THE STAND

Part II

by

Stephen King

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

ACT 1

FADE IN ON:

1 EXT. THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE DAY

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

TITLE CARD: Ogunquit, Maine June 29

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

FRAN (voice; sings)
Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me...

INT. CANVAS, ECU

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

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

FRAN (sings)
I once was lost but now am found.
Was blind but now I see.

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

FRAN
I love you, Dad. Frannie loves you.

She starts sewing again. And humming "Amazing Grace."
EXT. THE GOLDSMITH DRIVEWAY

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

INT. THE STAIRWELL OF THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE, LOOKING UP

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

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

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

FRAN
I'm here, Harold.

EXT. AT THE KITCHEN DOOR, WITH HAROLD

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

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

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

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

HAROLD
Of course.

They start for the door, the body swinging between them.
EXT. THE GOLDSMITH HOUSE EVENING

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

INT. THE GOLDSMITH LIVING ROOM, WITH HAROLD

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

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

HAROLD is up with puppyish speed, trying to help.

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

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

EXT. OUNQUIT, FRANNIE'S POV NIGHT


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

INT. THE LIVING ROOM, WITH HAROLD AND FRAN

She's still looking out the window.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[With sappy intensity]
There must be a reason for it.

She misses this clumsy stab at romance entirely.

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

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

FRAN
But where? How do we connect with them?

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

HAROLD
Stovington. Stovington, Vermont.

FRAN
What do you mean, Stovington, Vermont?

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

FRAN (hugs him)
Harold, you're a genius!

HAROLD (sputtering happily)
Of course the disease center in Stovington might be deserted too...

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

CONTINUES
9 CONTINUES (2)

HAROLD
Can you drive a motorcycle?

FRAN (still bubbling)
Sure! Jess taught me!

HAROLD
He's your boyfriend, isn't he?

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

FRAN
Nope. Not any more.

HAROLD (tremendous shyness)
Maybe I...you know, maybe I could be...

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

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

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

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

FRAN (sits up)
Oh! I forgot!

HAROLD
What, Fran?

FRAN (gaily)
It's a surprise! Wait right there!

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

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

CONTINUES
9 CONTINUES (3)

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

HAROLD
Does it run on batteries?

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

HAROLD
Beach Boys! Yes!

FRAN
Awesome choice--we're not worthy.

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

10 EXT. FRAN DAY

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

FRAN
Harold! Be careful!

HAROLD
I'm fine, Fran. Really.

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

HAROLD
Well... what do you think?

FRAN
It's great, Harold.
The sign, which HAROLD has painted in huge letters, reads: HAVE GONE TO STOVINGTON, VT. DISEASE CONTROL CENTER LEAVING Ogunquit JUNE 30 FOLLOW US HAROLD EMERY LAUDER FRANCIS GOLDSMITH.

HAROLD (aw shucks, ma'am)
I didn't know your middle name, or I would have put that on, too.

FRAN
It's fine.

They start to walk through the field toward the main road (U.S. 1, most likely) where the red Cadillac is parked. Further up, we see an overturned schoolbus and a Dairy Joy. The Dairy Joy's big plastic cone has fallen into the parking lot.

FRAN
Have you been having weird dreams since the flu, Harold?

HAROLD
Huh?

The director will indicate to us in some visual fashion that this is a dream. HAROLD is wearing a pair of those pajamas--decorated with football pennants or maybe can-can girls--which are reserved strictly for fat introverts who live alone. He's walking down a row of corn.

FLAGG (friendly voice)
H Harold? It's you, isn't it? Glad to see you--how you doin?

HAROLD turns toward--

HAROLD turns toward FRANNIE, his face smooth and innocent.

HAROLD (lying)
Nope; just the usual mind popcorn.

FRAN
I have. Two of them. There's a man in one--a scary man. He's out in the desert someplace...he looks at me...
Again the director will make it clear that this is a dream. FLAGG is squatting, back to THE CAMERA, near a small campfire. Buttes and mesas loom ominously in the b.g. In the f.g. is FRAN, barefoot, wearing a nightgown. We hear the SOUND of a LONELY DESERT WIND.

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

SOUND: A LOW, DOGLIKE GROWLING.

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

HAROLD
He looks at you? Yes? And?

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

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

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

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

They reach the Cadillac.

HAROLD (very uneasy now)
That one sounds as weird as the one about the guy in the desert.

CONTINUES
16 CONTINUES

FRAN
No, this one's nice. She's nice. And what makes these dreams especially weird is that they don't fade like dreams usually do. I can't get over the idea that those people are real.
[Reacts to his look]
You don't know what I'm talking about, do you?

HAROLD (lying his ass off)
Nope. I wish I did, but--

FRAN (sighs)
Well, never mind. Let's go get us some rolling iron, Harold.

HAROLD
Now you're talking.

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

17

EXT. A MOTORCYCLE DEALERSHIP, LONG DAY

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

18

EXT. FRAN AND HAROLD, CLOSER

HAROLD (buckling helmet strap)
You ready?

FRAN
God, yes! Vermont or bust!

HAROLD
Let's go.

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

DISSOLVE TO:

19

EXT. A DEAD LION DAY

It lies on its side in a cage.

TITLE CARD: NEW YORK CITY JUNE 30

CONTINUES
19 CONTINUES

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

LARRY (shouts)
Hello?

20 EXT. VARIOUS VIEWS OF CENTRAL PARK

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

21 EXT. LARRY

He cups his hands around his mouth.

LARRY (screaming this time)
Hello, is anybody there?

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

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

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

LARRY (voice, closer)
Is anybody ANYWHERE?

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

NADINE
Over here!

23 EXT. LARRY ON THE CENTRAL PARK RAMBLE

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

LARRY
Where? Keep shouting!
EXT. NADINE, ON HER PARK BENCH

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

NADINE
I don't believe I need to.

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

LARRY (points at the .22)
You wouldn't shoot me with that, would you?

NADINE
Are you dangerous?

LARRY
Only to myself.

NADINE (puts the gun away)
Then I'm not going to shoot you. You look frazzled. Come and sit down.

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

LARRY
I can smell your perfume.

NADINE (smiles faintly)
It's Opium.

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

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

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

NADINE
So my gun might not be such a bad idea.

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

LARRY
You know, I've seen this guy.

NADINE (shudders)
How can you tell? His eyes are--

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

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

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

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

NADINE
It's not composure, it's shock.

LARRY
Tell me something.

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

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

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

LARRY
I'm not bad, Nadine.
24 CONTINUES (2)

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

NADINE
He reminded me of an insane Diogenes.

