Brutal is leaning against the bars. Del is throwing the spool. Mr. Jingles is fetching it.

The silence is thick. Just the clack-clatter of the spool, and the skitter skitter of tiny mouse paws on concrete. It's getting on Paul's nerves in a big way. Softly:

PAUL

What about Dean? He's got a little boy would love a pet mouse, I bet.

Del looks horrified at the thought.

DEL

How could a boy be trust wid Mr. Jingles? Maybe forget to feed him. And how he keep up wid his trainin', just a boy, n'est-ce pas?

Del tosses the spool again--clack-clatter, skitter-skitter.

PAUL

All right, I'll take him.

DEL

T'ank you kindly, merci beaucoup, but you live out in the woods, and Mr. Jingles, he be scared to live out dans la foret.

PAUL

He whisper that in your ear?

Del nods, tosses the spool again--clack-clatter, skitter skitter. Paul is completely out of ideas. But then:

BRUTAL

How about Mouseville?

DEL

Mouseville?

BRUTAL

Tourist attraction down in Florida. Tallahassee, I think. Is that right, Paul? Tallahassee?

PAUL

(level)

Yeah, that's right. Tallahassee. Just down the road apiece from the dog university.

straight Brutal's mouth twitches, but he manages to keep a face. He gives Paul a look--don't blow this.

BRUTAL

You think they'd take Mr. Jingles? You think he's got the stuff?

PAUL

Might. He's pretty smart.

DEL

Hey! What dis Mouseville?

BRUTAL

Tourist attraction, I said. They got this big tent you go into--

DEL

Like a cirque? You have to pay?

BRUTAL

You shittin' me? Course you pay. Dime a piece, two cents for the kids. And inside the tent there's this mouse city made out of boxes and toilet paper rolls...

nobody's Percy is drifting up the block, listening too, but really paying him much mind.

BRUTAL

...plus they got the Mouseville

All-Star Circus. There's mice that swing on trapeze, mice that roll barrels, mice that stack coins...

DEL

Dat's it! Dat's da place for Mr. Jingles! You gonna be a circus mouse after all! Gonna live in a mouse city down in Florida!

off
Mile.
notice:
Del tosses the spool extra hard--it takes a bad bounce the wall and goes clattering through the bars onto the
The mouse goes after it like a shot, too intent to
His old enemy Percy.

BRUTAL

Percy, no!

Percy stomps the heel of his heavy work shoe down on Mr. Jingles. There's a SOFT SNAP as the mouse's back breaks.

sobbing
smiles.
Del screams in horror and throws himself at the bars,
the mouse's name. Percy looks to Brutal and Paul,

PERCY

Knew I'd get him sooner or later.
Just a matter of time, really.

dying
Harry
is
pouring out
He turns and strolls up the Mile, leaving Mr. Jingles
in a tiny pool of blood. Up at the duty desk, Dean and
get up from a cribbage game, stunned and furious.
Percy strolls past, exits to the execution chamber. Del
still screaming, all his pent-up terror and grief
at the dying mouse. And then comes a soft, urgent voice:

COFFEY

Give'm to me.

one
They turn. Coffey's got his arms out through his bars,
massive hand spread open.

COFFEY

Give'm to me. Might still be time.

wincing at Paul hesitates, scoops the mouse up off the floor,
the feel of it. Splintered bones are poking at the hide.

BRUTAL

What are you doing?

lays his Paul doesn't answer, just lays Mr. Jingles into Coffey's
see hand. Coffey pulls the mouse in through his bars and
other hand gently over it, cupping the creature. All we
now is the tail hanging out the side, twitching weakly.

BRUTAL

Paul, what the hell--

bars: Paul motions him quiet. Del is pleading softly at his

DEL

Please, John. Oh Johnny, help him,
please help him, s'il vous plait.

sharply. Harry and Dean join the group. Everybody watching now.
his Coffey puts his mouth to his cupped hands, inhales
those The world hangs suspended for a moment. Coffey raises
face, contorting as if desperately ill, starts making
horrendous choking sounds in his throat...

BRUTAL

(softly)

Oh, dear Jesus. The tail. Look at
the tail.

snapping They do. The tail is no longer weak and dying. It's
briskly back and forth, as if ready to play.
exhales Coffey makes that retching/gagging sound...and again
mouth. a cloud of swirling black "insects" from his nose and
The men watch, speechless, as the bugs turn white and

disappear.

off his
They
crying.

Coffey bends down, opens his hand. Mr. Jingles bounds
fingers through the bars, racing past the guards' feet.
turn to see Del gather the mouse up, laughing and
Dean turns back to Coffey with a stunned whisper:

DEAN

What did you do?

COFFEY

I helped Del's mouse. He a circus
mouse. Goan live in a mouse city
down in...down in...

BRUTAL

(numb)

Florida?

Coffey nods, remembering.

COFFEY

Boss Percy's bad. He mean. He step
on Del's mouse.

(softly)

I took it back, though.

wall.

And with that, he lies back on his bunk and faces the
The others look to Paul, don't even know what to say.

PAUL

Brute, come along with me.

(to Harry and Dean)

You fellas go on back to you
cribbage game.

Harry nods numbly. Paul leads Brutal up the Mile...

EXECUTION CHAMBER

arms.

...and they enter to find Percy polishing Old Sparky's

PERCY

Don't start in on me. It was just
a mouse. Never belonged here in
the first place.

PAUL

The mouse is fine. Just fine.
You're no better at mouse-killing
than anything else around here.

PERCY

You expect me to believe that? I
heard the goddamn thing crunch.

Paul steps closer, angry as we've ever seen him:

PAUL

Aren't you glad Mr. Jingles is
okay? After all our talks about
how we should keep the prisoners
calm? Aren't you relieved?

PERCY

What kind of game is this?

PAUL

No game. See for yourself.

Paul
the rag
Paul
Beat. Percy stalks past them, heads out onto the Mile.
and Brutal just wait, saying nothing. Brutal picks up
left by Percy, resumes polishing chores on Old Sparky.
Paul
stretches, cracks his neck. The silence heavy...
...until Percy reappears.

PERCY

You switched them! You switched
them somehow, you bastards!

BRUTAL

I always keep a spare mouse in my
wallet for occasions such as this.

PERCY

You're playing with me, the both
of you! Just who the hell do you
think you are--

Brutal grabs him , slams him bodily into the electric
chair.

Paul bends close, gets right in Percy's face.

PAUL

We're the people you work with,

Percy, but not for long. I want your word.

PERCY

My word?

PAUL

I put you out front for Del, you put in your transfer to Briar Ridge the very next day.

PERCY

What if I just call up certain people and tell them you're harassing me? Bullying me?

PAUL

Go ahead. I promise you'll leave your share of blood on the floor.

PERCY

Over a mouse? You think anyone's gonna give two shits?

PAUL

No. But four men will swear you stood by while Wild Bill tried to strangle Dean to death. About that people will care, Percy. Even your uncle the governor will care.

BRUTAL

Thing like that goes in your work record. Work record can follow a man around a long, long time.

trapped. Percy looks from one man to another, knowing he's

PAUL

I put you out front, you put in your transfer. That's the deal.

keep Percy thinks it over, nods. He tries to get up, but Paul him pinned...and pointedly offer his hand.

PAUL

You make a promise to a man, you shake his hand.

Percy hesitates, shakes Paul's hand...

HIGH WIDE ANGLE OF EXECUTION CHAMBER

...and Paul pulls him out of the electric chair as we

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME ANGLE AS ABOVE - NEXT NIGHT

Witnesses are trickling in, filling the seats. A storm
is brewing, sending FLASHES OF LIGHTNING across the floors.

INT. DEL'S CELL - NIGHT

Del sits with Mr. Jingles in his lap, stroking the mouse
between the ears. Paul, Brutal, and Harry appear at the
bars.

DEL

Hey, boys. Say hi, Mr. Jingles.

PAUL

Eduard Delacroix, will you step
forward?

DEL

Boss Edgecomb?

PAUL

Yes, Del?

DEL

Don' let nothin' happen to Mr.
Jingles, okay?

Paul nods--I promise. Del rises, steps to Paul.

DEL

Here, take him.

Del lifts his hand. Mr. Jingles steps off onto Paul's
shoulder with no hesitation. Gently:

PAUL

Del. I can't have a mouse on my
shoulder while...you know.

COFFEY

I'll take him, boss. Jus' for now.
If Del don' mind.

DEL

Yeah, you take 'im, John. Take him
til' dis foolishment done--bien!

(to Paul and Brutal)

After, you take him down to
Florida? To dat Mouseville?

BRUTAL

We'll do it together, most likely.
Maybe take a little vacation time.

Paul's
Paul moves to Coffey's cell. The mouse skitters off
shoulder onto Coffey's hand.

DEL

People pay a dime apiece to see
him. Two cents for the kiddies.
Ain't dat right, Boss Howell?

BRUTAL

That's right, Del.

DEL

You a good man, Boss Howell. You
too, Boss Edgecomb. Wish I could'a
met you bot' someplace else.

Del gives Mr. Jingles one last look, starts to cry.

DEL

Au revoir, mon ami. Je t'aime, mon
petit.

And they start to walk the Mile...

EXECUTION CHAMBER

drumming
BOOMS. A
Sweltering in the damp heat. Rain is pissing down,
the tin roof. People glance up uneasily as THUNDER
FAT LADY is staring grimly at the electric chair.

FAT LADY

Hope he's good and scared. Hope he
knows the fires are stoked, and
that Satan's imps are waiting.

ANGLE ON DOOR

Sparky.

Del enters, horrified to see Percy waiting at Old

Paul gives Del's arm a reassuring squeeze, leads him forward...

IN A TIGHT SERIES OF SHOTS:

The clamps are applied. The straps are drawn tight.

PERCY

Roll on one.

The lights brighten on a RISING HUM. Witnesses look up.