LARRY (uneasy)
Yeah...just lookin for an honest monster.

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

LARRY
What's this for?

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

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

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

NADINE
Maybe you're psychic.

LARRY
Maybe I am.

25

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

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

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

26

INT. UN, DEUX, TROIS, WITH NADINE

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

LARRY (voice)
How rare?

NADINE
Just run it through a warm room.

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

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

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

NADINE
Jeez, Louise.

LARRY
We have to get out.

NADINE
I beg pardon?

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

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

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

LARRY
What's that?

NADINE (with a challenging look)
Vitamin C.

LARRY
Oh. Well...

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

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

Another CHATTER OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE, this one more distant.

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

LARRY
Sure.

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

NADINE
Good. When do we go?

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

LARRY
The sooner the better.

NADINE
Where?

LARRY
West. Toward Nebraska. A town called Hemingford Home.

NADINE
Nebraska? Why there?

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

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

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

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

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

FLAGG (voice)
Nadine.

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

FLAGG
How I love to love Nadine.

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

INT. IN THE RESTAURANT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

NADINE (curt)
I don't dream. I never have.

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

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

LARRY (delighted)
Great!

CONTINUES
28 CONTINUES

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

FLAGG (faint voice)  
How I love to love Nadine...

DISSOLVE TO:

29  
EXT. A BRICK BUILDING IN A WESTERN CITY  DAY

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

TITLE CARD: PHOENIX CITY JAIL  JUNE 30

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

30  
INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY WING  DAY

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

LLOYD HENREID (voice)  
Hey! Hey, somebody let me out!

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

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

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

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

CONTINUES
30 CONTINUES

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

It's himself he's talking to.

LLOYD (very soft)
Starve.

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

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

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

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

32 INT. LLOYD

LLOYD
Good. Good. Glad to hear it.

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

LLOYD
Save the rest for later.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LLOYD
He will come. But you gotta believe.

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

LLOYD
Just in case.

33 INT. FOOT OF THE COT, LLOYD'S POV
There's a big dead rat lying there.

34 INT. LLOYD

LLOYD
Emergency supplies. You know.

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

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

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

CONTINUES
34 CONTINUES

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

35 EXT. THE CHEERFUL OIL REFINERY, LONG DAY

TITLE CARD: POWTANVILLE, INDIANA JUNE 30

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4th TEENAGE VOICE (female)
Oouggghh! Keep him away from me!
TRASH wheels around, terrified, confused, ashamed, and we get our first good look at him. If there can be such a thing as an intellectual imbecile, TRASHY is it. He's twenty-two and built like a football tackle. Tiny wire-rimmed spectacles bob up and down in the middle of his huge face. He holds the wrench up like a club.

TRASH
Stop it! Just stop it!

The voices LAUGH MOCKINGLY.

5th TEENAGE VOICE
Hey, Trash! Why dintcha burn up the school?

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

FLAGG (voice)
No one's there, Trash.

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

FLAGG (voice)
They're all dead and they can't hurt you anymore. Can't tease you anymore.

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

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

TRASH
There! Bumpty-bump! Dig your man!

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

TRASHCAN MAN unwraps the cord and begins to feed it into the pipe, continuing to sing his own peculiar version of LARRY'S hit song under his breath. When the cord is paid out all the way to the battery, he sets the clock's alarm to midnight and the hands to 11:58. Then he twists the wind-up key on the back of the clock several times. The clock starts to TICK. TRASHY stands up and backs away from it, his eyes wide.
This close, we can see the minute-hand moving. It's almost reached 11:59. Midnight is suicidally close.

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

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

TRASH (waking up)

Yuh!

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

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

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

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

As he crosses Route 130:

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

It explodes into a GIGANTIC FIREBALL.
EXT. TRASHCAN MAN

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

TRASHCAN MAN (shrieks)

MYXY LIIFE FORR YOUIUUU!

EXT. THE CHEERY OIL TANK FARM

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

EXT. FURTHER DOWN ROUTE 130

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

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

FLAGG (voice)

Trash. Trashcan Man.

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

TRASHY

What? Where are you?

He looks up at:

EXT. TELEPHONE LINES, TRASHCAN'S POV

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

FLAGG (voice)

Everywhere.
EXT. TRASHCAN MAN, ON ROUTE 130

He's totally blissed out.

FLAGG (voice)
I will place you high in my counsels,
Trash. And I will set you to burn.

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

TRASHY
My life for you. My life for you!

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

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 1.
It's one we've seen before, in the dream STU had just before DEITZ tried to kill him. We're looking down on it from a HIGH CAMERA POSITION which emphasizes the way the surrounding fields of corn make the clearing look like an island. There's only one tree—the hardy old survivor with the tire-swing hanging from it. Off to one side is a small building which can only be the privy.

TITLE CARD: HEMINGFORD HOME, NEBRASKA JUNE 30th

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

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

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

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

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

EXT. CORNFIELD, MOTHER ABAGAIL'S POV

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

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

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

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

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

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

51 EX. MOTHER ABAGAIL, CORNFIELD POV

SOFT SQUEAKS AND RUSTLES.

ABBY
Rats in the corn.

[She raises her voice]

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

[Back to normal tone]

Well-a-day.

She slowly begins to mount the steps.

52 EX. THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

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

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

CONTINUES
52 CONTINUES

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

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

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

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

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

ABBY (sings)
"Now is the needy time,
Lord, now is the--"

Breaks off in surprise and fear.

53

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

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

54

EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, ON THE PORCH

ABBY
The devil's imp! But I gct the Lord to protect me, n I ain't afraid of the likes of you.
55 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN

Rats SQUEAK and SQUIRM around his old cowboy boots.

    FLAGG (very low)
    I think you lie, old mother.

He raises his hands and holds them palms-out to her. There are no lines on those palms.

56 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

    ABBY (frightened but determined)
    Get thee hence!

57 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN

Those RED POINTS OF LIGHT appear in his eyes; he continues to hold his hands out to her.

    FLAGG
    Turn them away if they come, mother--
take my advice and turn them away.
If you come into the west, you'll
 die there. All of you will die there.

58 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

She begins to play her guitar and sing...to drown him out.

    ABBY (sings)
    "What a friend we have in Jesus,
    All our sins and griefs to bear..."

59 EXT. FLAGG, IN THE CORN

    FLAGG (closes his open hands)
    Your blood is in my fists, mother.

And blood begins to drip slowly from them.

60 EXT. ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

    ABBY (sings)
    "We should never be discouraged,
    Take it to the Lord in prayer."

Blood has begun to fly out from her strumming hand, splattering the guitar, beading up on the finish. She doesn't notice.