ON THE MILE

hotter,
Coffey looks up as the overheads flare hotter and
whispers to the mouse in his hands:

COFFEY

You be still, Mr. Jingles. You be
so quiet and so still.

RESUME EXECUTION CHAMBER

PERCY

Eduard Delacroix, you have been
condemned to die by a jury of your
peers, sentence imposed by a judge
in good standing in this state.
You have anything to say before
sentence is carried out?

Del tries to speak. Doesn't quite manage the first time.
Licks his lips and tries again.

DEL

I sorry for what I do. I give
anything to take it back, but I
can't. God have mercy on me.
(whispers to Paul)
Don' forget 'bout Mouseville.

Paul and Brutal nod--and are stunned as:

PERCY

No such place. That's just a fairy
tale these guys told you to keep
you quiet. Just thought you should
know, faggot.

had The stricken look in Del's eyes tells us a part of him
known all along. Paul and Brutal would both like to deck
"what Percy right about now, and he knows it--he gives them a
are you gonna do about it" smile.

black Nothing they can do. Paul nods to Harry, who takes the
Del's mask from the back of the chair and rolls it down over
head, leaving the top of his shaved head exposed.

PERCY

The takes the sponge and bends down to the bucket of brine.
other don't see it, but we do:

never Percy only pretends to dip the sponge and soak it. It
sponge touches the water. He straightens up and places the
atop Delacroix's head, hiding it with his hands.

realized The cap is lowered. Paul and the others haven't yet
Percy what's happened. THUNDER BOOMS and LIGHTNING CRASHES as
hides a smile, steps back to address the condemned:

PERCY

Electricity shall now be passed
through your body until you are
dead, in accordance with state
law. God have mercy on your soul.

TIGHT ON PAUL

then as realization starts to dawn. He stares at the bucket,
across the floor to Delacroix, coming to terms with the
evidence of his eyes--there's no water on the floor or
dripping down the sides of Del's neck.

to Paul's eyes widen. A stunned beat of horror. He starts
it open his mouth to scream "NO!", but Percy beats him to
with:

PERCY

Roll on two.

home Van Hay flicks the switch. WHAM. The electricity hits
and Del rocks forward, riding the current.

Then things start to go horribly wrong.

with a The HUMMING loses its steadiness and starts to waver
under CRACKLING SOUND. Tendrils of smoke begin curling from
shoots the cap, a mixture of burning hair and sponge. Brutal
whisper: Paul a horrified look. Paul responds with a harsh

PAUL

It's dry!

his Delacroix begins twisting and jittering in the chair,
legs masked face snapping violently from side to side, his
pistoning up and down in his restraints.

knot There's a MUFFLED POP from under the cap, like a pine
exploding in a hot fire. Smoke starts coming through the
fabric of the mask, puffing upward. Del is being cooked
alive. Paul spins to the partition, hollering--

PAUL

JACK!

--but Brutal grabs his arm, whispers fiercely:

BRUTAL

Don't you tell him to stop. Don't
you do it. It's too late for that.

wild Paul turns back, helpless. The other guards are trading
looks, unable to believe what's happening. Even Percy
looks aghast--he was expecting something, but not this.

animal Del begins SCREAMING--the wild, hysterical sound of an
uneven being shredded alive in a hay baler. The HUMMING goes
and ragged, the lights rising and falling...

ON THE MILE

the
feeling
goes

...as Del's screams rise and fall with them, echoing up
corridor. Coffey's shaking and screaming too, as if
Del's pain. Mr. Jingles squirms out of his grasp and
squeaking in terror toward the restraint room door...

BILLY

**HE'S COOKIN' NOW! THEY COOKIN' HIM
GOOD! NEAR ABOUT DONE, I RECKON!**

RESUME EXECUTION CHAMBER

and
BONES
their

Wrong. Del's nowhere near about done. He's slamming back
forth in the chair hard enough to shake the platform,
twisting hard against the leather restraints. We hear
BREAKING. A WOMAN'S SCREAMS. Witnesses start rising to
feet:

WITNESSES

What the hell's happening to
him?...Are those clamps going to
hold?...Christ, the smell!...Is
this normal?

The mask bursts into flame on Delacroix's face. Van Hay
hollers through the wire mesh, horrified:

VAN HAY

SHOULD I KILL THE JUICE?

PAUL

NO! ROLL, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, ROLL!

Harry scoops up the bucket of water to throw it.

PAUL

No water! No water! You crazy?

don't
instead.

Harry backs off with a look of dazed understanding--you
throw water on a man getting juiced. Right. He drops the
bucket, races to get the chemical fire extinguisher

face.
blown
away.

The flaming mask peels away, revealing Del's charring
His eyeballs are misshapen globs of burning white jelly
out of their sockets. The ATTENDING DOCTOR faints dead

hurrying to

Pandemonium now in the room. People shouting and
exit, chairs falling over, women screaming:

FAT LADY

Stop it, stop it, oh can't you see
he's had enough?

Hal grabs Paul by the shoulder, spins him around.

HAL

Why don't you shut it down?

PAUL

He's still alive! You want me to
shut down while he's still alive?

his

Hal is horrified at the thought. Del is jittering and
screaming, rocking from side to side, smoke pouring from
nostrils and mouth, his tongue sizzling purple-black.

the

The witnesses are crowding and shoving to get out, but
back door is locked. All they can do is cluster there.

Paul sees Percy with his head turned away. He grabs him,
forces his head around.

PAUL

You watch, you son of a bitch!

Del
just

Harry steps up, the extinguisher in his hands. Waiting.
finally slumps over. He still vibrating, but now it's
the effect of current flowing through his body.

PAUL

Kill it!

grabs the

Van Hay kills the current. The HUMMING DIES. Brutal
extinguisher from Harry, shoves it into Percy's hands.

BRUTAL

You do it. You're running the show, ain't you?

the Percy, sick and dazed, aims the extinguisher and hoses smoking corpse. Hal is near the back, calming the crowd:

HAL

It's all right, folks, it's all under control. Just a power surge from the storm, that's all, nothing to worry about...

PAUL

Dean, get doc's stethoscope.

up the Dean drops to the doctor's bag, digs through it, hands stethoscope. Paul plugs them into his ears. People are moaning and sobbing at the back of the room:

MAN

Oh my God! Is it always like this? Why didn't somebody tell me? I never would have come!

the Paul wipes some foam away from Delacroix's chest, places it's stethoscope pad to the raw flesh. He nods to Brutal-- over.

CUT TO:

INT. ACCESS TUNNEL - NIGHT

corpse Paul and the others bring the stretcher down, lay the on the gurney. Percy starts stammering excuses:

PERCY

I didn't know the sponge was supposed to be wet--

Brutal hauls off and slugs him. A scuffle ensues as the others grab Brutal and pull him off.

PAUL

Brutal, no!

BRUTAL

What do you mean, no? How can you say no? You saw what he did!

PAUL

Delacroix's dead, nothing can change that, and Percy's not worth it!

BRUTAL

So he just gets away with it? Is that how it works?

Hal comes lunging down the stairs, furious:

HAL

What the fuck was that? Jesus Christ, three witnesses puked all over the floor up there! And the smell! I got Van Hay to open both doors, but that smell won't come out for five damn years, that's what I'm betting! And that asshole Wharton is singing about it! I can hear him!

PAUL

(quietly)

Can he carry a tune, Hal?

triggering
fear.
down:
This pulls the plug on the moment--Hal snorts, laughter among the men, a wild release of tension and Everybody starts feeling a bit saner again as it dies

HAL

Okay, boys. Okay. Now what the hell happened?

lip.
All eyes go to Percy. Hal turns, sees Percy's bloody

HAL

Percy? Something to say?

PERCY

I didn't know the sponge was supposed to be wet.

Beat. A look of utter contempt from Hal.

HAL

How many years you spend pissing on the toilet seat before somebody told you to put it up?

PAUL

Percy fucked up, Hal. Pure and simple.

HAL

Is that your official position?

PAUL

Don't you think it should be?

Hal considers it, nods.

PAUL

He'll be putting in a transfer request to Briar Ridge tomorrow. Moving on to bigger and better things. Isn't that right, Percy?

Percy nods. Hal steps close, gives him a tight, icy smile.

HAL

You're a little asshole, and I don't like you a bit.
(off Percy's look)
Have that transfer request on my desk first thing.

Hal heads back up the stairs. Brutal shoves Percy aside and wheels Delacroix's body down the tunnel.

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

Paul returns to find Wild Bill making up a song in his cell:

BILLY

(singing)
Barbecue! Me and you! Stinky, pinky, phew-phew-phew! Weren't Billy or Jilly or Hilly or Roy--it was a French-fried faggot named Delacroix!

PAUL

You're about ten seconds away from

spending the rest of your life in
the padded room.

Coffey's
exhausted

Billy falls silent. Paul continues down the Mile to
cell. Coffey's on his bunk, face streaked with tears. He
wipes his eyes with the heels of his hands like an
child.

COFFEY

Poor Del. Poor old Del.

PAUL

Yes. Poor old Del. John, are you
okay?

COFFEY

I could feel it from here.

PAUL

What do you mean? You could hear
it? Is that what you mean?

COFFEY

He's out of it now, though. He's
the lucky one. No matter how it
happened, Del's the lucky one.

Paul realizes he won't get a coherent answer.

PAUL

Where's Mr. Jingles?

COFFEY

(points vaguely)
Ran down there. Don't think he'll
be back.

(beat)

Awful tired now, boss. Dog tired.

Coffey lays down, turns to face the wall.

PAUL

Me too, John. Me too.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

the

Paul enters in darkness, hangs his hat. He drifts into

Austin kitchen, clicks on the radio. SOFT MUSIC BEGINS: Gene
singing "Did You Ever See A Dream Walking?"
the He pours a drink at the kitchen table, takes a sip, lays
behind glass down. Jan sleepily appears from the darkness
glances him, entering the kitchen. He realizes she's there,
back.
folds She can sense the weight on his soul. She comes to him,
his head into her arms. They stand that way, he drawing
strength and she giving it, as the music plays on...

DISSOLVE TO:

SEQUENCE WITH MUSIC:

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

together CAMERA TRACKS the pews to find Paul and Jan seated
in the congregation, voices raised in hymn...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MORNING

are Paul's Model T comes sputtering up the road. He and Jan
taking a drive, still in their Sunday best...

EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - MORNING

dish. Paul and Jan wait at the front door. Jan holds a baking

PAUL

I hate this.

JAN

I know.

inside... The door opens. Hal, looking tired, ushers them

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

in ...and they walk outside to find MELINDA MOORES sitting

be the sun, frail and wasted, a blanket on her knees. She'd
beautiful if not for the cancer killing her.

he Paul is shocked at her appearance, hides it as best as
side can. Jan covers this for him--she drops to Melinda's
hands with a warm smile and a kiss, takes the woman's frail
in hers.

all--I Paul catches Jan's eye. The look he gives her says it
don't know what I'd do without you...

DISSOLVE:

while ...and we find Paul and Hal talking quietly over beers
the women visit b.g.:

HAL

She's having one of her good days.
I thank God for that.

PAUL

What a bad day?

HAL

(beat)

Sometimes she's...not herself
anymore. She swears.

PAUL

Swears.

HAL

It just pops out, the most awful
language you can imagine. She
doesn't even know she's doing it.
I didn't know she'd ever heard
words like that...and to hear her
say them in her sweet voice...

(gazes off)

I'm glad she's having a good day,
Paul. I'm glad for you and Jan.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

him

Paul is wide awake, staring at the dark. Jan can sense brooding. She rolls over sleepily.

JAN

Honey? If you don't say what's on your mind, I'm afraid I'll have to smother you with a pillow.

PAUL

I'm thinking I love you. I'm thinking I don't know what I'd do if you were gone.

JAN

Oh.

PAUL

(beat)

I'm also thinking I'd like to have the boys over tomorrow.

Off Jan's look, we

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM- DAY

Paul and
in:

Brutal, Harry, and Dean are seated at the table with Jan. Serving plates are being passed, everybody digging

THE MEN

(various, ad-lib)

Ma'am, you sure know how to fry up some fine chicken...Brutal, don't hog the taters now...Try that corn yet? It's something special...

Paul softly interjects:

PAUL

You saw what he did with the mouse.

wipes

This stops everybody cold. Dean puts his chicken down, his hands. Looks are traded in the silence.

BRUTAL

I could'a gone the rest of the day without you bringing that up.

DEAN

I could'a gone the rest of the year.

PAUL

He did it to me too. He put his hands on me and took my bladder infection away.

The men absorb this. Brutal glances to Jan.

JAN

When he came home, he was...all better.

DEAN

You're talking about an authentic healing. A praise-Jesus miracle.

PAUL

I am.

BRUTAL

If you say it, I accept it. But what's it got to do with us?

Jan looks to Paul, realization starting to dawn:

JAN

Melinda? Oh, Paul...

BRUTAL

Melinda? Melinda Moores?

Paul nods--that's who we're talking about.

JAN

You really think you can help her?

PAUL

It's not a bladder infection, or even a busted-up mouse. But there might be a chance.

HARRY

Hold on now. You're talking about our jobs. Sneak a sick woman onto a cellblock?

PAUL

Hal would never allow that. You

know him, he wouldn't believe something unless it fell on him.

BRUTAL

So you're talking about taking John Coffey to her. That's more than just our jobs, Paul.

DEAN

Damn right. That's prison time if we get caught.

HARRY

Let's not discuss this like it's even an option. Brutal, help me out here...

Brutal lets out a deep breath, considering. He looks to Paul.

BRUTAL

I'm sure she's a fine woman...

JAN

The finest.

PAUL

What's happening to her is an offense, Brutal. To the eyes and the ears and the heart.

BRUTAL

I have no doubt. But we don't know her like you and Jan do...do we?

PAUL

That's why it's a lot to ask.

HARRY

It is. Let's not forget Coffey's a murderer. What if he escapes? I'd hate losing my job or going to prison, but I'd hate having a dead child on my conscience even more.

PAUL

I don't think that'll happen...
(beat, softly)
...in fact, I don't think he did it at all.

The men are stunned by this. Off their looks:

PAUL

I just can't see God putting a gift like that in the hands of a man who would kill a child.

DEAN

Well, that's a tender notion, but the man's on death row for the crime. Plus, he's huge. If he tried to get away, it'd take a lot of bullets to stop him.

BRUTAL

We'd all have shotguns in addition to sidearms. I'd insist on that.

(to Paul)

He tried anything, we'd have to take him down. You understand.

PAUL

I understand.

BRUTAL

(beat)

So. Tell us what you had in mind.

FADE TO BLACK

IN BLACKNESS, A TITLE CARD APPEARS:

"Night Journey"

CUT TO:

INT. INFIRMARY BUILDING/DISPENSARY - NIGHT

the
the
A FLASHLIGHT BEAM plays across a glass cabinet, scanning contents. The beam pauses. A hand enters frame, unlocks cabinet, pulls out a bottle of morphine tablets...

pills
...and WE ANGLE TO Brutal as he shakes half a dozen onto his palm, pockets them, replaces the bottle on the shelf. He turns and slips five bucks to a NIGHTSHIFT ORDERLY.

BRUTAL

I was never here.

ORDERLY

Shit, for five bucks, you was never nowhere.

INT. E BLOCK ACCESS TUNNEL - NIGHT

stainless
paper...
A MORPHINE PILL is being crushed to powder on the steel gurney. TILT UP to Paul crushing the pills. Brutal carefully scrapes the powder onto a small sheet of

INT. PAUL'S INNER OFFICE - NIGHT

reading a
Percy is parked in Paul's chair with his feet up, book titled: "CARING FOR MENTAL PATIENTS."

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

tension
Paul and
Harry and Dean are playing cards at the duty desk, thick, cards slapping softly as the seconds tick by. Brutal finally show up toting bottles of RC cola:

BRUTAL

Fellas thirsty? Fresh out of the icebox.

DEAN

Oh, thanks. That's swell.

HARRY

Yeah, hot in here.

sound of
They begin popping the caps off, swigging cola. The it brings Billy to his bars.

BILLY

Hey. Hey, I'm'a get some too.

BRUTAL

My ass you get some too.

PAUL

You think you deserve any?

HARRY

(checks a clipboard)
Day report says he's been okay.

BILLY

Hell, yes, I been behaved. C'mon,
now, don't be stingy hogs.

a
on
He
Paul shrugs to Brutal--why not? Brutal pops the top off
bottle, passes it to Paul. Paul grabs a tin cup, sets it
the desk...and we see it contains the morphine powder.
pours the cola, swirls it around...

ANGLE THROUGH COFFEY'S BARS

peers
...as Coffey looks up, sensing something happening. He
up the Mile as Paul walks to:

BILLY'S CELL

reach.
Billy reaches for the cup, but Paul keeps it out of

PAUL

You gonna stay behaved?

BILLY

C'mon, you clunk, gimme that.

PAUL

You promise me, or I'll drink it
myself right here in front of you.

BILLY

C'mon now, don't be that way. I be
good.

draining it
Paul lets him take the cup. Billy knocks it back,
in three huge swallows. He lets out an awesome belch.

PAUL

Cup.

BILLY

We'll break out the fire hose and
take it anyway. And you will have
drunk your last R.C. cola. Unless
they serve 'em down in hell.

Paul Billy's smile fades. He hands the cup through the bars.
takes it, turns and heads back to--

THE DUTY DESK

entire --where Brutal, Harry, and Dean have been watching the
exchange with their hearts in their throats...

DISSOLVE:

He ...and we find Billy staring glassy-eyed at the ceiling.
stepping to keels over on his bunk. ANGLE to Paul and Brutal
the bars with Harry and Dean.

PAUL

Anybody wants to back out, now's
the time. After this, there's no
turning back.

(off their looks)

So? We gonna do this?

A voice comes softly from down the way:

COFFEY

Sure. I'd like to take a ride.

shock. Their heads come slowly around, staring at Coffey in

BRUTAL

(to Paul)

Guess were all in.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

enters Percy looks up from his book as the door opens. Paul
with Brutal and Harry, ominously hemming the desk.

PERCY

What is this?

Paul pulls the canvas straitjacket from behind his back.

PAUL

Payback.

Harry

Percy jumps up and tries to the execution chamber, but grabs him, spins him back. A wild scuffle ensues as:

PERCY

Let go of me! Let go!

PAUL

Settle down, Percy!

book he

Percy tries to jerk away, crashes into the desk. The was reading falls to the floor--

It's a

'30's,

has

uk-

--and a "Tijuana Bible" is revealed within the pages.

pornographic cartoon book of the type popular in the

featuring crude drawings of famous cartoon characters or movie stars engaged in outlandish sexual acts. This one

Olive Oyl getting it doggy-style from Popeye. The word balloon over his head features his famous laugh: "Uk-uk-

uk!"

BRUTAL

Oooo, Poicy! What would your mother say?

PERCY

Let go, you ignoramus! I know people! Big people!

PAUL

So you've said. C'mon, stick out your arms like a good boy.

PERCY

I won't. And you can't make me.

BRUTAL

You're dead wrong about that, you know.

lets out

that

Brutal grabs Percy by the ears, twisting hard. Percy

a shriek--not just of pain, but a dismayed understanding

he's not going to bluster his way out of this one.

BRUTAL

You gonna put your arms up? I'll rip your ears off. Use 'em for tea caddies. You know I will.

PAUL

The man's ripping your ears off, Percy. I'd do as he says.

straitjacket
of
Percy jerks his arms up before him. They get the on him within seconds. Percy turns to Paul on the verge tears. Softly:

PERCY

Please, Paul. Don't put me in with Wild Bill. Please.

PAUL

You would think that.

Paul gives him a hard, angry shove...