    ABBY (sings)
    "Are we weak and heavy-laden--"

She looks down at her guitar and dress, sees that both are spattered with blood, and gasps.
EXT.  FLAGG, IN THE CORN

He holds his dripping fists out in the gathering gloom.

FLAGG

Your blood is in my fists.

EXT.  MOTHER ABAGAIL, CU

Her fear leaves her, and her face fills with stern determination. This time she CLOSES HER EYES when she speaks to God, and she is clearly praying, not just making conversation.

ABBY

Dear Lord, take this evil vision from my sight.

She opens her eyes again, clearly confident FLAGG will be gone...

EXT.  THE CORNFIELD WHERE FLAGG WAS  TWILIGHT

...and he is. The PERSISTENT SQUEAK AND SCUTTER of RATS remains, however.

EXT.  ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

She looks down at herself and sees there's not a single drop of blood on her anywhere. Of course not--it was just FLAGG'S trick, and her prayer has rid her of him...or has it?

SOUND: SQUEAK AND SCUTTER.

EXT.  THE CORNFIELD WHERE FLAGG WAS

Rats flicker and twist at the base of the cornstalks, then DISAPPEAR.

EXT.  ON THE PORCH, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL

She looks up at the darkening sky.

ABBY

I'm scared, Lord. If it's your will to bring 'em on anyway, best do it before I lose my heart. Amen.

She begins to play again. THE CAMERA DRAWS SLOWLY UP AND AWAY until we're looking down at the house, as we were when we first came to Hemingford Home.

ABBY (sings)

"Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care,
There's a friend who never fails us:
Take it to the Lord in prayer."
INT. LLOYD HENREID'S JAIL CELL  NIGHT

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

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

INT. A COUNTY JAIL CORRIDOR

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

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

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

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

INT. LLOYD'S CELL

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

FLAGG (screaming)
Down here! DOWN HERE! Please!Please help me!

INT. THE HALL, WITH FLAGG OUTSIDE THE BARRED GATE

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

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

INT. LLOYD, AT THE BARS OF HIS CELL

As those RAPPING BOOTHEELS approach, LLOYD steps away from the
door of his cell. Now fear wars with hope on his face.
FLAGG appears, just a SHAPE at first, and walks slowly to the cell. At last he comes into a bar of light and we see his happy, hateful face. There are two buttons on his jacket. One shows the face of Jesus, the other the face of Angus Young (lead guitarist, AC/DC).

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

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

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

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

FLAGG
Tell me something, Lloyd.

LLOYD (starts)
How do you know my name?

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

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

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

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

LLOYD puts his hands over his face.
LLOYD (whispers)

Poke should be here, not me—everything was Poke's idea.

FLAGG

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

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

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

LLOYD (soft awe)

Wow!

FLAGG (does W.C. Fields)

Wait a minute, son...wait a minute...you ain't seen nuthin yet, like the man said...

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

LLOYD (wide-eyed)

My...dear...God!

FLAGG

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

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

FLAGG

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

LLOYD

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

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

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

LLOYD
No...we was just cellmates.

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

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

He points to the dead rat.

LLOYD
You bet I would.

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

LLOYD
Who?

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

CONTINUES
LLOYD (licks his lips)  

I...I promise.

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

FLAGG

You're free, Lloyd. Come on out.

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

LLOYD (whispers)

Mine?

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

LLOYD

Mine!

FLAGG (charming)

Shall we get some dinner, Lloyd?

LLOYD

You bet.

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

INT. THE CELLBLOCK CORRIDOR, WITH FLAGG AND LLOYD

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

FLAGG (happy)

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

LLOYD

Yes. You bet.

FLAGG (ferocious grin)

You and me, Lloyd. You and me.

They pass to the left of THE CAMERA and OUT OF FRAME. We DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. THE CORNER OF 7TH AVENUE AND 39TH STREET  DAY

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

TITLE CARD: JULY 1

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

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

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

He looks around at:

EXT. WEST 39TH STREET, WITH NADINE

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

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

NADINE (touchy)
My shoes are fine!

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

NADINE
Spare me the lecture.

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

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

NADINE'S anger collapses.

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

LARRY
Yeah, tell me about it.

NADINE
What do you mean?

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

NADINE
I don't!

LARRY
You mean you do and you don't remember.

NADINE
What I mean is I don't dream.

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

NADINE'S eyes widen.

77
EXT. THE DESERT NIGHT

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

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

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

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

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

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

NADINE (mourns)
Don't, oh please, it's cold, so cold, please don't...
80  EXT.  RESUME LARRY AND NADINE ON WEST 39TH

NADINE
I don't dream, I said!

LARRY
Nadine--

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

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

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

81  EXT.  NADINE, ON THE SIDEWALK

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

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

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

ACE-HIGH
That her?

RATTY
That's her. And that her friend.

He points to someone ACE-HIGH has missed.

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

LARRY comes hurrying after NADINE.

LARRY
Nadine! Hey, Nadine! Wait!

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

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

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

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

RAT-MAN
She ain't his. She ain't mine. She ain't yours, either. She's his.

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

ACE-HIGH
You really believe there is such a guy?

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

ACE-HIGH looks uneasily across the street at:

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

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

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

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

ACE-HIGH (sulking)
I want to mess with her. She's a fine-looking honey.

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

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

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

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

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 2.
ACT 3

87 EXT. LOOKING DOWN ON THE LINCOLN TUNNEL RAMP DAY

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

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

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

NADINE
I can't go down there.

LARRY
Yes you can. I'll be with you.

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

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

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

LARRY
I don't believe it.

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

LARRY
And you've had enough of that, too.

He snatches the bottle out of her hand.

NADINE
Give that back!

CONTINUES
LARRY

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

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

LARRY (startled)

Hey! Where are you going?

NADINE (walking)


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

LARRY

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

[She keeps walking]

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

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

LARRY

The hell with you, then!

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

LARRY

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

He looks at:

EXT. 11TH AVENUE, LARRY'S POV

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

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

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

LARRY (mutters)
Hell with you.

He turns and starts down the ramp again.

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

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

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

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

EXT. LARRY

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

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

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

EXT. LARRY

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

EXT. A WEST SIDE NEW YORK STREET, WITH NADINE

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

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

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

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

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

RATTY
No, little honey--bad idea.

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

RATTY
We from him, The Walkin Dude.

Now her face begins to fill with understanding.

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

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

ACE-HIGH
Yeah. Guess so.

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

NADINE
He yelled at me. And threw my medicine away.

RATTY (to ACE-HIGH)
He yelled at her!

ACE-HIGH (great dismay)

Oh!
RATTY
And threw her medicine away!

ACE-HIGH
Ohhhh!

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

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

RATTY (almost gentle)
Listen, bitch--don't you know who
you belong to?

The three of them stare at each other silently.

INT. THE LINCOLN TUNNEL, WITH LARRY

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

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

INT. TRAFFIC LANES, LARRY'S POV

The beam plays over cars that have become loaded hearses.

INT. LARRY, ON THE WALKWAY

He looks away quickly, wincing.

LARRY (mutters)
Don't look at em, stupid.

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

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

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

LARRY (shock)

What the hell--!

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

ECHO

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

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

TRAFFIC LANEs, LARRY'S POv

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

LARRY

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

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

LARRY (voice)

Huh?

ECHO

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

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

LARRY

Oh my God.

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

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

LARRY
Who's there? Identify your—

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

SOUND: SOFT, GRITTING FOOTSTEP.

LARRY (screaming)
Who's there? Answer or I'll shoot!

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

NADINE (screaming voice)
Larry! Larry, please, for God's sake stop shooting!

A beat of silence.

LARRY (shocked; stunned)
Nadine! Stay where you are! Do you hear me?

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

105 INT. THE WALKWAY, WITH NADINE

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

LARRY
Did I hurt you? Are you shot?

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

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

CONTINUES
105 CONTINUES

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

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

LARRY
What? What, Nadine?

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

NADINE
Are you still mad about the pills?

LARRY (hugs her)
No. Of course I'm not.

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

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

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

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

NADINE
Miracle cure, huh?

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

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

CONTINUES
NADINE
I say yes--right away.

He helps her to her feet.

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

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

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

He puts an arm around her.

106
EXT. THE JERSEY SIDE OF THE LINCOLN TUNNEL

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

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

NADINE
Oh, Larry. Oh, my God.

LARRY
Yeah. One thing about it, though...

What?

LARRY
New Jersey never smelled so good. Come on.

He leads her up the ramp toward the shattered toll-booths.
EXT. A HIGHWAY IN NEW ENGLAND DAY

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

TITLE CARD: SOUTH RYEGATE, NEW HAMPSHIRE JULY 1

GLEN BATEMAN (sings as he paints)
"Baby, can you dig your man...
Da-da-dum-dum if anyone can...
He's got some righteous glands,
So can'tcha tell me--"

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

STU (amused voice)
I don't think you're singin' that just right.

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

STU
Take it easy--I'm friendly.

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

GLEN
I certainly hope so.

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

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

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

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

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

STU
Think of it as home defense while on the road.

GLEN (relieved)
Glad to hear it. Glen Bateman, at your service.

He holds out his hand. STU shakes it.

STU
Stu Redman. Originally from east Texas.

He bends forward to look at GLEN'S picture.

108 PICTURE, INSERT

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

109 EXT. STU, GLEN, KOJAK

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

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

STU
Well...I suppose...

GLEN
Also, I play a mean game of cribbage.

STU (claps him on the shoulder)
On one condition--drop the Mr. Redman.

GLEN
It's a deal. Just give me a hand with my gear and we'll get going.
They are walking beneath an overarching canopy of old trees -- very pretty. GLEN pushes his bike along; STU walks beside him with his pack riding easy on his back; KOJAK pads along to the rear. They pass a car with the dry-rotted driver lying face-down on the ground beside the open door, but otherwise the world is silent and pastoral.

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

Both.

STU (after a pause)

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

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

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

STU (uneasy)
That's crazy.

GLEN
Isn't it.

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

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

He starts walking again. After a few moments, STU follows him.
EXT. A CORNFIELD, AT NIGHT

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

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

EXT. STU, AT THE EDGE OF THE CLEARING

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

STU
Who are you? Who are you really?

EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL

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

EXT. STU

STU
Yes, Boulder. But--

All at once he hears SQUEAKING and looks down at:

EXT. STU'S BARE FEET

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

EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, CU

ABBY (alarm, terror)
The rats are his!

EXT. STU

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

CONTINUES
117 CONTINUES

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

JANITOR (gurgles)
Stay away from her, east Texas.
Stay away or you'll all die.

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

FLAGG
The plague! The horror! Oh, the horror!

118 INT. A BEDROOM IN GLEN BATEMAN'S HOUSE

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

ABBY (echoing voice)
You come on along and see me. You and all your friends.

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

119 STU'S HAND, INSERT

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

120 INT. STU, CU

His face is thoughtful...beginning to believe.

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 3.
ACT 4

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

TITLE CARD: PIPERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA JULY 2

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

NADINE (voice)

No, Larry.

LARRY (voice)

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

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

122 INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

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

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

NADINE

No, Larry—not now—I can't.

LARRY

Sure you can.

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

NADINE (very upset)

I said I can't.

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

LARRY

I want you, Nadine.

NADINE

I know, but--

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

NADINE
It's just... too soon.

LARRY (gently)
Is it the dreams?

NADINE (freezing)
I told you: I don't dream.

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

She gives him a little hug, her face pleading.

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

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

LARRY
Sure. Time I got.

NADINE (smiles)
Thank you.

He gives her a kiss. A chaste one.

123
EXT. THE TENT BY THE ROAD LATER THAT NIGHT

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

124
INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

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

LARRY (in his sleep)
Who are you?

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

He's wearing whatever he was wearing when we saw him making
out with NADINE. He looks toward:
126 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL, LARRY'S POV

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

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

127 EXT. LARRY, SLEEPING IN THE TENT

LARRY (in his sleep)
Yes. Hemingford Home or Boulder...
one place or the other...

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

NADINE (sleeping)
Please...it's so cold...

FLAGG (persuasive voice)
No, it's not...it's warm.

NADINE (sleeping)
Warm...

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

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

NADINE
He's warm. Not you.

FLAGG (pulls her back)
Remember who you belong to, Nadine.
You are the promised one.

NADINE (struggling)
Why me? Who promised?

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

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

FLAGG
Nadine. My love.

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

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

NADINE
Yes. I'll be fine.

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

NADINE and FLAGG
--married.

NADINE (dreamily)
Married in the desert. With a billion stars all around. My love.

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

NADINE
I can handle Larry. I--

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

He turns away. She reaches for his bare shoulder.

NADINE
He's nothing but a boy--

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

FLAGG
Leave him. Do you hear me? LEAVE HIM!

Her face fills with horror, she screams--
INT. THE TENT, WITH LARRY AND NADINE

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

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

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

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

FLAGG (dim, echoing voice)
Nadine...