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

room
...and they bring him down the Mile to the restraint door. Brutal takes Percy's holster and baton.

BRUTAL

You'll get 'em back, don't worry.

PERCY

That's more than I can say about your jobs. All your jobs! You can't do this to me! You can't!

Paul steps forward with a roll of strapping tape.

PAUL

Let you in on a little secret. We can and we are.

into
through
tape.
He slaps the tape over Percy's mouth and shoves him back the restraint room. Percy stands breathing heavily his nose, making muffled mmmph-mmmph! sounds under the

PAUL

You're going to have a few hours

of quiet time now, so you can reflect on what you did to Del.

BRUTAL

(grins)

If you get lonely, think about Olive Oyl...

(thrusting his hips)

...uk-uk-uk-uk!

And they slam the door, shutting Percy into darkness.

A WALL-MOUNTED GUN SAFE

heading

is unlocked, shotguns pulled out. The men load up, down the Mile as:

PAUL

One more time--what do you say if somebody comes by?

DEAN

Coffey got upset, so we put him in the restraint room. They hear any noise, they'll think it's him.

They come to Coffey's cell.

COFFEY

We goan for the ride now?

PAUL

That's right.

The cell is unlocked. Coffey emerges. Paul motions them along, still grilling Dean:

PAUL

What about us?

DEAN

You're over in Admin, going over Del's file. Brutal and Harry are in the laundry doing their wash--

cell

see

drunk.

A skinny white arm suddenly shoots out from Wild Bill's and grabs Coffey by the wrist. The men gasp, shocked to see Billy on his feet, grinning and weaving like a punch-

actually
were
just put
away,
blazing.

Coffey's reaction is beyond simple surprise; he's trembling at Billy's touch as if some electrical circuit engaged. His eyes are wide and horrified, as if he'd his hand in a basket full of snakes. He tries to pull but Billy has him tight, that mysterious circuit

BILLY

(slurring wildly)
Where you fink you're goin'?

Coffey responds softly, with utmost horror:

COFFEY

You're a bad man.

BILLY

S'right, nigger. Bad as you'd want.

Paul plucks Billy's hand off Coffey's arm--and Coffey flinches back as the circuit is broken.

BILLY

Whooooee. Whole room's spinning.
Like I'm shit-ass drunk. I have me
some shine or what?

the way:
He turns and staggers back to his bunk, muttering all

BILLY

Niggers oughtta have they own
'lectric chair. White man oughtn't
havta sit in no nigger 'lectric
chair, nossir...

staring.
He goes face-first onto his bunk. Coffey is still

COFFEY

He's a bad man.

INT. EXECUTION CHAMBER - NIGHT

sight of
Coffey is brought in...and freezes in horror at the
Old Sparky. A whisper:

COFFEY

They're still in there. Pieces of them, still in there. I hear them screaming.

shadow
so
up.
All eyes go to the electric chair. It sits shrouded in like an ominous throne. Never before has this place felt haunted to the men. It makes the hairs on the neck stand up.

PAUL

John, come along! Right now, y'hear? C'mon! Toward that door!

Coffey finally responds, pulling away...

INT. E BLOCK ACCESS TUNNEL - NIGHT

will
...and they come down the steps. They realize Coffey have to stoop all the way down the tunnel. Paul pats the gurney.

PAUL

Lie down on this.
(off Coffey's look)
It'll be easier for you and no harder for us.

back.
ground,
of
Coffey eases carefully onto the gurney, lying on his His knees hang over the edge and his toes touch the but it works. They push him along, traversing the pools light.

arms,
Coffey actually starts to smile. He reaches out his fingertips touching the tunnel walls as they go by.

COFFEY

Say. This is fun.

EXT. PRISON WALL - NIGHT

fenced
A massive iron door SQUEALS open onto a little-used enclosure. Paul and the others bring Coffey up from the

tunnel below, emerging into the night. Coffey's breath catches as he gazes wondrously up at the stars,

pointing:

COFFEY

Look, boss! It's Cassie, the lady in the rocking chair!

PAUL

Shhh. John, you have to be quiet now.

COFFEY

(whispering)

You see her? You see the lady?

BRUTAL

We see her, John.

Harry goes first, hugging the shadows as he pulls his keys to unlock the gate...

WIDE SHOT OF PRISON

...while TOWER GUARDS huddle in their enclosure atop the walls. An occasional SPOTLIGHT cuts the darkness.

FIREFLIES

dance in the fields and trees as far as the eye can see.

across

Four dark figures detach from the shadows, hurrying

side...

the lonely country road into the fields on the far

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

his

Coffey's hand scoops up some fallen leaves. TILT UP to

smell.

face as he crunches them under his nose, inhaling their

misreads

He see the guards throwing him anxious looks. He

it,

this, holds out his hand so they can smell too. They do

just to make him happy.

PAUL

C'mon, big boy, keep moving.

A FEW FIREFLIES come winking through frame as the group

presses on...

ANOTHER AREA/WOODS

The trees are growing sparser, opening onto fields. MORE
wake... FIREFLIES are flitting into view, trailing in their

BRUTAL

How far is it?

HARRY

Just up ahead...

removing
TRUCK
Harry brings them to a thicket of trees. They start
branches and boughs, uncovering a battered old FARMALL
hidden in the brush.

them,
The men pause. Even more fireflies are swirling around
growing in number. It's getting downright weird.

childlike
hand,
fingers.
Coffey laughs softly, drawing their attention. A
smile has utterly transformed his face. He raises his
letting a firefly weave playfully in and out of his

COFFEY

Hey there, little firefly. Where's
Mrs. Firefly this evening?

Another firefly joins the first, both now dancing and
blinking around his fingers. Coffey laughs again.

COFFEY

Oh, there you is. You come out to
play too?

Coffey as
blinking
The men stand gaping. The fireflies are flitting to
if to a beacon. He waves his hands slowly, fireflies
and trailing from his fingertips like magic dust.

glowing
sheen off
They begin orbiting his shiny bald head like tiny
planet orbiting a sun, their light kicking a mellow

his ebony skin. Coffey's eyes meet Paul's.

PAUL

They seem...drawn to you.

COFFEY

I love 'em, is why. They don't think no hurtful thoughts. They's just happy to be. Happy little lightning bugs...

The men don't know whether to be enchanted or terrified. Harry gives Paul a look--can we go? Please?

PAUL

C'mon, big boy. Upsy-daisy.

him.
button...
Coffey clammers up on the stakebed. Paul and Brutal join
Harry gets in behind the wheel, jabs the starter

ON THE STAKEBED

...while Coffey sits with his back to the cab.

PAUL

John? Do you know where we're taking you?

COFFEY

Help a lady?

PAUL

That's right. Help a lady. But how did you know?

COFFEY

Dunno. Tell the truth, boss, I don't know much'a anything. Never have.

left
The truck pulls out. Coffey waves as the fireflies get
behind, dwindling away like stars.

COFFEY

Bye, fireflies. Bye.

WIDE ANGLE OF COUNTRYSIDE

countless

The truck rumbles from the fields onto a dirt road,
fireflies swirling in its wake...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOORES HOUSE - NIGHT

rumbling

Headlights come over the rise. The truck appears,
down toward the house. The world is isolated and still.

IN THE TRUCK CAB

on.

Harry stops and cuts the engine, leaving the headlights
Silence now, save for the trilling of crickets.

IN THE STAKEBED

actually

Paul and Brutal both look terrified now that they're
here. An urgent whisper:

BRUTAL

We can still turn back.

Paul hesitates, wanting to do just that, but:

COFFEY

Boss, look. Someone's up.

steps
them.

Lights are coming on inside the house. Coffey rises and
down from the truck, pulling Paul along. Brutal follows

BRUTAL

This is a mistake. Christ, Paul,
what were we thinking?

PAUL

Too late now. Harry, keep John
here until we call you.

inside
on
twin

Paul and Brutal walk to the front door as the lights
the house keep clicking on. The last one finally comes
over the stoop, the front door opens a crack...and the
barrels of a shotgun poke out into the night.

HAL

Who the hell goes there at two-thirty in the goddamn morning?

PAUL

Hal, it's us! It's Paul and Brutal--it's us!

haggard

The door swings wider, revealing Hal's face gaunt and in the yellow porch light, stunned to see them:

HAL

Paul, what are you doing here at this hour? Jesus, it's not a lockdown, is it? Or a riot?

PAUL

Hal, God's sakes, take your finger off the trigger...

Hal doesn't, aiming past them at the truck in the yard.

HAL

Are you hostages? Who's out there? Who's by that truck?

tugging
hammers.

Coffey steps into the glare of headlights with Harry on his arm, trying to hold him back. Hal cocks both

HAL

John Coffey! Halt! Halt right there or I shoot!

His aim wavers as a woman's voice comes from upstairs:

MELINDA (O.S.)

Hal? Who are you talking to, you fucking cocksucker?

is

A frozen moment. Hal mortified. Paul gives him a look-- that Melinda?

front

Hal's shotgun shifts back to Coffey--but Paul steps in of the muzzle.

PAUL

No one's hurt. We're here to help.

HAL

Help what? I don't understand. Is this a prison break?

PAUL

I can't explain what it is. You just have to trust me.

before
it's
Coffey comes up the steps, brushes Paul aside, stops the warden. Hal blinks, his thoughts suddenly fuzzy-- that benign hypnotic effect Coffey has.

HAL

What do you...want?

MELINDA

Hal! Make them go away! No salesmen in the middle of the night! No Fuller brushes! No French knickers with come in the crotch! Tell them to take a flying fuck in a rolling d...d...

sob.
We hear the sound of GLASS BREAKING, then she begins to

COFFEY

(a whisper)

Just to help. Just to help, boss, that's all.

HAL

You can't. No one can.

it to
Coffey pulls the shotgun gently from Hal's grasp, hands Paul. Coffey moves past Hal into the house...

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

...and comes up the hallway toward the stairs.

HAL

Don't you go up there! Don't you do it!