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

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

EXT. THE TENT NIGHT

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

EXT. THE MOON, NADINE'S POV

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

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

EXT. NADINE

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

CONTINUES
NADINE (low)

I'm sorry--but what has to be has to be.

She begins to dress in travelling clothes.

EXT. PIPERSVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA EARLY MORNING

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

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

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN to CU.

LARRY (sings)

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

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

LARRY

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

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

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

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

LARRY

Nadine!

He drops to his knees and shoots back into the tent.
The Stand, Part II

135 INT.  THE TENT

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

LARRY

Nadine?

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

136 THE NOTE, INSERT

Larry.

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

Much love.

Nadine

137 INT.  THE TENT, WITH LARRY

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

138 THE NOTE, INSERT

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

139 INT.  LARRY

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

DISSOLVE TO:

140 EXT.  THE SOUTH RYE GATE TOWN COMMON  DAY

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

STU (voice)

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

CONTINUES
GLEN (voice)
Why not? Always assuming we can
find a motorcycle with a sidecar;
I'm not leaving Kojak.

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

STU
You don't sound very enthusiastic.

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

STU
Pretty cynical, baldly.

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

GLEN
When I lose sleep, I get cranky.

STU (sympathetic)
Bad dreams?

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

STU joins GLEN at the rail.

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

GLEN (sour)
"Folks round these parts call me Mother
Abagail. I'm a hundred and six and still
make my own bread."

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

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

You are cynical, aren't you?

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

Vegas. I think he's in Las Vegas.

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

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

Well--

(holds up his hand)

Shh! Hear that?

GLEN doesn't at first, but KOJAK does, and so do we: MOTORCYCLES APPROACHING. KOJAK gets to his feet and BARKS.
STU, GLEN, and KOJAK approach the edge of the town common as two cycles sweep around the far corner and come up Main Street, swerving to avoid a few wrecks. It's FRAN and HAROLD. When she sees STU and GLEN, FRAN slows to a stop at once. HAROLD stops because she does. There's a degree of caution on both sides (as befits people who have been dreaming about that authentic American boogeyman RANDY FLAGG), but it runs the spectrum from FRAN, who is delighted to see living people (she's thinking a lot about her baby now, and the society which will be necessary to protect it), to HAROLD, who looks upon STU and GLEN (maybe KOJAK, too) as potential rapists.

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

HAROLD (looks pointedly at STU)
I see it.

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

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

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

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

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

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

STU
No harm intended here, Mr.--?

HAROLD
Lauder. Harold Lauder.

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

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

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

GLEN
Where are you folks headed?

FRAN Nebraska.

HAROLD Stovington, Vermont.

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

HAROLD
What's wrong?

STU
Going to Stovington would be a waste of your time.

HAROLD
I hardly think you're the best judge--

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

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

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

HAROLD (a little shrill)
The dreams are an aberration!

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

HAROLD (with no thought)
No!

CONTINUES
FRAN (shocked)

HAROLD

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

And STU suddenly realizes what this is all about.

EXT. STU AND HAROLD, CLOSE

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

STU

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

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

STU (with emphasis)

Last thing in the world.

EXT. FRAN, SQUATTING BESIDE KOJAK

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

RESUME HAROLD AND STU

HAROLD

You...mean it?

STU

I mean it.

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

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

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

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

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

HAROLD
It is good. Cold.

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

He sits nearby and drinks deeply from his own can.

HAROLD
I still want to check Stovington.

FRAN
Harold, why?

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

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

THE STOVINGTON DISEASE CENTER    EVENING

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

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

EXT. THE FLOWER-BED, STU'S POV

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

RESUME STU

He looks away quickly, wincing with disgust and dismay. He gazes back toward the building and sees:
149  EXT.  STOVINGTON MAIN ENTRANCE, STU'S POV

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

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

150  EXT.  HAROLD, CLOSER

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

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

STU

You still from Missouri?

151  EXT.  THE STOVINGTON DRIVEWAY  EVENING

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

GLEN

Kojak! Up, boy!

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

GLEN

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

STU

It fits.

FRAN

Can't we please get out of here?

STU

Yeah--let's go.

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

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 4.
152  EXT.  MAIN STREET OF A DUSTY LITTLE TOWN  DAY

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

TITLE CARD: MAY, OKLAHOMA JULY 4

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

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

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

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

TOM CULLEN (voice)
Hey, mister! Where you goin?

154  EXT.  NICK, STILL SPEEDING ALONG

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

TOM (alarmed voice)
Hey, mister! Watch out!

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

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

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

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

NICK winces back from the hand scrubbing his forehead.

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

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

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

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

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

[With some anxiety]
Do you like em?
156 CONTINUES

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

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

NICK nods and laughs silently.

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

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

TOM
Sure don't talk much, do you?

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

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

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

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

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

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

CONTINUES
156 CONTINUES (2)

TOM (at last)
I don't getcha, mister--sorry.

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

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

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

157

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

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

158

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

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

TOM
I got it, mister! I got it!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NICK shakes his head.

TOM
Guess we're stuck, huh?

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

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE MAY DRUGSTORE

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

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

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

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

160 EXT. MAIN STREET, WITH NICK

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

161 EXT. TOM

He grins and runs to meet NICK.

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

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

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

TOM
To see the old black lady?

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

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

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

CONTINUES
161 CONTINUES

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

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

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

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

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

162

EXT. THE ROAD LEADING OUT OF MAY AFTERNOON

MUSIC, UP TO FULL.

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

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

DISSOLVE TO:

163

EXT. A BARN DUSK

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

SOUND: CLUCKING CHICKENS as the TRAVELLING MUSIC FADES OUT.

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

SOUND: LOUD SQUAWKING as ABBY seizes that fifth chicken.

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

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

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)
Five good-sized fryers in the sack and
I ain't bleedin' no place. Praise God.

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

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

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

164
EXT. A DIRT ROAD, WITH MOTHER ABAGAIL   NIGHT

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

CONTINUES
164 CONTINUES

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

FLAGG (low, echoing voice)
Your blood is in my fists, Mother.

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

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

The townsack JERKS VICIOUSLY in her grip.

ABBY
Hi!

165 EXT. THE TOWSACK, ABBY'S POV

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

FLAGG (soft, echoing voice)
You were right, old woman--

166 RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL

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

FLAGG (voice continues)
--there are rats in the corn.

ABBY looks at the side of the road and sees:

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

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

168 RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL

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

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

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

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

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

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

FLAGG (soft, echoing voice)
Your blood is in my fists.

ABBY (closes her eyes)
Help me, Lord--be my sword and my shield.

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

ABBY
Be my staff!

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

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

ONE SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

The rats are gone.