COFFEY

Boss, you just be quiet now and

let me be.

Coffey mounts the stairs with the others at his heels, heading up toward that quavering voice:

MELINDA (O.S.)

Stay out of here! Whoever you are, just stay out! I'm not dressed for visitors, you rat's asshole!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Coffey enters, trailed by the others. Paul pauses, horrified.

The woman propped in bed barely resembles Melinda Moores anymore--she looks made up like a Halloween witch, her skin hanging in a loose trail of wrinkles, one corner of her mouth twisted. Yellowish bile stains her chin and the front of her nightgown. Her hair has gone white and straw-like, her eyes glowering at Coffey with lively, irrational interest:

MELINDA

Oh, so big! Pull down your pants! Let's have a look!

Hal groans with despair. Coffey just stands there for a moment, watching her from a distance, then approaches the bed...

MELINDA

Don't come near me, pigfucker.

...but as he draws closer, a change occurs. Her features soften, her eyes become more sane and aware.

MELINDA

Why do you have so many scars? Who hurt you so badly?

COFFEY

Don't hardly remember, ma'am.

Coffey sits on the edge of the bed. The lights seem to flare

eyes. hotter and brighter. Tears are forming in Melinda's

MELINDA

What's your name?

COFFEY

John Coffey, ma'am. Like the drink, only not spelt the same.

The She lays back, staring at him with shining fascination.
indeed... world seems to be slowing down, growing very still

...and he starts bending slowly toward her.

COFFEY

Ma'am?

MELINDA

Yes, John Coffey?

COFFEY

I see it. I see it.

He comes closer...closer still...

COFFEY

You be still now. You be so quiet and so still.

whisper He brushes her forehead with his lips...the gentlest
moment of a kiss...then moves his mouth down to hers. For a
with an we can see one of her eyes staring past him, filling
expression of surprise...

lips ...and then her face is lost to view as Coffey puts his
inhaling on hers. We hear a soft whistling sound as he begins
the air deeply from her lungs. Something hot and glowing
starts passing between them, drawn on his breath...

moment, as The men watch. The house seems to shudder in that
if the entire world has shifted an inch to the right...

DOWNSTAIRS PARLOR

...and the grandfather clock stops ticking, the pendulum
stopping dead, the glass face cracking neatly up the
center...

BEDROOM

...and a windowpane cracks. Then another. A picture
falls off the wall. A lightbulb bursts, showering glass.

Paul smells smoke, realizes the fringed coverlet of the
bed has caught fire. Moving like a man in a dream, he
reaches for the waterglass on the nightstand, douses the flames.

Coffey keeps kissing Melinda in that deep and mysterious
way, inhaling and inhaling, her hand held in his like a tiny
white bird. For a moment we actually hear something screaming,
as if some willful imp were being extracted by force...

...and then it's over. Coffey raises his head,
revealing:

Melinda's beautiful face. Her mouth no longer droops.
Color is coming back to her hair. Her skin is shining with
life.

Coffey regards her raptly for a moment or two, then
starts coughing violently.

He turns away and drops to his knees, hacking like a man
in the last stages of tuberculosis.

Paul and his men are expecting Coffey to spit out the
"bugs", but he doesn't--he just keeps coughing, deep and hard,
barely finding time to snatch in the next breath of air.

Hal goes to his wife, beyond stunned, sits at her side.
She looks back at him with amazement, her face like a dirty
mirror that's been suddenly wiped clean.

side John's coughing grows even worse. Brutal drops to his
and slaps his broad, spasming back.

BRUTAL

John! Sick it up! Cough 'em out
like you done before!

strain, Coffey just keeps retching, eyes watering from the
spit flying from his mouth.

BRUTAL

He's choking! Whatever he sucked
out of her, he's choking on it!

himself Paul starts toward them. Coffey crawls away, pressing
still into a corner with his face against the wallpaper. He's
under making gruesome deep hacking sounds, but getting it
control. He weakly waves Paul off--let me be.

her Paul looks to the bed. Hal sits with Melinda, stroking
brow. Color is blooming in her cheeks even as we watch.

MELINDA

How did I get here? We were going
to the hospital in Indianola,
weren't we? We stopped and you
bought me a packet of posies...

HAL

Shhh. It doesn't matter. It
doesn't matter anymore.

MELINDA

Did I have the X-ray? Did I

PAUL

Yes.

They both look at him.

PAUL

It was clear. There was no tumor.

Her Hal bursts into tears. Melinda sits up, comforting him.
eyes are drawn to the corner.

MELINDA

Who is that man?

Coffey is struggling to rise. Brutal does his best to help.

PAUL

John? Can you turn around? Can you turn around and see this lady?

Coffey turns. His face is ashen gray, seriously ill.

MELINDA

What's your name?

COFFEY

John Coffey, ma'am.

MELINDA

Like the drink, only not spelled the same.

COFFEY

No, ma'am. Not spelt the same at all.

She pushes the covers aside to rise. Hal tries to stop her...

HAL

Melly, no...

...but she pushes his hand gently aside. Hal watches in wonder as she stands, takes a first tentative step...and walks to Coffey. She gazes up and touches his face.

MELINDA

I dreamed of you. I dreamed you were wandering in the dark, and so was I. We found each other. We found each other in the dark.

She undoes her necklace, holds it up for him. He hesitates, glances to Paul. Paul nods--it's all right. Coffey lowers his head. Melinda affixes the delicate chain around his neck.

MELINDA

It's St. Christopher. I want you

to have it, Mr. Coffey, and wear it. He'll keep you safe. Please wear it for me.

COFFEY

Thank you, ma'am.

MELINDA

Thank you, John.

she Her arms go around his neck, hugging him tightly as if
might never let go.

EXT. MOORES HOUSE - NIGHT

the Paul and the men hustle Coffey out the front door toward
baby, truck, helping him as best they can. He's weak as a
knees threatening to give out at any moment.

PAUL

C'mon, John, stay on your feet.

HARRY

Christ, he goes down, we'll need three mules and a crane to pick him up again...

it, They get Coffey to the truck and throw their backs into
his helping him crawl up onto the stakebed. He rolls over on
Brutal back. Harry hops up, covers him with an old blanket.
pulls aside, speaking low:

BRUTAL

He'll never sit in Old Sparky. You know that, don't you?

(off Paul's look)

He swallowed that stuff for a reason. I give him a few days. One of us'll be doing a cell check and there he'll be. Dead on his bunk.

PAUL

If that's his choice, he's earned it.

(beat)

Let's get him back on the Mile.

FADE TO BLACK

IN BLACKNESS, A TITLE CARD APPEARS:

"Coffey on the Mile"

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

Dean starts babbling with relief as they return:

DEAN

Am I glad to see you! You were gone so long! Wild Bill's making noises like he's gonna wake up...
(notices Coffey)
What the hell's wrong with him?

BRUTAL

He's hurting, Dean. Hurting bad.

Dean jumps in, helps them steer Coffey into his cell.

PAUL

John, we're gonna set you on your bunk now. Ready?

head,
Coffey nods, sits heavily on the bunk. He lowers his breath rasping like a rusted hinge. The guards step out.

DEAN

What about Mrs. Moores? Was it like the mouse? Was it a...you know...a miracle?

PAUL

Yes. Yes it was.

beat.
Paul scans their faces. Smiles are traded. An exultant

HARRY

Damn. I think we got away with it.

BRUTAL

We still gotta convince a certain somebody to keep his trap shut.

PAUL

Get his stuff.

Dean hurries off to retrieve Percy's holster and baton. Brutal unlocks the restraint room door, swings it open.

Percy

is revealed sitting against the wall, glaring, his mouth still taped. Paul crouches down. Brutal joins him.

PAUL

I want to talk, not shout. I take the tape off, you gonna be calm.

yank.

Percy nods. Paul takes hold of the tape, preparing to

BRUTAL

My mother always said if you do it fast, it won't hurt so much.

Paul rips the tape off. Percy's eyes water with pain.

BRUTAL

I guess she was wrong.

PERCY

Get me out of this nut-coat.

PAUL

In a minute.

PERCY

Now! Now! Right n--

up,

Paul slaps him hard, knocks him sideways. Percy looks blinking in surprise. Paul grabs him, yanks him back up.

PAUL

You shut up and listen. You deserved to be punished for what you did to Del. You'll accept it like a man, or we'll make you sorry you were ever born. We'll tell people how you sabotaged Del's execution--

PERCY

Sabotaged!

PAUL

--and how you pissed yourself like a frightened little girl. Yes,

we'll talk, that's a given--but,
Percy, mind me now...we'll also
see you beaten within an inch of
your life.

Percy blinks, unable to grasp that.

PAUL

We know people, too, are you so
foolish you don't realize that?
People with friends and loved ones
doing time in this prison. People
who'd be happy to amputate you
nose or your penis just so someone
they care about could get an extra
three hours in the exercise yard
every week.

(off Percy's look)

Let bygones be bygones. Nothing's
hurt so far but your pride...and
nobody need ever know about that
except the people in this room.

BRUTAL

What happens on the Mile, stays on
the Mile. Always has.

A long pause. Softly:

PERCY

May I be let out of this coat now?

They pull him to his feet, undo the straps. He shrugs
out of
maintain
the straitjacket and adjusts his clothes, trying to
a shred of dignity.

PERCY

My things?

Dean hands them over. Percy smooths his hair and puts
his hat
on, starts strapping on his holster belt.

PAUL

Think it over, Percy.

PERCY

Oh, I intend to. I intend to think
about it very hard. Starting right
now.

Percy exits the restraint room. Brutal whispers to Paul:

BRUTAL

He'll talk. Sooner or later.

Paul nods with weary resignation--yeah, I know.