RESUME ABBY

Still breathing hard, she looks on the other side.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV

Only corn lit by ghostly moonlight. No rats.

RESUME ABBY

ABBY
Thank You, Lord--thank You.

She bends over creakily and picks the dead rat up by the tail. She looks at it, shakes her head in disgust, then takes it to the side of the road and tosses it into the corn. As she starts to turn away, something else catches her eye. She bends down.
EXT...THE SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABBY'S POV
There are two clear tracks here. Cowboy boots.
RESUME MOTHER ABAGAIL

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

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

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 5.
ACT 6

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

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

TITLE CARD: PRATT, KANSAS...JULY 10

178  EXT.  THE BENCH, WITH NICK AND TOM

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

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

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

179  EXT.  PRATT DRUGSTORE, NICK'S POV

It's right across the street.

180  RESUME NICK AND TOM

NICK gets up.

TOM
Where you goin?

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

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

NICK trots across the street, headed for the drugstore.
INT. NICK, FROM THE DOOR OF THE DRUGSTORE

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

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

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

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

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

INT. NICK

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

INT. JULIE

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

JULIE

My God, are you real?

RESUME NICK

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

INT. NICK AND JULIE

JULIE

If you ain't a ghost, say somethin.

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

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

CONTINUES
JULIE

You a deaf-mute?

NICK nods, and JULIE caws incredulous laughter.

JULIE

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

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

JULIE

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

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

JULIE (giggling, of course)

Little distress of the lower tract?

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

187

TOM, THOUGH THE DUSTY WINDOW, JULIE'S POV

He's still sitting disconsolately on the bench.

188

RESUME NICK AND JULIE

JULIE (still looking out)

He's a moose, ain't he?

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

189

NOTE, INSERT

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

190

RESUME NICK AND JULIE

JULIE (mostly to herself)

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

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

JULIE
Do all deaf-mutes have such big guns?

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

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

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

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

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

JULIE (childish fury)
Dummy!

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

EXT. THE SIDEWALK BENCH, WITH TOM

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

TOM
It was the apples--laws, yes.

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

CONTINUES
191 CONTINUES

TOM

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

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

EXT. PRATT MAIN STREET, WITH JULIE

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

JULIE (to TOM)

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

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

TOM

Uh, yeah...Tom Cullen. M-O-O-N,
that spells Tom Cullen.
[To NICK]
I don't like medicine, mister--
laws, no.

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

JULIE

That's right--it's poison.

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

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

TOM

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

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

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

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

JULIE

You dummy freak bastard!

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

JULIE

You wouldn’t dare.

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

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

TOM

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

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

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

JULIE

All right! I’ll read your crappy note!

She looks down at:

NOTE, INSERT

We don’t need you.

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

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

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

JULIE
I'll make you sorry, you stupid freak.

[She begins to back away]

I will.

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

JULIE
I'll make you BOTH sorry!

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

195 EXT...TOM AND NICK ON THE BENCH

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

196 INT. A PRATT SPORTING GOODS SHOP DAY

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

197 EXT. ON THE BENCH, WITH NICK AND TOM

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

NICK points a finger at himself.

TOM (surprised)
You too?

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

. TOM (eager)
Laws, yes! Let's get out of this town before she comes back!

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

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

TOM
She's shootin' at us!

TOM runs for his life. NICK still looks puzzled.

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

EXT. THE INTERSECTING STREET, NICK'S POV

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

JULIE (voice)
Come on! Come on, let's see YOU run!

Another CRACK; another GUNFLASH.

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

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

TOM
Come on, mister! Come on!

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

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

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

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

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

TITLE CARD: 50 MILES WEST OF PRATT...JULY 11
202  EXT.  TOM AND NICK, CLOSER

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

TOM
Hot! Laws, yes!

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

TOM (points down the road)
What's that, mister?

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

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

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

204  EXT.  TOM AND NICK

TOM (awed)
What is it?

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

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

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

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

He looks doubtfully forward, at:

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

The reflection is closer now, tearing toward them.
EXT. NICK AND TOM

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

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

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

NICK flashes him a thumb-and-forefinger circle.

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

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

EXT. FURTHER UP THE ROAD WITH NICK AND TOM

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

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

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

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

DICK
How do you know?

RALPH
Be dog if I could tell you.

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

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

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

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

GINA (giggling)
M-O-O-N spells moon!

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

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

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

NOTE, INSERT

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

EXT. BY RALPH'S TRUCK

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

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

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

TOM
Nick Andros! How you doin, Nick?

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

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

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

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

RALPH
All aboard for Nebraska--right, doc?

DICK (a trifle prissy)
I wish you'd stop calling me that.

RALPH
Closest thing we got this summer. [Out the window]

What do you say, boys--all ready?

EXT. LOOKING DOWN THE HIGHWAY

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

FADE TO BLACK. THIS ENDS ACT 6.
ACT 7

211 EXT. LARRY UNDERWOOD, CU

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

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

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

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

TITLE CARD: DES MOINES, IOWA JULY 11

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

LUCY (trembling voice)

Excuse me?

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

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

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

CONTINUES
212 CONTINUES

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

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

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

LUCY (sobbing)
I'm so pleased to...to meet you...

LARRY
Same here, believe me.

He turns to JOE and holds out his hand.

LARRY
Hello, son.

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

LARRY
Whoa, son! I surrender!

LUCY
Joe! Put that away!

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

LARRY
Nice kid. Has he had his rabies shots?

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

LARRY
Haven't we all?
LUCY
I'm Lucy Swann. The boy...I found him in a supermarket in Iowa City. He was just wandering around and eating stuff. Back then he was almost feral.

LARRY
And you took him with you anyway?

LUCY
He would have died on his own.

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

LARRY
What do you suppose it was? Lightning?

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

LARRY
Yes. What about that?

He points toward the smouldering skyline.

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

LARRY
You think someone deliberately burned Des Moines to the ground.

LUCY
Yes.

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

I can't.

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

LARRY

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

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

LARRY (lame)

--instrument.

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

LARRY

Didn't I see this kid in Deliverance?

LUCY

I beg pardon?

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

LARRY

Never mind. [Looks off toward the skyline] Who'd want to burn a whole city to the ground, for God's sake?

LUCY

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

LARRY

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

LUCY

Screaming. Like a lost soul. Or someone in terrible pain. It went away in that direction. [She points] West.

They look at each other, and we
213   EXT. A DESERT HIGHWAY  NOON

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

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

TITLE CARD: THE UTAH BADLANDS  JULY 11

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

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

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

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

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

215   EXT. TRASH

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

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

TRASH looks left, toward:

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

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

217   EXT. TRASH

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

TRASH
My life for you! Bumpy-bumpy-bump!
My life for you! Bumpy-bumpy-bump!