ON THE MILE

getting
from
Percy pauses near Coffey's cell, careless as always,
his holster buckled--and a massive black arm grabs him
through the bars. His SCREAM brings Paul and the others
the restraint room.

looks
lips
Coffey's face is pressed so tight between his bars it
like he's trying to push his head through. He draws his
back, baring his teeth in an awful sneer...

feel
head,
Percy whacks him with his baton. Coffey barely seems to
it. He curls his free hand around the back of Percy's
pulling him ever closer...

breath
get
for
...and Percy's screams are muffled as their mouths come
together. Coffey begins exhaling as if he'd held his
for hours. Percy jerks like a fish on a hook, but can't
away. The men jump in, try to pry Percy loose, hollering
Coffey to let him go.

down
and
The black "insects" are flowing from Coffey to Percy,
swirling into his mouth, up his nose, down his throat.
Several lightbulbs explode in their steel cages up and
the Mile. Percy's baton drops from his nerveless fingers
clatters to the floor, never to be picked up again.

skin.
And then Coffey steps back, rubbing his mouth as if he's
tasted something bad. The color has returned to his

as a
face,
loudly.

Percy, however, is ashen gray. His expression is blank sheet of paper, not a trace of awareness in his eyes. The men are stunned. Paul raises his hand to Percy's face, snaps his fingers. Nothing. He tries again, clapping loudly. Percy reacts slightly, eyes fluttering, swaying a bit.

PAUL

Easy, easy. You all right?

Mile,
swaying
his

Percy says nothing. He turns and walks slowly up the hill, his movements vacant and disjointed. He comes to a stop at Wild Bill's cell...and turns slowly to look in. Wild Bill is coming painfully around, groggily clutching his head. He looks up, see Percy.

BILLY

What'a you looking at, you limp noodle? You wanna kiss my ass or suck my dick?

Bill as
BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!
across
smear,
wrestling

Nothing for the longest moment. Percy just staring...
...and then he pulls his gun and empties it into Wild Bill as fast as he can pull the trigger.
BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!BAM!
Bill takes all six rounds in the chest, reeling back across the cell. He hits the wall and slides down, leaving a smear, his face registering a final look of stunned surprise. Paul and the other tackle Percy and bring him down, wrestling the gun out of his hand. Dean is almost weeping:

DEAN

Oh God, oh God, no...

black
the

Percy is flat on his back, staring up at nothing. The "bugs" come drifting out of nose and mouth, swirling in the air over his head. They turn white and disappear.

on The men are speechless. Paul turns, sees Coffey sitting
the floor at his bars, watching.

COFFEY

Punished them bad men.

PAUL

Why Wild Bill? Why?

COFFEY

I saw in his heart. When he grab
my arm, I saw what Wild Billy
done. Saw plain as day. Can't hide
what's in your heart.

PAUL

What? Saw what?

Coffey reaches toward him, straining through the bars.

COFFEY

Take my hand, boss. You see for
yourself.

BRUTAL

Paul, no!

pleading Paul hesitates, torn between reason and Coffey's
eyes. A whisper:

COFFEY

My hand.

together. Paul can't help it. He has to. Their hands come
between Paul lurches wildly as that circuit starts blazing
them...

PAUL

No...please...

COFFEY

Gots to, boss. Gots to give you a
little bit of myself. A gift,
like. A gift of what's in me so
you can see...

...and Paul sees:

playing The Detterick twins. Kathe and Cora. Laughing and
hopscotch in the dust under a later afternoon sun...

basket A dinner table. Family having supper late in the day,
of biscuits being passed. Twelve year old Howie
Detterick taking it, passing it on...

the An hand with a paint brush slopping bright red paint on
side of a barn...

turning Kathe skipping to the head of the hopscotch squares,
and starting back, laughing in the sun...

blood... The paint brush slopping more paint, dripping like

break Paul jerks and twists, trying to pull away, trying to
done: the circuit, but he can't, not till all is seen and

to Marjorie Detterick calling from the porch for everybody
come eat, supper's ready...

barn... A hammer pausing. Klaus looking down from atop the

yard... The Detterick twins finishing their hopscotch, gathering
their jump ropes from the dust, running across the

takes The basket of biscuits being passed to little Cora, who
a biscuit and passes it on...

The Klaus coming down the ladder, calling to his daughters.
who little girls running past the man with the paint brush,
turns and smile as they go by...it's Wild Bill.

pulls The basket of biscuits is passed one last time. A hand
at the one out, raises it for a bite. It's Wild Bill, smiling

little girls as conversation flows around the table...

Paul screams, trying to pull away, but:

dawn, a
cut
The porch door is kicked off its hinges just before
figure looming in the doorway. Kathe wakes, her scream
short as the man's fist punches her hard in the face...

himself,
Paul trembles violently as if riding the lightning
pleading for it to stop, but there's one last thing:

Wild Bill looms over the terrified little girls like a
horrendous boogeyman, whispers to Kathe:

BILLY

You lover your sister? You make
any noise, know what happens? I'll
kill her instead of you.

(to Cora)

And if you make any noise, I'll
kill her.

And he drags them out into the coming dawn...

real
...as Coffey lets Paul go. Paul is gasping, back in the
world where his men are staring at him with wide eyes.

COFFEY

He kill 'em with they love. They
love for each other. You see how
it is?

Softly:
Paul nods, numb. Tears are flowing down Coffey's face.

COFFEY

That's how it is ever' day. That's
how it is all over the worl'...

CUT TO:

WILD BILL

lies dead, staring with glassy eyes. A FLASHBULB POPS,
rimming him with harsh blue light...

INT. E BLOCK - DAWN

overcoat.
guards
murmuring:

...as Hal arrives, wearing his pajama top under his
He sees the POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER taking pictures. The
are giving statements to GROUPS OF COPS, everybody

DEAN

...well, I dunno, he just snapped,
I guess...

HARRY

...s'right, one minute he's fine,
the next--blammo...

BRUTAL

...bastard grabbed him through the
bars a few days back, scared the
boy so bad he wet himself...

Hal turns, sees:

PERCY

than
sits handcuffed on the floor of the Mile, eyes glassier
Wild Bill's. TWO COPS are trying to snap him out of it:

COP #1

Son! Son! Can you hear me?

COP #2

Speak up if you can hear us! We
gotta ask you some questions!

shining a
A MEDIC is raising Percy's eyelid with his thumb,
penlight, getting no reaction.

MEDIC

I think this boy's cheese slid off
his cracker.

HAL

sees Paul, motions him aside to talk privately:

HAL

I'll cover you as much as I can,
even if it mean my job, but I have
to know. Does this have anything
to do with what happened at my

house? Does it, Paul?

comes Paul looks Hal in the eye. As with Bitterbuck, the lie
easy:

PAUL

No.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

hospital TRACKING A PAIR OF FEET shuffling into the room in
brought slippers, escorted by TWO ORDERLIES. The patient is
out the to a window. The orderlies turn to leave...
...and we BOOM UP to reveal Percy, catatonic, staring
same window where we met Wild Bill...

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

reveal his ...and we WIDEN SLOWLY from Percy at the window to
RIDGE last stop in life. It's emblazoned on the gate: BRIAR
MENTAL HOSPITAL. He finally got that transfer.

CUT TO:

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - DUSK

TIGHT ON PAUL as softly:

PAUL

It makes sense. I read the file.
Hal even said it himself. Wharton
rambled all over the state last
few years, causing trouble. Hell,
longer than that. Been at it since
he was ten. Vandalism. Petty
theft. Setting fires.

They're ANGLE SHIFTS to include Jan, Brutal, Harry and Dean.
house. in the brambly patch that borders the woods behind the
The sun is setting, turning the horizon fiery.

JAN

You saw him. You actually saw this Wild Bill person take those girls.

PAUL

Their father hired him on for a few days last spring, help repair the barn. Cheap labor, just another drifter...

BRUTAL

Only not.

PAUL

Sick bastard came back a month later, just before dawn. Took the girls...did what he did. Coffey found them afterwards and tried to help. It was too late.

JAN

(absorbs this)

Then you can stop it. The execution, I mean. Get Coffey a new trial.

PAUL

Based on what, honey? Some kind of magical vision I had?

JAN

Show this farmer--what's his name, Detterick?--show him a picture of Wild Bill.

(off their looks)

Why not? If Wharton was there...if the farmer can identify his picture and they know he was there...

BRUTAL

Him being there in May doesn't mean he came back and killed those girls in June. Even if he was committing other crimes.

PAUL

They got their killer as far as they're concerned.

Hell, Coffey's own lawyer would come throw the switch if we let

him.

JAN

Then lie.

PAUL

Lie? About what?

JAN

Tell them Wharton confessed to the crime. Brutus, you can back him up, say you heard it too. You can say that's what set Percy off. He shot Wharton because he couldn't stand thinking of what happened to those two little girls, it snapped his mind...

(seeing their looks)

...what? What now?

DEAN

We never reported anything like that. We would've, too, everybody knows it. It's part of our job.

BRUTAL

Besides, confessing don't make it so. Slugs like Wild Bill lie about everything. Crimes they committed, women they had, even the weather.

JAN

But he was there! He painted their barn! He ate dinner with them!

PAUL

All the more reason he might take credit for the crime. He's gonna fry anyway, so why not boast?

Jan stands thinking for a moment, then:

JAN

All right. Then you've got to get John Coffey out on your own.

HARRY

Ma'am?

JAN

You did it once, didn't you? Only this time, don't bring him back.

Dean blinks, stunned by this notion. Gently:

DEAN

Ma'am, your son's grown up and moved away. My kids are just starting kindergarten. Will you be the one to explain to them why their daddy's in prison?

JAN

Work out a plan. Make it look like a real escape.

HARRY

Better be a plan an imbecile could dream up. Nobody'd believe it otherwise.

BRUTAL

Even if we did think of something, it wouldn't do any good.

JAN

Why not? Just why the hell not?

PAUL

Because he's a six-foot-eight-inch baldheaded black man with barely enough brains to feed himself. How long you think it'd be before he was recaptured? Two hours? Six?

Jan swipes a tear away with the heel of her hand.

Softly:

JAN

Do you mean to kill him, you cowards? Do you?