CONTINUES
MUSIC: ACOUSTIC GUITAR, playing "Eve of Destruction" as TRASH starts walking toward the Vespa motor-scooter.

EXT. SIZZLING UTAH BADLANDS AFTERNOON

MUSIC IS LOUDER. In the f.g., the CROW is perched on a spur of red rock, watching the highway.

SOUND BELOW MUSIC: The WASP-WHINE of an APPROACHING SCOOTER, and then TRASHY SWEETS INTO VIEW. Imagine Karloff as Im-Ho-Tep on a Vespa, and you've got an idea of what he looks like. TRASH'S bandages--not to mention little strips and tags of burnt skin --flap in the slipstream. He is unconscious of his aspect, however; his mind is fixed upon Cibola, the fabled City of Gold. It lies ahead. It, and FLAGG.

TRASHCAN MAN (long scream)
Si-aaaaaaaaa-bo-laaaaaaaaa!

The CROW CAWS GRIMLY, as if in agreement, then flaps off. Acoustic guitar UP TO LOUD.

EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S HOUSE DAY

We're high above it, looking down. There's a feeling of peace and quiet here, as if the plague has been shut out. As if time itself has been shut out.

TITLE CARD: HEMINGFORD HOME, NEBRASKA JULY 12

SOUNDS of a MEAL BEING PREPARED; DISHES RATTLE, CUTELRY CLASHES.

MOTHER ABAGAIL (voice)
Now, Lord...if only that red tea made up nice...

INT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S KITCHEN

It looks like Thanksgiving Day dinner about twenty minutes prior to lift-off. The counter is covered with serving dishes and pots steam on the stove. Three of the chickens ABBY fought so hard to save sit on the butcher's block, roasted to a turn.

At CAMERA LEFT, a door stands open and three or four steps go down to ABBY'S cold pantry. She comes STRUGGLING and PUFFING up them with a big glass jug of red tea.

ABBY
Please Lord keep me from droppin it on the floor, if it be Your will.

CONTINUES
She CONTINUES TO AD-LIB PRAYERS as she sets the jug down and starts to pull pots off the stove.

SOUND, VERY FAINT: AN APPROACHING ENGINE.

MOTHER ABAGAIL

Now, Lord, I ain't got no corn yet, but I guess the men You're sendin--

She hears the APPROACHING MOTOR. Her face lights up with happiness and she heads for the door.

EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S PORCH

She hurries out, shades her eyes, and looks at:

EXT. THE LANE LEADING TO ABBY'S HOUSE, PORCH POV

RALPH BRENTNER'S truck approaches, throwing up rooster-tails of dust. RALPH waves his battered straw hat.

RALPH

Yeehaw!

EXT. ABBY

She smiles and waves back. Tears of happiness fill her eyes and trickle down her ancient, wrinkled cheeks.

ABBY

Praise God for bringin' em through. My Lord, I thank You so.

She descends the porch steps, clinging to the railing. The truck pulls into the dooryard and RALPH gets out at once. NICK and TOM are still in the bed of the truck. DICK ELLIS has joined them. Two newcomers, both women, are up front with GINA. OLIVIA WALKER, about fifty, has the little girl in her lap. The younger woman, a redhead, is JUNE BRINKMEYER.

RALPH

Hello, Mother--we never took a single wrong turn. Nick knew just how to come.

NICK is climbing down from the truck with TOM right behind him.

RALPH (continues)

Ralph Brentner. Pleased to meet you.

He starts to hold out his hand, then decides that won't do. He enfolds her in a gentle but enveloping bearhug instead.

CONTINUES
RALPH (deep emotion)
Good to see you, Mother.

TOM

Laws, yes!

RALPH lets go of her, and MOTHER ABAGAIL immediately turns to NICK. There is great power in their combined glance.

ABBY

Hello, Nick; glad to see you. God bless.

NICK is trying to convince himself all this isn't a dream. Then he hugs her and covers her cheeks with kisses. ABBY laughs through her tears. The others surround NICK and MOTHER ABAGAIL in a loose circle.

ABBY (just to NICK)

You done it, Nick--you brought em through. And you're the first of many.

NICK looks at her questioningly.

ABBY

Yes--they're all dreamin, and they'll either come to me--to us--or to him.

DICK

Mother Abagail...that's your name?

ABBY

Well, it's what people call me. And you're all welcome here. Our time is gonna be short, but we'll break bread together and have some fellowship, one with the other. There's a picnic table in the shed that'll do for all of us. Nick and Ralph, you bring it out. And this big fella here--

TOM

Tom Cullen! I dreamed about you, ma'am!

ABBY

Yes, I bet you did. You pick us some corn. These two women--

JUNE

I'm June Brinkmeyer. This is Livvy Walker.
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ABBY
Good to meet you both. You can help me serve out. There's plenty, praise God. The earth's been bountiful this year, plague or no plague.

GINA
Grammylady?

ABBY
What, honey?

GINA
Are you the oldest lady in the world?

OLIVIA
Shhh, Gina! That's not polite!

ABBY laughs and hugs GINA.

ABBY
Mayhap so, sweetheart. Mayhap so.

224 EXT. EARLY EVENING, BEHIND MOTHER ABAGAIL'S HOUSE

A fat red sun hangs just over the horizon. The remains of a huge meal litters a picnic table covered with a homely checked tablecloth. ABBY and NICK sit at the head of the table. DICK, RALPH, JUNE, and OLIVIA make up the rest of the company. Off to one side, TOM is pushing a laughing GINA in the tire swing.

DICK (calls)
Not too high, Tom! She's got one broken wing already!

ABBY
They be fine. My great-grandson Jim replaced the rope on that thing just before the plague hit.

RALPH
That was one dilly of a meal, ma'am.

GINA runs over.

GINA
Can I sit on your lap, grammylady?

ABBY
Well, come on up n let's see.

GINA fits MOTHER ABAGAIL'S lap just about perfectly, it seems.
JUNE
Come on, Gina--time to get washed up and ready for bed.

ABBY
I made up a cot for her in the room upstairs. You and Livvy can bunk in there with her.

JUNE carries GINA away. NICK scribbles a note which he now hands to ABBY. She holds it at arms' length so she can read it.

NOTE, INSERT
How long have you known we were coming?

RESUME GROUP AT THE PICNIC TABLE

ABBY
Let me ask you one--how did you know to come here in the first place?

NICK touches his fingers to his forehead, then points to her.

RALPH
He dreamed of you, Mother. We all did. You and the other fella.

NICK writes something else, and this time she doesn't have to hold the note out to read it.

NOTE, INSERT
Big capital letters: DARK MAN.

RESUME GROUP AT THE PICNIC TABLE

MOTHER ABAGAIL looks up from the note and meets their eyes grimly, one by one--NICK last.

EXT. THE MOON (M-O-O-N, THAT SPELLS MOON) NIGHT

CRICKETS HUM LAZILY in the corn. Somewhere an OWL Hoots.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY DOWN to ABBY'S porch. She's in her rocker. NICK sits in a kitchen chair beside her. RALPH leans against the porch rail; JUNE and DICK sit on the steps.

MOTHER ABAGAIL
I've been told that we'll be like a snowball rollin downhill, pickin up other people as we head west.
DICK
Told by who, Mother?

ABBY
Told by God. (Pauses) I tried not to hear what God had to tell me, but you see all the good it done. When God sends you your draft notice, it ain't no good askin' for a deferment.

ABBY turns to NICK.

MOTHER ABAGAIL
You been drafted, too, Nick. God has put His finger on your heart. But He's got more fingers than one. There are others, as well. There's dark work for you chosen ones ahead, Nick—dark and bloody.

NICK tears a note off his pad and hands it to RALPH.

RALPH
Ma'am, Nick wants to know how much you know about this dark man.

ABBY
I know he's the purest evil left in the world. But he'll call the rest; he's started already.

DICK
Maybe he's not real. Maybe he's just...you know...a bogeyman.

ABBY
You dreamed of me; ain't I real?

DICK
Well...

ABBY
He's real enough, and if we give him time, he'll come for me and for the people who cleave to me. It's our lot to deal with him. Don't ask me why, either--God don't explain his will to the likes of Abby Freemantle.

RALPH
If this is God's way, Mother, I wish he'd retire and let someone younger take the wheel.

CONTINUES
229 CONTINUES (2)

NICK scribbles something else, tears off what he's written, and hands it to RALPH. RALPH reads it and looks embarrassed. ABBY smiles, though—she knows what this is about.

    ABBY (to RALPH)
    Well?

    RALPH
    He says...he says he don't believe in God.

OLIVIA, who has just come out, stops where she is. The others hold their breaths, waiting for the explosion. Only NICK is is unafraid; he looks at her directly. ABBY bursts into hearty laughter and grasps NICK'S hand. She pats it.

    ABBY
    Bless you, Nick, but that don't matter. He believes in YOU.

    NICK'S smile fades and he looks at her with an expression of surprise...and perhaps a little awe, as well. He pulls his hand free, and jots quickly on his pad. This time he doesn't bother to tear the note off, just hands the whole pad to RALPH.

    RALPH
    Nick says if you're sure, we better start for Boulder in the morning.

    Amen.

230 EXT. MOTHER ABAGAIL'S DOORYARD AROUND MIDDAY

SOUND: The THUMP of a sledgehammer hitting a wooden post.

There are now two trucks parked in the yard. GINA and the women are in the cab of RALPH'S. Parked next to it is a new Chevrolet longbed which has been filled with a great many of ABBY'S possessions (most being brought along for reasons of strict practicality; the fact is, the old lady's got the best stuff for this strange new world). Sitting in a place of honor, roped down tight, is ABBY'S rocker.

DICK and RALPH stand next to the new truck. DICK is wearing the expression of a man who has finally gotten his dream truck.

    DICK
    Citizens' Band radio...four wheel drive...indie suspension...this baby's loaded!

    RALPH grins and pats his rusty old truck.

CONTINUES
RALPH
I'll stick with Lucille. We been around to the zeros twice together, and she never let me down yet. Tom! Hey, Tommy! Where you be?

TOM comes running out of the corn. Strands of cornsilk flutter from his shirt and his hair.

TOM
Here I am! I been scarin up crows!

RALPH (dry)
I bet. Get up in the back of mine, Tommy. Nick's gonna ride with Mother Abagail.

EXT. NICK, IN FRONT OF MOTHER ABAGAIL'S PORCH

His shirt is laid over the porch rail while he uses MOTHER ABAGAIL'S sledge to hammer home a signpost. The sign reads GONE ON TO BOULDER. MONITOR CITIZENS' BAND 14.

As NICK finishes and straightens up, he sees RALPH'S wave and returns it. MOTHER ABAGAIL comes out onto the porch. She's wearing a shawl and a mournful expression. She's holding her guitar as she starts down the steps.

NICK grabs his shirt, turns, and comes face to face with ABBY as she reaches the bottom of the steps. That sad, thoughtful look on her face is clearer than ever. NICK taps her forehead gently, then holds his hands out, miming "Are you all right?"

MOTHER ABAGAIL
I'm fine, Nick--just thinking about the home place.

She looks at:

EXT. A SEA OF CORN UNDER A SUMMER SKY, ABBY'S POV

It's beautiful--a perfect summer day in Nebraska.

ABBY (voice)
My daddy owned all this once...as far as your eye can see.

EXT. NICK AND MOTHER ABAGAIL

ABBY
When he was gone, my brothers lost it, a piece at a time, until only the home place was left.
She starts to cry. NICK slowly buttons his shirt, watching her with concern and sympathy.

**ABBY**

And what I told myself was, "Don't worry, Ab--they can take the rest, foolish men that they are, but I'll hang onto the home place--come what may, I'll hold onto this. I'll live here, I'll die here, and I'll be buried here, under the Nebraska sky."

She finds a tissue in the pocket of her housedress and slowly wipes her eyes with it.

**ABBY**

And now lookit this! Lookit my things settin out in the back of that damn truck! Ain't that some hot sketch?

She bursts into bitter tears. NICK puts an arm around her.

**ABBY**

Oh Nick, I have harbored hate of the Lord in my heart. I've seen a world where good works are paid for in pain and evil rides over the roads in Rolls-Royces. I don't understand nothing, least of all why God has bent His eye on me. All I know is He says, "Abby, the time has come to bend n lift, and it don't matter that you're a hundred and six years old. And don't question Me, because I'm the foreman of this operation." And I say, "Yes, Lord, Thy will be done," but in my heart I curse him and ask why, why, why.

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**EXT. RALPH AND DICK**

RALPH (shouts)

You guys comin? Daylight's wastin!

**EXT. NICK AND MOTHER ABAGAIL**

NICK waves back and turns his attention to ABBY again.

**ABBY**

The only answer I ever get is the same one Job got when God spoke to him out of the belly of the whirlwind--"Where were you when I made the world?" Don't question what you can't understand, in other words--just shut up n do your job.