Paul tries to take her hand. She wrenches away, furious.

JAN

Don't touch me! Next week this time you'll be a murderer, no better than that man Wharton, so don't touch me!

She runs off toward the house, starting to sob as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT PAUL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

regular
PLAYS
and

Paul is at the kitchen table in the wee hours, at his place, sipping his beer. Irving Berlin's "Remember" SOFTLY on the radio. Jan comes down, looking miserable exhausted.

JAN

I'm so sorry I called you a coward. I feel worse about that than anything I've ever said to you in our whole marriage.

PAUL

Even that time we went camping and you called me Old Stinky Sam?

offers

She can't help smiling at that. He returns the smile, her a sip of beer. She takes it, sits.

JAN

Does Hal know? That Coffey's innocent, I mean?

(Paul shakes his head)

Can he help? Does he have the influence to do something about this?

PAUL

No.

JAN

Then don't tell him. If he can't help, don't tell him. Ever.

PAUL

I won't.

JAN

(beat)

There's no way out of this for you, is there?

PAUL

No. I've been thinking about it, too, believe me.

(beat)

Tell you the truth, honey. I've

done some things in my life I'm not proud of, but this is the first time I've ever felt in real danger of hell.

JAN

Hell? Oh Paul...

(touches his face)

Talk to him. Talk to John. Find out what he wants.

CUT TO:

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

flitting
The
window.

Coffey sits quietly in his cell, a solitary firefly in circles around his finger. Paul and the men appear. The firefly flits away, vanishing through Coffey's tiny window.

COFFEY

Hello, boss.

PAUL

Hello, John.

Brutal unlocks his cell. Paul enters.

PAUL

I guess you know we're coming down to it now. Another couple of days.

(beat)

Is there anything special you'd like for dinner that night? We can rustle you up most anything.

Coffey gives it some careful thought.

COFFEY

Meatloaf be nice. Mashed taters with gravy. Okra, maybe. I's not picky.

PAUL

What about a preacher? Someone you could say a little prayer with?

COFFEY

Don't want no preacher. You can say a prayer, if you want. I could

get kneebound with you, I guess.

PAUL

Me?

Coffey gives him a look--please.

PAUL

S'pose I could, if it came to that.

Paul sits, working himself up to it:

PAUL

John, I have to ask you something very important right now.

COFFEY

I know what you gonna say. You don' have to say it.

PAUL

I do. I do have to.

(beat)

John, tell me what you want me to do. You want me to take you out of here? Just let you run away? See how far you can get?

COFFEY

Why would you do such a foolish thing?

right
Paul hesitates, emotions swirling, trying to find the words.

PAUL

On the day of my judgement, when I stand before God, and He asks me why did I kill one of his true miracles, what am I gonna say? That is was my job? My job?

COFFEY

You tell God the Father it was a kindness you done.

(takes his hand)

I know you hurtin' and worryin', I can feel it on you, but you oughtta quit on it now. Because I want it over and done. I do.

right

Coffey hesitates--now he's the one trying to find the words, trying to make Paul understand:

COFFEY

I'm tired, boss. Tired of bein' on the road, lonely as a sparrow in the rain. Tired of not ever having me a buddy to be with, or tell me where we's coming from or going to, or why. Mostly I'm tired of people being ugly to each other.

I'm tired of all the pain I feel and hear in the world ever' day. There's too much of it. It's like pieces of glass in my head all the time. Can you understand?

By now, Paul is blinking back tears. Softly:

PAUL

Yes, John. I think I can.

BRUTAL

There must be something we can do for you, John. There must be something you want.

up. Coffey thinks about this long and hard, finally looks

COFFEY

I ain't never seen me a flicker show.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON COFFEY'S FACE

a gazing with wide-eyed, open-mouthed wonder, the light of motion picture projector flickering on his skin...

INT PRISON AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

on the ...while Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dance up there big screen, images flowing in magical black and silver tone.

FRED ASTAIRE

(singing)
Heaven, I'm in heaven...and my
heart beats so that I can hardly
speak...

empty Paul and the men are scattered about in the otherwise
auditorium, also watching.

PROJECTION BOOTH

window Toot operates the projector, peering through the tiny
into the theater. He yawns, glances at his watch. Late.

IN THE AUDITORIUM

graceful Fred and Ginger are now in the most passionate and
part of the dance. Irving Berlin's music swells.

COFFEY

breath is can't believe what he's seeing. He's so excited his
caught in his throat. Softly:

COFFEY

Why, they's angels. Angels. Just
like up in heaven...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT

FOUR PAIRS OF FEET come marching up the Green Mile.

ANGLE ON COFFEY

as Paul appears at the bars with Brutal, Harry, and Dean.
Nothing is said. Coffey knows why they're here. He rises

steps Brutal unlocks the cell, slides the door open. Coffey
out, looks around at their dazed and sad faces.

COFFEY

I be all right, fellas. This
here's the hard part. I be all
right in a little while.

Paul indicates St. Christopher medal around John's neck:

PAUL

John, I should have that just for now. I'll give it back after.

start

John lets him take the necklace. Paul pockets it. They to walk the Mile as:

COFFEY

You know, I fell asleep this afternoon and had me a dream. I dreamed about Del's mouse.

PAUL

Did you, John?

COFFEY

I dreamed he got down to that place Boss Howell talked about, that Mouseville place. I dreamed there was kids, and how they laughed at his tricks! My!

He laughs at the memory of it, then grows more serious:

COFFEY

I dreamed those two little blonde-headed girls were there. They 'us laughing, too. I put my arms around 'em and sat 'em on my knees, and there 'us no blood comin' outta their hair and they 'us fine. We all watch Mr. Jingles roll that spool, and how we did laugh. Fit to bus', we was.

Behind them, Dean stifles a sob.

PAUL'S INNER OFFICE

uncertain.

Coffey kneels. Paul joins him, self-conscious and

PAUL

What should we pray for, John?

COFFEY

Strength?

Harry by

Paul nods--strength it is. Dean surprises Brutal and

also kneeling. Brutal and Harry hesitate...then join them.

PAUL

God, please help us finish what we've started, and please welcome this man, John Coffey--like the drink, but not spelled the same--into heaven and give him peace. Please help us to see him off the best we can and let nothing go wrong. Amen.

Paul starts to rise, but Coffey takes his hand.

COFFEY

I know a prayer I once heard. Can I say it?

PAUL

You go right ahead, John. Take all the time you need.

Coffey closes his eyes, frowning in deep concentration.

COFFEY

Baby Jesus, meek and mild, pray for me...

And Paul sees:

enclosed
Kathe and Cora Detterick kneeling together in the porch that night, just before their bedtime:

KATHE AND CORA

...and every child. Be my strength, be my friend...

And then the vision is gone as:

COFFEY

...be with me until the end. Amen.

Coffey rises, offers Paul his hand, helps him up.

EXECUTION CHAMBER

Full house tonight. Bill Dodge is waiting at Old Sparky.

Silence as Coffey is led in, all eyes on him. Klaus and Marjorie Detterick are in the front row. She mutters:

MARJORIE

Die slow, you bastard.

COFFEY

is faltering as Paul and Brutal bring him to the chair.

COFFEY

They's a lot of folks here hate me. A lot. I can feel it. Like bees stinging me. It hurts.

BRUTAL

Feel how we feel, then. We don't hate you--can you feel that?

Coffey tries to take comfort in it, but flinches as:

MARJORIE

Kill him twice, you boys! You go on and kill that raping baby-killer twice, that'd be fine!

She dissolves into tears. Klaus pulls her against his shoulder, looking dazed by the whole thing.

Paul and Brutal turn John around, sit him down. Paul notices Dean crying again, his back to the witnesses. They kneel to apply the leg clamps, while Brutal and Harry secure the arms.

PAUL

Wipe you face before you stand up, Dean.

They Dean nods, wiping his face with the sleeve of his coat. rise, stepping back. This time, Paul's out front:

PAUL

Roll on one.

and Van Hay cranks the generator. The lights flare hotter brighter. It's just like in Melinda's bedroom the night Coffey cured her with a kiss. Airless and bright, dreamlike.

MARJORIE

Does it hurt yet? I hope it does!
I hope it hurts like hell!

PAUL

John Coffey...you have been
condemned to die in the electric
chair by a jury of your
peers...sentence imposed by a
judge in good standing in this
state. Do you have anything to say
before sentence is carried out?

John hesitates, nods.

COFFEY

I'm sorry for what I am.

MARJORIE

You ought to be! Oh, you monster,
you damn well ought to be!

Coffey's
eyes.

Brutal takes the mask from the hook to draw it over
head. Coffey looks to Paul with terrified, pleading

COFFEY

Please, boss, don't put that thing
over my face. Don't put me in the
dark, I's afraid of the dark.

PAUL

All right, John.

Brutal puts the mask back, proceeds with the sponge.

IN TIGHT ANGLES

breathing

The cap is lowered, the straps drawn. Coffey is
fast, terrified, muttering under his breath:

COFFEY

...heaven...I'm in heaven...
heaven...heaven...heaven...

THE WITNESSES

sit and wait, barely breathing.

JACK VAN HAY

is poised at the switch, wondering why the order won't
come.

PAUL

is staring at Coffey, unable to say the words.

BRUTAL

(whispers)

Paul. You have to say it. You have
to give the order.

Their Paul
Paul
head:
Paul can't. He reaches out and touches Coffey's hand.
fingers clasp. In that moment, staring into his eyes,
hears the last thought that ever goes through Coffey's

COFFEY

(whispered V.O.)

He kill 'em with they love. That's
how it is ever' day. All over the
worl'...

locked
spoken:
Their fingers disengage. Paul steps back, eyes still
with Coffey's, and says the hardest words he's ever

PAUL

Roll on two.

fingers
shattered
Detterick's
all
pair
Van Hay throws the switch. Coffey surges forward,
splayed and jittering past Old Sparky's arms.
Lights begin blowing out all over the Mile, raining
glass and sparks. Some of the witnesses scream.
A thin line of blood comes trickling out of Klaus
nose. He reaches up, absently wipes it away.
Coffey's eyes are locked on Paul's, riding the lightning
the way. He finally slumps. Van Hay kills the current.
Coffey's expression is peaceful, as if sleeping. A final
of tears drift gently down his cheeks.

CUT TO:

INT. ACCESS TUNNEL - NIGHT

medal
Paul ever so carefully replaces the St. Christopher's
around Coffey's neck. They wheel him down the tunnel.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S MODEL T - NIGHT

Paul drives home, his heart numb.

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

then
Paul pulls in, cuts the engine. He sits for a moment,
gets out and heads for the house.

to
The door opens. Jan steps out in her nightgown and robe
meet him on the stairs. She takes him in her arms.

Paul can't hold it back anymore. He breaks down sobbing
against her as we

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NURSING HOME SUNROOM - PRESENT DAY

It's late in the day as:

PAUL

That was the last execution I ever
took part in. Just couldn't do it
anymore after that. Brutal either.
We both transferred out, took jobs
with Boys' Correctional.

(beat, nods)

That was all right. Catch 'em
young, that became my motto. Might
even have done some good.

ANGLE SHIFTS TO Elaine listening. Uncertain.

PAUL

You don't believe me.

ELAINE

I don't imagine you would lie to

me, Paul. It's just that...

PAUL

...It's quite a story.

ELAINE

Yes. Quite a story.

(pause)

One thing I don't understand. You said you and Jan had a grownup son in 1935. Is that right?

(Paul nods)

But if that's true...

PAUL

The math doesn't work, does it?

a She shakes her head. Paul thinks for a moment, comes to decision.

PAUL

You feel up to a walk?

CUT TO:

EXT. GEORGIA PINES - DAY

The rain has mostly stopped. Brad Dolan, back in street clothes, gets in his pickup truck and drives away...

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

...while Paul and Elaine watch from a window.

EXT. GEORGIA PINES - DAY

ridge This time, we see two red specks trudging slowly up the toward the treeline.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

the Paul brings Elaine along the wooded path into view of storage shacks. They're both wearing ponchos.

PAUL

There. It's in there.

ELAINE

Paul? This thing you want to show me. Is it scary?

PAUL

Scary? No. Not really.

He gives her a smile, offers his hand. She takes it.

INT. SHACK - DAY

We see Paul approach through the grimy window as before,
this time bringing Elaine. ANGLE SHIFTS to the door as they arrive, creaking open on rusty hinges to reveal them.

They enter. Elaine looks around at the musty nooks and crannies, wondering what they're doing here. Paul
touchers arm, directs her attention:

PAUL

There.

Elaine moves closer, sees it on the dusty floorboards:

An old cigar box.

For a moment, she doesn't know what to make of it.

PAUL

Hey. Wake up, old boy. Wake up.

Elaine's breath catches in her throat...

...as a pair of bright oilspot eyes peer over the edge
of the cigar box. It's a mouse. His fur, once brown, is now all
gray.

ELAINE

Paul? It isn't...it can't be...

Paul gets down on the floor, holds out his hand.

PAUL

Come over here, boy. Come on over her and see this lady.

The mouse tries several times to get over the side of
the cigar box before he finally makes it. He comes to them,

of hobbling and crippled with arthritis. Paul pulls a slice
mouse. toast from his pocket, breaks off a small piece for the

ELAINE

That can't be Mr. Jingles.

Mr. Paul says nothing, just pulls a spool from his pocket.
gets Jingles might be old, but he's as obsessed as ever. He
ready to fetch, eyes riveted to the spool. Softly:

PAUL

Messieurs et mesdames. Beinvenue
au cirque du mousie.

it. He Paul tosses the spool. The mouse limps painfully after
his reaches it, goes around...and has to lay down to catch
breath. Elaine starts forward, but Paul holds her back.
rises After a moment, Mr. Jingles finds his feet again. He
and starts nosing the spool back to Paul.

ELAINE

Oh, Paul. Don't make him do it
again. I can't bear to watch.

PAUL

(softly)
But he loves it so much.

He glances around at the shack with a sad smile.

PAUL

This isn't exactly the Mouseville
we had in mind...but we make do,
don't we, old fella?

BRAD (O.S.)

As I live and breathe!

They gasp and spin. Brad Dolan stands in the doorway.

BRAD

Fooled you, didn't I Got yourself
a little love nest here, I see...

He pauses, seeing Mr. Jingles.

BRAD

...what the fuck? Is that a mouse?

PAUL

Don't hurt him, okay? Okay?

BRAD

It's a goddamn mouse, y'old fool,
they carry all kind'a disease...

still Brad grabs an old garden hoe--the blade's rusted, but
sharp enough to cut a mouse in two.

BRAD

...now step aside.

Paul rushes in front of Brad, fists clenched, yelling:

PAUL

You leave him alone, Percy! You
leave him alone, or by God I'll--

Brad gives Paul a hard shove, pins him against the wall.

BRAD

Who you calling Percy? Name's
Brad, you senile fucker. And I'm
gonna nail that mouse, you can
take that to the everfucking bank.

Elaine is suddenly at Brad's elbow, seething with fury:

ELAINE

How dare you? Get out!

BRAD

Piss off, you wrinkeldy old bitch.
Me and Paulie are talking.

ELAINE

His name is Mr. Edgecomb. If you
ever call him Paulie again, your
days of employment at Georgia
Pines will end.

BRAD

Who the hell you think you are?

ELAINE

I am the grandmother of the man who is currently Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives. A man who loves his relatives, Mr. Dolan. All it would take is a phone call.

Brad's smile falters. Elaine steps closer.

ELAINE

At first I thought I'd let you be. I'm old, and that seemed easiest. But when my friends are threatened and abused, I do not let it be.

(icy beat)

Now get out, or you won't work another day here. Not another hour. I swear it.

Brad eases his grip on Paul...and backs off.

BRAD

Don't know what you're getting so het up about. Just a damn mouse.

ELAINE

Get out, you ignorant man. What little mind you have is ugly and misdirected.

Brad flushes red, heads for the door. He pauses.

BRAD

Don't bother coming back here tomorrow...Mr. Edgecomb Gonna be a new lock on this door. This is off-limits to residents, no matter what Mrs. My Shit Don't Stink has to say about it.

his And off he goes. Paul tries to control the shaking in hands, looks to Elaine.

ELAINE

Little trick I learned from Percy Wetmore.

PAUL

Is your grandson really Speaker of the House?

ELAINE

He is.

Paul bends down, picks Mr. Jingles up.

PAUL

You gonna thank the lady? She just saved your old mousie hide.

The mouse stretches his neck forward, nose twitching, smelling Paul's breath. Paul looks to Elaine. Softly:

PAUL

I think Mr. Jingles happened by accident. I think when we electrocuted Del, and it all went so badly...well, John could feel it, you know...and I think a tiny part of whatever was inside of him just leapt out...

(beat)

Me, I was no accident. John had to give me a little part of himself...a gift, like...so I could see for myself what Wild Bill had done. When John did that, a part of whatever power worked through him spilled into me.

ELAINE

He...what? Infected you with life?

Paul looks at the mouse, strokes him gently between the ears.

PAUL

That's as good a word as any. He infected us both, didn't he, Mr. Jingles. With life.

(beat)

I'm a hundred and five years old, Elaine. I was forty the year John Coffey walked the Green Mile.

ELAINE

...oh my God...

CAMERA PUSHES SLOWLY IN on Paul as:

PAUL

I haven't even had a cold since 1935. I've had to watch my friends

and loved ones die off through the
years...Hal and Melinda...Brutus
Howell...my wife...my son...

(beat)

...and you, Elaine. You'd die,
too, and my curse is knowing I'll
be there to see it...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Paul, dressed in a dark suit, comes up the aisle. ANGLE
SHIFTs to reveal Elaine Connelly lying in the open
casket.

PAUL (V.O.)

...that's my punishment, you see?
My punishment for letting John
Coffey ride the lightning...for
killing a miracle of God...

Paul lays a rose atop the casket.

PAUL (V.O.)

...you'll be gone, like all the
others, and I'll have to stay...

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Paul stands at the graveside as the casket is lowered.

PAUL (V.O.)

I'll die eventually, I imagine. I
have no illusions of immortality.
But I will have wished for death
long before death finds me.

He turns and walks away.

PAUL (V.O.)

In truth, I wish for it already.

INT. E BLOCK - NIGHT (1935)

Empty and silent. Young Paul walks the Mile alone,
listening
to the quiet. He pauses, seeing something. A whisper:

PAUL

Mr. Jingles?

under the
Paul

It is Mr. Jingles. The little mouse is peering from
restraint room door. He's come home, looking bedraggled.
bends down, gently picks him up.

PAUL

Where you been, boy? I've been
worried about you. You hungry?

Paul turns and head back up the Green Mile, carrying the
mouse cupped in his hands as we

MATCH DISSOLVE

TO:

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

mouse

Young Paul transforms into Old Paul in the dissolve, the
corridor of the Green Mile becoming the corridor of the
nursing home. He's walking along, holding the little
the same way he did over sixty years ago.

PAUL (V.O.)

I lie in bed most nights, thinking
about it. And I wait...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Paul lies awake, staring at the moon outside his window.

PAUL (V.O.)

I think about all the people I've
loved, now long gone.

I think about my beautiful Jan,
and how I lost her so many years
ago. I think about all of us
walking our own Green Mile, each
in our own time. But one thought,
more than any other, keeps me
awake most nights...

(beat)

...if he could make a mouse live
so long, how much longer do I have?

He looks over at the nightstand...

PAUL (V.O.)

We each owe a death, there are no exceptions, but sometimes, oh God, the Green Mile is so long...

his ...and WE PAN to reveal Mr. Jingles sleeping fitfully in cigar box, chasing that spool in his dreams as we

FADE OUT: