

EMMA

By
Chris Rodgers

Chris Rodgers
(801) 856-8821
podger7777@hotmail.com

INT. PSYCH WARD - DAY

Rays of cloudy light illuminate a polished green corridor through windows surrounded by steel bars.

Wearing pajamas and slippers, JOHNNY, a young man in his early twenties, gaunt, something lost behind his eyes, walks slowly toward double metal doors.

A banging noise and a man and woman yelling at each other can be heard from some distant corridor.

He stops and turns to look behind him, then runs down the remainder of the hallway until pushing through the double doors.

EXT. RURAL WESTERN UNITED STATES - DAY

Johnny, wearing a large backpack, walks down the main street of a small town. A mirage glistens in the road ahead of him. His shirt and face are covered in a greasy sweat.

He stops next to a green sign.

It reads: HANNAH'S BOWL, POP 501.

He continues down the road.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - DAY

As Johnny walks through the glass door in the front of the building, a bell tied to the door JINGLES. He lets out a sigh of relief, happy to be out of the heat.

The tables and benches of the establishment are a variety of seven different faded colors.

He throws his backpack onto one of the benches.

Nobody is in the restaurant except Johnny and a goofy looking young man named DARRELL, twenties, who stands behind the counter.

Darrell wears a tight pair of jeans, a Clown Burger shirt that is too small for his large belly, and a pair of thick square glasses. He has a slight mustache, a flat top, and

a ducktail. He almost looks like a hipster, but without the irony.

Johnny walks up to the counter to order.

He looks up at the giant menu hanging above him, stares at it briefly, then gives up.

JOHNNY

(in a hoarse voice)

Um, can I just have a cheeseburger
combo with a Coke?

DARRELL

I'm sorry, we don't have combos.

Johnny looks up at the menu again.

JOHNNY

Oh. Well, can I get a cheeseburger,
a medium french fry, and make the
drink a large.

Darrell looks down at the register.

DARRELL

What kind of drink sir?

JOHNNY

Coke.

DARRELL

Is Pepsi O.K.?

JOHNNY

Pepsi?

Darrell nods.

JOHNNY

Come on. I just walked--never mind,
give me a root beer.

DARRELL

Good choice, sir.

JOHNNY
You don't have to call me sir.

DARRELL
Okay.

JOHNNY
Why would you say that root beer is
a good choice? What makes root
beer so great?

DARRELL
I just like it.

Johnny stares at a Darrell. An awkward moment.

JOHNNY
Oh.

DARRELL
That will be four dollars and
twelve cents.

Johnny opens his wallet. It holds only a five-dollar bill.

He pulls it out and hands it to Darrell.

Darrell opens the register. CHING.

He hands Johnny his change.

DARRELL
Eighty-eight cents. I'll call your
number when it's ready.

Johnny takes another look around. He is still the only
person in the building.

DARRELL
(into a microphone)
One cheeseburger, one medium fry.

Darrell walks into the back and begins to cook.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - LATER

Johnny sits at a faded orange table eating his lunch.

He looks out the window and examines the town.

It seems to be deserted. The Buildings are old and run down. The streets are worn.

He shoves a few fries into his mouth, then gets up and walks over to the counter where Darrell stands doing absolutely nothing.

JOHNNY

Does this place ever get busy?

DARRELL

Oh yeah, we're the only fast food restaurant in town.

JOHNNY

Well, where is everybody?

DARRELL

It's only 10:30 in the morning, sir.

Johnny looks at his watch.

JOHNNY

So it is. Why do you open so early?

DARRELL

We don't open 'til noon.

JOHNNY

But I just--

DARRELL

Lock on the door is broken.

JOHNNY

Uh huh. Can I get an application for work? Do you need help?

DARRELL

Yeah, I guess so. Will you be stayin' here in town?

JOHNNY

Know of anywhere I could stay on a week-to-week rent?

DARRELL

Well, there's a motel, but if you're plannin' on stayin' awhile, I'd try Chuck and Mary's house. They have an extra room and they've rented it out before.

JOHNNY

Thanks, I'll do that.

Johnny turns to go back to his table, but Darrell isn't finished.

DARRELL

My brother says they're millionaires.

Johnny keeps walking.

JOHNNY

Huh.

DARRELL

Yup.

EXT. CHUCK AND MARY'S HOME - DAY

Johnny walks up the pathway to the front yard.

The house is older and a little larger than the houses that surround it. Victorian in style, weather torn, and in need of a paint job. It has a haunted feel to it.

Weeds have grown up through the boards of the porch and they cling to the front door in such a manner that it's obvious this door has not been used in quite some time.

Johnny steps up onto the wooden porch and looks for a doorbell. There isn't one so he knocks loudly.

MARY (O.S.)

Who the fuck is that? We don't use that door.

Johnny looks around nervously.

JOHNNY

I'm here about renting a room!

MARY

Well, go around back!

Johnny step off the porch heads around the side of the house.

The side of the house is even worse than the front. The weeds grow so high he can barely make his way through them.

The backyard has a picnic table covered in all kinds of clutter. Next to it is a rusted tractor. The rest of the yard is littered with various kinds of junk.

Two cats run from him and hide in the shade underneath the tractor.

The back porch is similar to the front, only larger and surrounded by a screen to keep bugs out, but the screen is torn in a hundred different places.

He steps onto the porch to knock, but before he can the door is flung open by MARY, a frightening woman in her early fifties with wild gray hair and a muumuu style dress.

Behind her stands CHUCK, a man in his early thirties, wearing nothing but a pair of white briefs. One side of his body has severe burn scars.

She stares at Johnny inquisitively.

JOHNNY

Hi, I'm Johnny.

INT. ATTIC BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny enters the bedroom alone, and throws his pack onto the bed.

He reaches down and pulls some clothing out of the pack and lays it on the bed, then reaches into the pack again, this time coming up with a black pistol.

He looks at it for a moment, then opens a zipper on the side of the pack and stashes the gun there.

On the other side of the pack he opens a different zipper and brings out a plastic soapbox.

He shakes it. RATTLE, RATTLE.

He opens the box revealing thirty, or so, long red and white pills.

He grabs one, plops it into his mouth and swallows, then throws the box onto the bed.

He looks around the room, then walks over to a window and looks out.

He stares out the window for a moment, looking out over the front yard, then turns back to the bed.

Something catches his eye and he turns to the foot of the bed and stares in wonder at the something on the wall in front of him.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - EVENING

Johnny walks through the entrance as the bells on the door jingle behind him.

There are only a couple of customers in the establishment.

Johnny looks over at one of them, CLYDE, a farmer looking man in his forties with a gray beard and overalls.

Johnny stares at the man intensely for a moment, then walks up to the counter and looks around for Darrell.

JOHNNY

Darrell! Are you back there?

Darrell walks up from around back. He wears the same gray wranglers, cowboy boots, and clown burger shirt from before.

DARRELL

Come on back.

JOHNNY

What's he doing here?

Johnny motions his head to Clyde.

DARRELL

Who?

Johnny stares at Clyde.

JOHNNY

I'm not talking to him.

The bells to the entrance jingle as JUSTIN, a slightly older version of Darrell, wearing tight gray wranglers and cowboy boots walks through the door. There is an uncommonly large bulge in his midsection.

JUSTIN

Darrell, you mother fucker! Make me a double cheeseburger with extra cheese, no pickles, no lettuce, and no tomato. You know how I like it.

DARRELL

Come back here and make it yourself.

Justin makes a quick motion towards the counter.

Darrell flinches.

JUSTIN

(gritting his teeth)

Fuck you, Darrell. I'll come back there and fucking kill you, and then I'll tell mom that you wouldn't make me a burger, and I'm a customer now, so shut up and go make it. I ain't workin' tonight.

Darrell stares at Justin intensely. Justin acts as if he's going to jump over the counter.

DARRELL

All right, all right.

Darrell hurries away but slips on some grease in his cowboy boots and hits a tray full of spatulas, ladles, and silverware on the way down. They crash down on top of him in a clamor.

Darrell lies on the ground amidst the utensils.

Justin walks away laughing.

JUSTIN
Oh, you dumb fat fucker, you better
check your pants for shit.

DARRELL
(mumbles)
Fuck me.

JUSTIN (O.S.)
I heard that you dumb shit, I'll
tell mom.

Darrell gets up and looks at Johnny.

DARRELL
That's my brother.

Johnny nods.

JOHNNY
I'm going to use the bathroom
before we get started.

Darrell rubs his sore ass.

INT. CLOWN BURGER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Johnny walks into the bathroom to find Justin using the
urinal.

There is a rolled up tube sock on the sink.

Justin zips himself up, then shoves the sock down into his
wranglers.

He notices Johnny staring at him.

JUSTIN
Shut the fuck up.

Justin leaves the bathroom.

JUSTIN (O.S.)
Darrell! Is that burger done yet?

Johnny walks over to the sink and pulls the soapbox out of his pocket.

He opens it and plops a pill into his mouth.

He leans down and turns on the faucet, then scoops up some water with his hands and drinks from them.

He splashes water onto his face, then looks into the mirror, leaving the water running.

EXT. CHUCK AND MARY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Johnny walks up the steps of the back porch.

One of the steps crack and a cat comes screaming out from underneath the porch.

Johnny jumps and looks around stunned for a moment, then walks into the house.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Johnny steps from outside directly into the kitchen.

In front of him and to the left is a sink filled with dirty dishes and rancid water. The dishes tower above the upper lining of the sink.

Straight ahead is the doorway from the kitchen to the living room. There is no door on the hinges, so Johnny can see Mary sitting on the couch watching TV.

It sounds like reruns of The Munsters.

To the right of him sits Chuck.

He sits in his briefs at the kitchen table, trying to give one of their cats a haircut with a pair of wire cutters.

JOHNNY

Hi, Chuck. What are you doing?

CHUCK

(mumbles)

Fucking cats...hair all over...
damn things.

Directly to the left of Johnny are an archway and the landing to the foot of the stairs, and on the other side, a bathroom door.

Johnny walks through it and heads up the stairs to his bedroom.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny walks into the room and shuts the door behind him.

He opens the window and lies down on the bed.

There is no TV in the room so he stares at the mysterious thing that hangs on the wall at the end of his bed.

He leans over, opens the drawer of his nightstand, and pulls out a pipe and a bag of marijuana.

He stuffs the pipe and smokes.

Downstairs Mary yells at Chuck.

MARY (O.S.)

Chuck! Have you told that Goddamn freeloader he hasn't paid us for groceries yet?

CHUCK (O.S.)

Honey I told you, he's been eatin' at the Clown Burger every night since he got here.

Johnny lies on his bed listening and smoking his pipe.

MARY (O.S.)

I don't give a shit where he decides to throw his money! I've been buyin' groceries for three and I expect to be reimbursed, or he can get the hell out. Also, it's his turn to clean the bathroom--

INT. BATHROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Johnny opens the bathroom door and stops in his tracks.

He grimaces at what he sees.

Gray hair from all parts of Mary's body clings to the toilet and sink. The shower curtain has yellow/brown streaks crawling down it. A greasy film of old used soap covers the linoleum, and the sink is backed up so horribly, that sewage is starting to leak onto the floor.

He slams the door shut and walks out the back door.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Johnny walks over to a tree and relieves himself.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mary, now in the kitchen, continues to yell at Chuck while he continues to struggle with the cat.

MARY

--so if you don't say something to him tomorrow, both of your sorry asses are gonna' be sleepin' in the street.

Mary stares at him for a moment with a subtle look of pity. Then walks over to the counter and opens a drawer.

MARY

If you insist on cutting the cats Hair...

She pulls out a pair of scissors and hands them to chuck.

MARY

...use scissors.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny sits on the bed listening to the two downstairs. The dialogue stops so he turns his attention back to the wall at the end of his bed.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Johnny unpacks his backpack. Chuck stands by the side of the bed in an open robe with nothing but a pair of briefs underneath. He looks as though he might help but he doesn't.

Johnny looks up at the wall at the end of the bed.

JOHNNY

What is that?

Chuck looks over at the wall and smiles.

CHUCK

Couldn't tell ya, but it beats
havin' a TV, doesn't' it?

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny takes the last hit from his pipe, places it on the nightstand, and grabs his pillbox.

He shakes it. One pill rattles around loosely.

He opens the container and drops the single pill into his hand

He stares at it a moment, then tosses it out the open window.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Johnny and Chuck sit on the couch. Mary sits alone on the love seat. Their faces illuminated by the blue light of the television in the otherwise dark room.

All three appear to be uncomfortable.

CHUCK

Where exactly do you come from,
Johnny?

JOHNNY

Lots of places.

Chuck thinks about this for a moment.

CHUCK
Have you seen Emma yet?

Mary shoots Chuck a dirty look.

MARY
If you're gonna' talk about that
dumb ghost, then I'm goin' to bed.

Mary gets up and walks towards the bedroom.

CHUCK
Fine with us.

Chuck looks over at Johnny.

CHUCK
She's a ghost.

Mary stops in the archway of her bedroom door to listen.

CHUCK
I've seen her up in my office a
couple a times. That's the room
next to yours.

MARY
That isn't your office you fuckin'
idiot. That's my storage room. And
I better not find either of you in
there.

Chuck ignores her.

CHUCK
And one night, she sat right where
you're sittin' now and watched TV
with me.

Johnny smiles at Chuck.

Mary stands in the archway still listening.

Chuck glances at her for a split second then leans towards
Johnny.

CHUCK
(whispering)
She even showered with me once.

MARY
That's enough. I'm going to bed.

Mary slams the door behind her.

Chuck stares at Johnny intensely.

Johnny stares back.

CHUCK
True story.

INT. PSYCH WARD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Johnny sits on his bed looking out of the barred window.

Someone screams incessantly in another part of the ward.

JOHNNY
Shut the fuck up!

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny lies sleeping in his bed.

The blue light of the moon, shining outside of his bedroom window, illuminates the room.

His name is whispered lightly, almost inaudible.

He opens his eyes slowly, a look of confusion.

Raising his head off of the pillow, he looks around the room.

It appears to be empty.

The floor in the hallway outside his bedroom CREAKS.

He darts his gaze in the direction of his bedroom door.

Footsteps creak their way down the hall, making their way ever closer to his bedroom door.

Johnny watches the crack of light between the door and the carpet slowly disappear as a shadow overcomes it.

The footsteps stop.

His name is whispered again.

He quickly turns his attention back to the end of the bed.

A young girl wearing a white button down shirt and black panties stands before him.

He jumps up and struggles to turn on the lamp that sits on his nightstand.

The room fills with light when it finally clicks on.

The room is empty.

Breathing heavily, he scans the room over and over again. Empty.

He looks over at the bag of marijuana sitting on his nightstand.

He opens up the nightstand drawer, tosses the baggie in and slams the drawer shut, then switches the lamp off and goes back to bed.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Johnny walks out of his bedroom and stops at the foot of the stairs.

He looks down the hall towards the door to the room next to his.

Suddenly there is a slam against the door. BOOM!

Johnny flinches.

He stares down the hall terrified.

BANG!

Again, but different this time.

He jumps again then looks down the stairwell.

Mary is standing at the foot of the stairs next to the bathroom door. She pounds her fist against the door.

BANG!

MARY

Chuck, get outa' there. If I hafta smell your rotten ass one more day of my miserable life, I'm just gonna' die.

She looks up at Johnny standing at the top of the stairs, watching her.

MARY

(annoyed)

What?

They stare at each other.

MARY

Well come on down and have your coffee like you do every fuckin' morning.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - DAY

Johnny and Darrell clean the grills. Johnny stops.

JOHNNY

What do you plan on doing with your life, Darrell?

Darrell continues to grind the grill brick against the grill.

DARRELL

I don't know. Nothing. How 'bout you?

JOHNNY

I guess I'm trying to figure that out. That's why I'm out here in the middle of nowhere. You know?

Darrell nods. Johnny goes back to cleaning the grill.

JOHNNY

I'm just wondering if you have any plans, or if you're just going to work at a fucking burger restaurant in a shit hole town with an asshole brother for the rest of your life.

JUSTIN (O.S.)

Fuck you!

Justin appears behind them.

JUSTIN

What the fuck are you doing with your life? Travelin' around from town to town actin' like a fuckin' weirdo to everyone you meet. You don't know shit about fuckin' nothin'. Darrell's mom is sick and if he ever even thinks about doin' anything 'cept workin' like the fuckin' greasy bastard he is, I'll find him and kill him.

Darrell continues to clean the grill but has slowed his motions.

Johnny stares at Justin.

DARRELL

He's just makin' conversation, Justin.

JUSTIN

(mocking)

He's just makin' conversation, Justin.

(back to normal)

You little queer. Who's your brother? Me or this fuckin' weirdo?

Darrell continues to clean the grill.

Justin grabs a chunk of flesh from his side and squeezes.

JUSTIN
Who's your brother, Darrell?

Darrell lets out a yelp.

DARRELL
You are! Now fuckin' let go!

Justin let's go and gets his face close to Darrell's.

JUSTIN
What did I tell you about talkin'
like that, Darrel? Mom would be
sicker 'an she already is.

Justin looks up at Johnny.

JUSTIN
You're gonna help me empty a grease
barrel.

EXT. BEHIND CLOWN BURGER - DAY

Johnny and Justin carry a big drum, half full of grease.

JUSTIN
You need to stop talkin' like a
fuckin' poet to my brother. I
don't need him thinkin'. Nobody
does. You want to talk to him,
talk to him about pussy. I swear
to God that kid has weirder
thoughts than even you.

They come to a drain and set the drum down.

JUSTIN
Now, I'm gonna get my arm under
this thing and hold it up. You
need to hold it from the top though,
cause it's heavier than my dick,
and we're gonna pour it in the
drain.

Johnny stares down at the drain.

JOHNNY

Are you supposed to pour grease
down there?

Justin looks up at him.

JUSTIN

Don't give me that green-peace-corp
shit and just hold your fuckin' end
up.

They pour the grease into the drain. Justin's arm wrapped
around the underside.

Justin grimaces.

JUSTIN

Goddamn, this shit smells worse
than my balls.

JOHNNY

Your balls smell like a couple of
tube socks rolled together.

Justin looks up at him. The drum slips from Johnny's
hands.

CRUNCH.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny turns on the lamp, gets out of bed and walks over to
the wall at the end of his bed.

He stands in his boxers, his ear against the wall,
listening to strange noises coming from the room next door.

The sound of someone restlessly looking for something and
whimpering.

Johnny looks over at the alarm clock on his nightstand.
2:01 A.M.

The noises stop. Complete silence.

Johnny moves his ear closer to the wall.

BANG!

Johnny jumps backwards. The wall shakes.

Silence again.

Johnny puts on a pair of pajama pants, opens the door to his bedroom, and steps into the dark

HALLWAY

Johnny walks down the dark hallway, past the staircase and a vacuum, to the room next door to his. He stares at the closed door for a moment.

The noises have stopped.

He reaches out and grabs the doorknob but instantly recoils.

He rubs the palm of his hand, then makes it into a fist and blows warm air into it.

He reaches into his pajama pants and using the material as a glove, grabs the knob again and quickly turns it, opening the door.

The door SQUEAKS open.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT

Johnny steps through the threshold, hugging himself, and flips on the light.

Just as the light comes on, it pops and covers the room in darkness.

Silhouette's of boxes, backlit by the blue light of the moon coming in through the window, pervade the room.

The crinkling of plastic comes from behind one of the boxes.

Johnny moves toward the sound until finding a dark mass that appears to be covered in plastic. The plastic moves slightly.

He bends forward to get a closer look.

The plastic moves more quickly and dramatically this time, revealing a young woman's suffocated face behind the foggy material.

Johnny jumps backward in abject horror.

The silhouette of a young woman, bleeding, her head wrapped in plastic, emerges from the darkness.

Her long, dark, moist hair hangs out of the plastic. Her skin the color of fog in headlights. She walks slowly toward him from the back of the room.

Johnny steps backward slowly, keeping his eyes on her, then trips over a box and falls to the floor.

JOHNNY
(panicked)
Jesus Christ.

The door shuts behind him. He stumbles over boxes to get up.

The Girl moves slowly closer.

The sound of plastic crinkling. He falls over another box.

Reaching the door, he looks over his shoulder, makes a whimpering sound, then flings the door open and runs out into the

HALL

He rushes out of the room, running sideways, trying to keep an eye behind him and immediately trips over the vacuum and falls down the staircase, tumbling.

He hits his head into the wall at the bottom of the stairs with a THUD.

Struggling with consciousness, he looks up to the top of the stairs.

A dark silhouette appears, then descends.

Johnny screams as the body moves closer.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny sits strait up in bed and looks around the room.

Empty.

His sheets are strewn all over the bed. His body covered in sweat.

The alarm clock reads 7:14 A.M.

He jumps out of the bed wearing nothing but a pair of boxer shorts.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Johnny throws the door open and looks into the room. It's full of boxes like the night before, but is otherwise empty.

He shuts the door.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny walks into the room, opens the nightstand drawer, pulls out his bag of marijuana and his pipe, and throws them in the trashcan.

He fixes his sheets, crawls under them, and goes back to bed.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny slowly opens his eyes and sits up in his bed.

11:11 A.M.

He looks sleepily around the room, then opens his nightstand drawer.

JOHNNY
(groggily)
Where the...

Remembering the trashcan, he pulls his pipe and baggy out and loads himself a bowl.

He takes one toke, then gets up, puts on his pajama pants and leaves the room.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Johnny walks over to the coffee pot and sees that coffee has already been made.

There are no clean coffee mugs so he pours it into a juice glass that he finds in the cupboard.

Next to the coffee pot he finds a NOTE written in really bad writing.

INSERT NOTE:

Johnny, we have gone into the city to take care of boring stuff, so we didn't think you would want to come. We won't be home until this evening. Have a good day.

Chuck and Mary

Johnny takes his glass of coffee and walks over to the refrigerator. He opens it and looks inside.

He pushes things around until he finds a pint of cream.

He opens it, takes a whiff, scrunches his nose, and takes another whiff, then pours it into his coffee.

He puts the cream back in the fridge and shuts the door, revealing the ghost, head wrapped in plastic, wearing a white button down shirt and black panties. She stands five feet away, watching him from the living room.

Without notice he leaves the kitchen.

INT. STAIRCASE - DAY

Johnny walks slowly up the long narrow staircase that he may or may not have tumbled down the night before.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny enters his bedroom with his glass of coffee and walks over to the bed.

He grabs a pack of cigarettes off of the nightstand and walks over to the window.

He opens the window and crawls outside onto the section of roof that hangs over the front porch.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

He crawls into a nice spot between his window and the window to the storage room and lights a cigarette.

The day is overcast.

He takes a drag off the cigarette, then a sip of the coffee and smiles.

Behind him the silhouette of a young woman appears in the window of the storage room.

Her features are indistinct. She watches him.

Johnny puts the cigarette in his mouth, then wraps his hands around the coffee glass, warming them.

He turns to look in the window behind him but something makes him stop mid turn.

He turns back, looking away from the window behind him, and smokes for a second more, then tosses his cigarette and crawls back into his room as it begins to rain.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Johnny walks down the hallway towards the door to Mary's storage room. He stops in front of the door and takes a sip of coffee.

He reaches out and touches the knob lightly, testing it, then opens the door.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Johnny steps into the room and stops. He scans the room. Nothing but boxes.

He walks lazily and nervously through the room from box to box.

In one corner of the room a sheet, draped over a hidden object, begins to move slightly. Johnny freezes. He stares at the sheet intensely.

The sheet moves again slightly. He steps towards it and flings it off the object it covers.

Underneath it are more boxes and a vent blowing air.

On the outside of the boxes, written in black magic marker, is the name EMMA.

Johnny takes a sip of his coffee as he stares at the boxes.

He reaches out for one of the boxes and opens it up. There are clothes inside.

He sets his coffee down and opens another box. It contains insignificant items like a teddy bear and a jewelry chest.

He reaches in and pulls out a large envelope. He opens it, revealing photographs.

Most of the photos are of a girl, various ages. A few have a younger Mary in them. Pictures from another era.

He pulls one out of the stack that has a picture of Mary and the girl standing in front of the house that he is in. The house is in much better shape. Mary is younger and prettier and has a smile on her face. The girl standing beside her is in her late teens, long dark brown hair, giant blue eyes, wearing short cutoff jeans and a tube top. Beautiful.

Rain outside begins to hit the window in the room with force.

He pulls out another box and begins to look through it.

Inside he finds an old newspaper. The date on the newspaper is April 30, 1991

He finds the page he is looking for.

INSERT HEADLINE:

Police have no suspects in murder
of aspiring model.

The girl from the pictures stands behind Johnny watching him. She wears the cutoff jeans and tube top.

An army of goose bumps travel down Johnny's arm.

He looks up from the article and takes in a deep breath. Exhales.

He sits motionless, staring forward, away from the young woman behind him. Somehow aware that she is there.

He starts to tremble until it turns into violent shaking.

He quickly puts the items back into the boxes, throws the sheet over them and turns around. The room is empty.

INT. CLOWNBURGER - DAY

Johnny walks briskly through the entrance.

The bells on the door JINGLE as he walks up to the counter.

CLYDE (O.S.)
Are you working tonight, John?

Johnny turns around sharply.

JOHNNY
No. Hold on a second and I'll come talk to you.

He turns back to the counter.

JOHNNY
(to Darrell in the back)
Darrell, buddy. Bring me some chicken strips and French fries, would you?

Johnny walks over to Clyde's table and sits down.

CLYDE
What's going on? You look flustered.

JOHNNY
Something is happening. It's happening again.

CLYDE
It?

JOHNNY
Ghosts.

CLYDE
Ghosts?

JOHNNY
Just ghost, I guess. I think Mary
had a daughter?

CLYDE
Maybe it's all in your head. Like
last time.

JOHNNY
I didn't make that up. What are
you doing here?

Darrell walks up to them with the food and sets it in front
of Johnny.

Johnny does not acknowledge Darrell. Just stares forward
at Clyde.

With a look of concern, Darrell reaches out to put his hand
on Johnny's shoulder and his mouth opens as if to speak.
Something is not right here.

JOHNNY
Thanks, Darrell.

Darrell slowly pulls his hand back and turns around to
leave.

Johnny turns and watches him walk away, then turns back to
Clyde.

CLYDE
What are you doing here, John?

JOHNNY
Chuck has been telling me about a
ghost that lives in his house named
Emma. Then I found out this morning

That...wait...what am I doing here?
What the fuck are you doing here?

Johnny's seems to be confused. Sweat runs down his face.

CLYDE
Is this ghost asking you to do
things?

JOHNNY
No. I don't know. I found some
boxes.

Johnny slams his fists down on the table. BANG!

In the background, behind the service counter, Darrell
flinches.

JOHNNY
Why are you here!

Darrell watches them nervously.

CLYDE
I thought you might want to talk.
About Emma.

Johnny calms down.

JOHNNY
How do you know about Emma?

CLYDE
You just told me.

This confuses Johnny more.

JOHNNY
He says it showers with him? Why
would he say that about Mary's
daughter?

CLYDE
You mean Chuck?

Johnny takes a bite of a chicken finger and looks away from
Clyde.

JOHNNY
I need to think.

CLYDE
Are you taking your pills?

Johnny turns sharply back to Clyde.

JOHNNY
That's not up to you anymore.

CLYDE
Okay. Lets talk about why you're
here in Hannah's Bowl.

JOHNNY
Maybe I can help these people out.

CLYDE
What makes you think these people
need help?

JOHNNY
I'm just want to be good. Do good.

JINGLE, JINGLE.

Johnny turns to see Justin enter the building.

His arm is held strait up at a ninety-degree angle by a
white cast that covers the full length of his arm.

He turns in the direction of Johnny and Clyde.

JUSTIN
Look at what you did to me.

He walks directly to their table.

JUSTIN
I know you did it on purpose.

Clyde looks at Johnny.

CLYDE
Did you do it on purpose, John?

Johnny stands up.

JOHNNY
Don't call me John.

Now Justin looks confused.

JUSTIN
I didn't call you John.

Johnny brushes past Justin and heads for the door, but Darrell yells out from the grill.

DARRELL
Johnny, wait!

Johnny stops.

JOHNNY
What?

JUSTIN
I'm not just gonna forget about this!

DARRELL
Come here a minute.

Johnny walks over to the counter.

DARRELL
Will you come with me and my brother to town tonight? He's making me go.

JOHNNY
Your brother wants to kill me, so... no.

Johnny starts for the door.

DARRELL
It's my birthday.

Johnny slows his pace and lowers his head.

JOHNNY
(under his breath)
Fuck.

JUSTIN
Yeah, you better fuckin' leave.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Johnny walks into the kitchen from the back door.

Chuck and Mary are standing in the kitchen and in uncommonly happy spirits.

Chuck wears pants and a shirt for the first time.

CHUCK
Hi, Johnny.

JOHNNY
Hi.

CHUCK
We brought back some ching li from town.

Mary walks over to Chuck with a smile.

MARY
Don't call it that.

She looks at Johnny.

MARY
It's Chinese food.

She puts her arms around Chuck and squeezes him.

Johnny sits down at the table. White boxes of Chinese takeout in front of him.

MARY
You smell like my father use to.

Chuck steps away from her.

CHUCK
That's a weird thing to say.

Chuck leaves the room.

Mary walks to the cupboard and starts setting the table.

Chuck comes back into the room wearing only his briefs.

He sits down at the table and looks at Johnny.

CHUCK

Well c'mon, let's dish up.

Mary sits at the table as Chuck dishes food onto his plate.

He looks at Johnny.

CHUCK

Hey, you wanna watch M.A.S.H
tonight?

JOHNNY

I'm going to town, actually.

CHUCK

We just got back from town.

Mary's spirits have lowered.

MARY

Who the hell you goin' to town with?

JOHNNY

Darrell and his brother.

Mary grabs her plate from Chuck who has neglected to dish up anybody else's food and has already begun eating his.

MARY

Justin? That boy is nothing but
trouble. What are you gonna do in
town with those two idiots?

CHUCK

(to himself)

We've got pork-fried rice, sweet pork,
these little fried things.

MARY

I know exactly where you're gonna
end up too.

CHUCK

I don't know what's in 'em but I'll bet it's pork.

Mary shoots a glance at Chuck.

MARY

Oh, will you shut the hell up!

CHUCK

I'm hopin' its pork.

Mary looks back at Johnny and angrily dishes Chinese food onto her plate and Johnny's.

MARY

Their mama thinks she has every disease imaginable. I think she's just fuckin' lazy. Her husband hit her over the head with a bottle of Evans and Williams and she aint got outta bed since. Sheriff just let him stroll outta town too. He ain't never came back. Darrell was only ten. He ain't right in the head now, prob'ly never was. His brother sure as shit never was. Too much like his dad, I guess.

Chuck laughs and rice flies out of his mouth onto the table.

CHUCK

(laughing)

Why do you think Klinger keeps wearin' women's clothing? He knows they're not gonna let him go home.

Mary stares at Chuck in disbelief then shovels some food into her mouth mumbling.

MARY

I'm boarding with a couple a fuckin' idiots.

Johnny smiles at Chuck.

JOHNNY
Because it's funny.

INT. TRUCK CAB - NIGHT

Darrell drives the truck, Justin has the passenger window, and Johnny is smashed between the two. Justin's broken arm hangs out of his window.

The truck rattles. All three of them stare forward.

JUSTIN
I know you dropped that fuckin'
drum on my arm on purpose. I look
like a fuckin' idiot.

JOHNNY
I didn't do it on purpose. It was
covered in grease. It slipped.

JUSTIN
Shut the fuck up. It's Darrell's
birthday and were takin' him to
the titty bar, so I'll let it go
for now, but only for now. I
haven't figured what I'm gonna do
to you yet, but if I was you I'd
leave town 'fore I do.

Red and blue lights flash behind them.

Darrell pulls off the road.

JUSTIN
What in the fuck does he want?

DARREL
I don't know.

Johnny looks behind them at the police car.

A SHERIFF walks up to the window. Darrell rolls it down.

DARRELL
Hi, Sheriff.

The Sheriff shines his flashlight into the interior.
Justin stares forward.

SHERIFF
How you boys doin' tonight?

DARRELL
Just fine, sheriff. It's my
birthday.

SHERIFF
Is that so? How old are you?

DARRELL
Twenty-one.

SHERIFF
Who's this in the car with you?

DARRELL
My brother Justin and our friend
Johnny.

SHERIFF
I know your brother, Darrell.

He shines his light in Justin's face. Justin continues to
stare forward.

JUSTIN
Sheriff.

He shines his light in Johnny's face.

SHERIFF
You that boy stayin' with Chuck and
Mary?

JOHNNY
Yes, sir.

The Sheriff sneers and keeps his light pointed on Johnny's
face.

SHERIFF
Where you boys headed?

DARRELL
Well, we're headed into--

JUSTIN
You drunk again, Sheriff?

The Sheriff shines his light back to Justin.

SHERIFF
What happened to that arm anyhow?
You have an accident jerkin' off?

Justin doesn't answer.

SHERIFF
Watch your mouth or I'll break the
other one.

The Sheriff looks up and down the road for a minute.

SHERIFF
If you boys come rollin' back into
town smellin' like booze 'n pussy,
I'll be waitin to pull you over,
hear me? So think twice about it.

Nobody says anything.

SHERIFF
How's your mother, Darrell?

DARRELL
She's fine, sir.

SHERIFF
All right then, get outta here.

The Sheriff puts his light down and walks towards his car.

JUSTIN
Have another whiskey you fuckin'
cock eater.

They pull back onto the highway.

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

A stripper, wearing nothing but cowboy boots, a cowboy hat
and a g-string, rides a brass pole to a song that is too
loud.

Justin watches her intensely, talking to himself.

JUSTIN

All right, baby. I'm gonna take
you home with me tonight. Yes,
ma'am.

He reaches over and slaps Darrell in the face.

JUSTIN

You like that? Look at those
titties.

He grabs a cocktail WAITRESS as she walks by.

JUSTIN

Give me two shots of whiskey and
two beers. And when you're done
with that, why don't you get up
there and dance for us?

She smiles at him. One of her front teeth is chipped in
half.

She looks over at Johnny.

WAITRESS

Do you want anything?

He shakes his head.

She walks off, rubbing her left hand across Justin's face.

JUSTIN

You pussy. You've been nursin'
that beer for a half hour.

Darrell looks pale.

DARRELL

I don't want any more drinks,
Justin.

Justin watches the stripper.

JUSTIN

Well you're gonna drink 'em anyway.

He turns to Johnny.

JUSTIN

That man you're livin' with has six million dollars stashed away somewhere in that house of his. I'm gonna show up there one night with my rifle and take it from him. First though, I'm gonna fuckin' creep into your room while you're sleepin', rest the tip of my rifle between your eyes and...BOOM! Blow your fuckin' head all over the wall. Just for breakin' my arm.

JOHNNY

Sure you are. You wouldn't find ten cents in that house.

Justin watches the stripper for a minute, then turns and looks at Darrell, who has nodded off.

JUSTIN

Darrell! Wake the fuck up!

Darrell abruptly sits up straight. Justin slaps Darrell in the face again, laughing.

JUSTIN

I was just tellin' Johnny about our plan to rob Chuck.

Darrell's face is pale and he slurs when he speaks.

DARRELL

I didn't say that, you did.

JUSTIN

You want a lap dance?

DARRELL

(slurred)

Leave me the fuck alone.

Justin stands up.

JUSTIN

Homo. I bet you wouldn't mind if
Johnny gave you a lap dance.

He walks over to a corner of the bar and solicits a lap
dance.

Johnny watches him from where he sits.

Across the room the dancer sits Justin in a chair.

The waitress comes back with their drinks.

WAITRESS

Where'd that guy go?

Johnny nods in Justin's direction.

The Waitress turns around and watches for a moment with a
smile on her face.

WAITRESS

All right.

She watches for a moment, then walks away.

The dancer grinds her rear end into Justin's face.

JOHNNY

Chuck doesn't have any Goddamn
money.

DARELL

My brother says he's got a whole
lot of money.

JOHNNY

Well, your brother is full of shit.
Tell him to stay the fuck away from
that house.

DARRELL

He aint gonna do nothin'.

JOHNNY

I don't know why you put up with
his shit. No one should be treated
the way he treats you.

DARRELL

What do you want me to do? He's my brother.

JOHNNY

You could start by individualizing yourself. You wear the same clothes as him. You cut your hair like him.

DARRELL

Everybody cuts their hair like this.

JOHNNY

It's obvious you look up to him. That shit has got to fucking stop if you want him to respect you.

Justin walks towards them with a putrid look on his face.

He sits down, takes his shot of whiskey, then slams his beer. The grimace still on his face.

JUSTIN

I think that girl just took a shit.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Darrell lies with his head on the bowl of a vomit filled toilet. His face is white and greasy.

Johnny sits on the edge of a bathtub smoking a cigarette.

JOHNNY

You need to flush that fucking toilet. It smells like Southern Comfort and it's making me sick just looking at it.

Darrell ignores him.

Johnny stands up and flushes the toilet just as the door to the bathroom bursts open and Justin flies in.

Darrell jolts up, startled from the sound, and puke spews from his mouth.

Justin looks frantically through the bathroom drawers with his one good arm.

JUSTIN

I can't take this smell anymore.
It's in my mustache.

He finds a pink disposable razor and grabs a nasty bar of soap from the sink.

He rubs the bar of soap all over his mustache and begins shaving.

Darrell is passed out again.

Justin looks at Johnny in the mirror.

JUSTIN

(mocking)

Are you holdin' his hair up for him
while he pukes?

Johnny stares at him, smoking his cigarette.

Justin finishes shaving, throws the razor at Johnny, and walks out, shutting the door behind him.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

Uh-uh! No fuckin' way! Where's
your brother? Uh-uh.

She bangs on the bathroom door.

WAITRESS (O.S.)

The only reason I invited you guys
over here was cause I thought I was
gonna get tag teamed by two
brothers!

She pounds again.

WAITRESS

Get out here and fuck me!

Johnny flicks his cigarette at the door.

He hears her walk off.

Darrell has his mouth on the bowl and is making weird noises.

DARRELL

Da da da.

Johnny reaches in his pocket and pulls out a film canister.

He pops the lid off and drops the contents into his palm.
A little green nugget of marijuana.

He gets up, walks over to the door and opens it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Johnny walks past Justin and the Waitress as they have sex on the couch.

The Waitress straddles Justin, riding him up and down as he sits back with his broken arm pointed straight up in the air.

They both moan.

Johnny walks out the front door.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

Johnny loads a bowl and lights it up.

INT. PSYCH WARD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A nurse enters Johnny's room.

NURSE

It's time for your pill.

She hands a Dixie cup to Johnny.

He turns the cup upside down and a pill drops into his palm. He tosses the pill into his mouth.

She hands him a cup with water.

He drinks it.

She puts on a latex glove.

NURSE

Okay, open up.

He opens his mouth.

JOHNNY

Ahhh.

She sticks her finger into his mouth, checking behind his gums and under his tongue.

Satisfied, she exits the room.

Johnny watches her go, then retrieves the pill from the roof of his mouth with a grimace.

He reaches down into the side of his bed and brings up a plastic soapbox.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. PORCH—NIGHT

Justin kicks the door open, steps onto the porch, and walks past Johnny.

JUSTIN

If you're comin', were goin' now.

JOHNNY

What about Darrell?

JUSTIN

Fuck him.

Johnny stands up and starts after Justin.

JOHNNY

If you drive back into Hannah's Bowl drunk, the Sheriff is going to fuck us both over. Let me drive.

Justin throws the keys to Johnny.

JUSTIN

Whatever.

INT. TRUCK CAB - NIGHT

Justin is passed out against the passenger side door.

Johnny pulls off the highway and onto the dirt shoulder.

Justin wakes up.

JUSTIN

(groggy)

What the fuck are you doin'?

JOHNNY

I need to take a piss. It'll take
two minutes.

JUSTIN

I gotta take a piss too.

Johnny stops the truck and Justin opens his door, nearly
falling to the ground.

The highway is pitch black and silent.

Justin walks over to a ditch, unzips his fly, and starts
peeing.

JUSTIN

Man, was that bitch crazy.

Johnny picks up a rock the size of a grapefruit.

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Johnny pulls into the Waitress's driveway and gets out of
the truck.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Johnny throws the door open and walks into the room.

Darrell is asleep on the floor.

JOHNNY

Wake up, Darrell.

Darrell doesn't budge.

JOHNNY

Darrell!

Darrell lifts his head and hits it against the toilet.
CLINK.

He moans.

JOHNNY

Come on. Lets go home.

EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Darrell and Johnny walk to the truck. Darrell is stumbling
and disoriented.

They get into the truck.

INT. TRUCK CAB - NIGHT

DARRELL

Where's Justin?

Johnny starts up the truck.

JOHNNY

He told us to leave. That waitress
is going to take him home in the
morning or something.

Darrell leans against the door.

DARRELL

(mumbles)

He always does this to me.

Johnny drives off.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - DAY

Johnny pulls the truck into the driveway.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Darrell lifts his head up off of the door and looks around.

DARRELL

It's morning already?

JOHNNY

Mmm.

Johnny turns the truck off and opens his door.

DARRELL

Aren't you gonna take yourself
home?

JOHNNY

I can walk.

Darrell gets out of the truck.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - DAY

Darrell walks up to the front door.

DARRELL

Well, come inside so you can meet
my mom.

Johnny runs his fingers through his hair and stares at the house, then walks towards the door.

INT. DARRELL'S HOUSE - DAY

Johnny and Darrell walk into the front room.

SWEETIE (O.S.)

Darrell, is that you?

DARRELL

Yeah, mom. I brought a friend, we're
gonna come in.

Darrell opens the door to his mother's bedroom.

INT. SWEETIE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

SWEETIE (50's), thin hair, sickly complexion, looks at least ten years older than she actually is, lies in bed with the covers up to her chest, watching TV.

SWEETIE

Darrell, you know better than to
bring people who ain't family into
my bedroom.

She scratches one spot on her arm compulsively. The area is bright red and covered in sores.

SWEETIE

Where's your brother at?

DARRELL

He stayed in town.

SWEETIE

That son-of-a-bitch. Who's gonna take care of me?

DARRELL

He's gonna be back, mom. And I can take care of you.

SWEETIE

You couldn't take care of lump a dirt.

Johnny stares at the red spot on her arm as she scratches it.

She sees Johnny watching her.

SWEETIE

Them people on the news last night said that mosquitoes are carryin' some virus now...

She looks back to Darrell.

SWEETIE (cont'd)

...and one bit me this mornin'. You must've left a window open again. You tryin to kill me, Darrell? My body can't handle another virus.

DARRELL

This is my friend Johnny that works with us at the restaurant.

She turns back to Johnny.

SWEETIE

You livin' over there with Mary and that lunatic boyfriend of hers?

Johnny nods.

SWEETIE

Darrell, go get your mother some hot water with honey, and try not to spill it on me when you get back.

Darrell leaves the room. Johnny turns to follow.

SWEETIE

I used to be good friends with Mary. I was with her when they told her. About her daughter bein' murdered. It was a long time ago. Ain't nobody care or even remember now.

JOHNNY

What about Chuck?

SWEETIE

He don't know shit. He ain't from here. He met her the same way you did.

Something drops in the kitchen. CRASH.

SWEETIE

Mary and Emma had had a fight. Emma wanted to leave, said she was goin' to California to be a model. She probly coulda too if she'd made it. She was a true beauty.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

EMMA, young and beautiful like the photos, drives down an empty highway, singing along to the radio.

It rains outside the car.

SWEETIE (V.O.)

Mary didn't want her to go. She got down on her knees and begged her not to go. Mary had a boyfriend at the time that was beatin' her, and she was fixin' to leave him, so she explained to Emma

that without her she'd be all alone.
She told her that she was all she
had in the world and couldn't bear
to lose her, but Emma left anyway.

Emma pulls off the highway and into an old gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION PUMPS - NIGHT

Emma gets out of the car under the cover of the tin roof
over the pumps. The rain on tin creates a deafening noise.

She pulls the pump out of its cradle and inserts it into
her gas tank, then squeezes the handle.

Nothing happens.

She squeezes it multiple times but still nothing happens.

She looks towards the station. There is one light on
inside but she can't see anyone working.

She turns to put the pump back in its cradle.

Suddenly a thick sheet of plastic is flung over her face.

She struggles, but her assailant slams her head against the
car repeatedly.

Emma drops to her knees and the plastic is tightened.

The features of her face form to the tightly pulled
plastic, mouth wide open. The plastic caves in as she
tries to suck air in through her nostrils and mouth.

Her eyes are foggy through the plastic but open wide.

Her head is slammed into the car one last time.

She falls forward, head wrapped in plastic.

SWEETIE (V.O.)

They found her body in a ditch
with the plastic still wrapped
around her face.

Emma lies in a ditch surrounded by water. Her face covered
in plastic. The rain pours down around her.

INT. SWEETIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny listens to Sweetie finish her story.

SWEETIE

Mary called me the next morning
cause she was worried sick and I
sat with her all day till the
sheriff showed up. The police said
she was killed either by a psycho
or a woman, cause a pretty girl
like her and she weren't raped.

JOHNNY

That's a really horrible story.

SWEETIE

What's your story?

DARRELL (O.S.)

He's just passin' through.

They look up to see Darrell enter the room.

JOHNNY

It was nice meeting you ma'am.

Johnny turns to walk out of the room.

SWEETIE

Where's my other son?

Johnny keeps walking.

JOHNNY

I don't know.

INT. CHUCK AND MARY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Johnny enters from the back door.

The room is empty.

He walks into the

LIVING ROOM

Also empty.

He turns to his left and looks into Chuck and Mary's bedroom. Empty.

He turns around to see Emma, pale white, black panties, white shirt, moist black hair dangling from a head wrapped in plastic, sitting on the couch behind him.

He stares at her for a moment, then quickly walks back into the

KITCHEN

He heads for the back door but hears someone coming up the steps.

The handle on the door turns.

He dashes to his right and runs up the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Johnny reaches the top of the stairs and opens his bedroom door.

Emma, wearing a tube top and jeans, sits on his bed.

She opens her legs and motions him with her finger to come towards her. She is beautiful.

He takes a step forward.

Blood trickles down from the ear on the left side of her head.

Johnny runs back to the stairs, but she stands at the bottom, waiting for him. Now the whole side of her head is covered in blood. Her skin pale.

Johnny turns and runs down the hall to the storage room.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

The door flies open, startling Mary, who already occupies the room.

Johnny runs in and slams the door behind him.

MARY

What in the hell's wrong with you?

He holds the doorknob tight.

MARY

What did I tell you about coming in here? Get the fuck out!

JOHNNY

I don't want to go out there.

Someone on the other side of the door tries to open it. Johnny tightens his grip.

MARY

Who's out there?

Johnny just stares at her in total fear.

CHUCK (O.S.)

Hey what's going on in there?

The door flies open and Johnny falls forward onto the ground.

Chuck stumbles into the room.

MARY

What in the hell has gotten into you two?

Chuck looks confused.

CHUCK

What are you guy's doin' in here?

MARY

Apparently Johnny thinks he can go wherever he pleases in this house. Now, both of you, get the fuck out.

Johnny stands up. He and Chuck leave the room.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Chuck shuts the door behind them.

CHUCK

You look pale. And you're sweatin'
like a mule.

MARY (O.S)

Which one of you two idiots burned
out the light bulb in here?

JOHNNY

I just got home from the city just
now and I had to walk from
Darrell's house. Plus, I haven't
slept yet.

Chuck shakes his head.

CHUCK

You'll make yourself crazy livin'
like that.

Chuck walks off and down the stairs.

Johnny watches him go, then walks into his bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny falls face forward onto the bed.

INT. PSYCH WARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Johnny screams and struggles against the grip of two
orderlies as they try to strap him to his bed.

ORDERLY

If you won't take your pills, then
we have to do this.

He lunges at them, but leather straps hold down his arms.

They insert an I.V. in his arm.

JOHNNY

No!

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Johnny lies sleeping on top of the sheets.

MARY (O.S.)

Wake up!

Johnny jerks his head up off the bed. He's covered in sweat.

Mary stands at the edge of his bed.

MARY

Get up. Lucy's dead.

Johnny sits up on the bed and scratches his head.

JOHNNY

How long have I been asleep?

He wipes his arm across his forehead.

JOHNNY

Why is it so fucking hot in here?

MARY

Almost an hour.

Johnny sighs and lowers his head.

Mary walks out of the bedroom.

JOHNNY

Who's dead?

MARY (O.S.)

Lucy.

Johnny sits staring forward.

JOHNNY

(to himself)

Who the hell is Lucy?

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Johnny, Mary, and Chuck stand in front of a small grave.

Mary holds a cat who'd body is locked in rigor mortis.

CHUCK

Lucy was a good cat, Lord, but you have asked her to join you and we accept. Try to remember, Lord, that lawnmowers and other various farm equipment scare the hell out of her...

Mary shoots a glance at Chuck.

CHUCK (cont'd)

...also, remember Lord that although she may look sweet and cuddly, she hates to be touched or held, and will scratch you--

MARY

All right, Chuck, that's enough.

CHUCK

Amen.

Chuck sighs and looks up into the sky as Mary places the cat into the small grave.

CHUCK

Johnny, would you do the honors?

Johnny picks up a shovel and begins filling grave with earth.

Chuck and Mary walk away.

Johnny watches them go with an agitated look, then returns to shoveling.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Johnny walks into the kitchen from outside. He is dirty, sweating, pale, and looks as though he may pass out.

Chuck eats a sandwich while Mary makes herself one.

MARY

Do you want a sandwich?

JOHNNY

No, I need to sleep.

Chuck takes a bite of his sandwich.

CHUCK

I saw Emma again today. In your
bedroom.

Mary stops making her sandwich for a moment, but does not
look at Chuck.

MARY

Chuck! Not today.

CHUCK

God knows what she was doing in
your room, but I stood out in the
hall and watched her for a while.
She's pretty snoopy.

MARY

Enough with the fuckin' ghost, you
Goddamned fuckin' lunatic--

The phone rings. Mary picks it up.

MARY

Hello. Yes, do you want to talk to
him?

(beat)

Ok, I'll tell him.

She hangs up the phone and goes back to making her
sandwich, keeping her gaze fixed on it.

MARY

That was Darrell. His good for
nothin' brother didn't show up for
work and he needs you to come in
cause it's the Sunday shift.

Johnny stares at her.

JOHNNY

When?

She looks up annoyed.

MARY

Well he didn't say, but I'm pretty sure he wasn't talkin' about next week, so I'd get down there right now. You know how the Sunday shift is. Everybody wants a Goddamn milk shake after church, and church gets out in an hour.

Johnny stands but doesn't move further. Just stares at Mary

MARY

What in the hell's wrong with you?

JOHNNY

I haven't slept yet.

Chuck stands across from Mary eating his sandwich with a delicious grin.

MARY

Well I didn't tell ya to go out drinkin' all night, so stop starin' at me.

He continues to stare.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - NIGHT

Johnny stands at the counter staring forward. The establishment is relatively busy.

Darrell walks up to Johnny from behind.

DARRELL

Justin still ain't home. I swear to God I ain't never goin' to town with him again. I hardly got any sleep this mornin' with mom bossin'...

Darrell's words become inaudible. Just echoes of his words and the commotion of the customers.

A newspaper article is slapped down in front of Johnny.

Darrell stands further down the counter now, talking to a customer.

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
How's your mother, Darrell?

Johnny looks down at the newspaper article.

DARRELL (O.S.)
She's all right, I guess.

INSERT NEWSPAPER HEADLINE:

Police still looking for Virginia
State Hospital runaway.

Johnny looks up. Clyde stands in front of him.

JOHNNY
What?

Clyde points at the article forcefully.

CLYDE
It's only a matter of time before
somebody starts wondering who you
are.

JOHNNY
That's not me.

CLYDE
No?

JOHNNY
No.

Clyde folds the paper up and puts it into his pocket.

CLYDE
Where's Justin?

JOHNNY
How should I know? Are you going
to order something?

CLYDE

No.

JOHNNY

Good.

They stare at each other for a long moment, then Johnny walks away.

INT. CLOWN BURGER - NIGHT

Johnny and Darrell clean up. The restaurant is closed.

Darrell wipes off tables while Johnny sweeps.

DARRELL

Johnny, do you have any brothers?

Johnny stops sweeping.

JOHNNY

Yeah, three...well, two.

Darrell stops what he's doing and looks up at Johnny.

JOHNNY

One of them died.

DARRELL

Sorry.

Darrell continues wiping the table.

Johnny sweeps.

DARRELL

How did he die?

Johnny stops sweeping.

JOHNNY

My dad pushed him down the stairs.
Broke his neck.

Darrell stops wiping the table.

DARRELL

What happened to your dad?

JOHNNY

Nothing. He said he fell down them.
We all did.

DARRELL

Why?

JOHNNY

Because that's how it was.

They both return to their work for a moment.

DARRELL

I see you talkin' to yourself
sometimes. Like earlier tonight.

JOHNNY

Darrell, I can't stay any longer.
I had to bury a cat today and I've
been up since yesterday at eleven.

DARRELL

All right, I'll see you tomorrow.

JOHNNY

Sure.

INT. DRUG STORE - NIGHT

Johnny stands at the check out listening to the CASHIER, an old man in his sixties. There is a bag of strawberry gummy candy and a pack of cigarettes on the counter.

CASHIER

...rooster tails, panther martins,
red devils, spoons, rapalas, mepps,
walking worms, and jigs...

Chuck walks into the store wearing a robe.

He doesn't notice Johnny and keeps walking.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

...then you got yer flies, which I

don't use much. Lets see, royal
humphrey's and coachman's, olive
wing adam's, bead head's, wooly
buggers, parachute hoppers, and yer
standard bugs like mosquitoes,
gna--

JOHNNY

How much do I owe you?

Johnny's eyes are dark and sagging.

CASHIER

Four dollars and thirty-two cents.

Watching Chuck, Johnny places a five-dollar bill on the
counter, then, zombie-like, follows him to the back of the
store.

He sees Chuck walk into the freezer area behind where the
milk and dairy products are kept.

Curious now, Johnny walks slowly up to the door and opens
it.

INT. FREEZER - NIGHT

Johnny enters the giant refrigerator and looks around, but
Chuck cannot be seen.

Johnny walks cautiously towards the back of the freezer
until he hears a noise and turns to his left.

Behind a large rack of milk cartons, Chuck sits on the
floor of the freezer amongst a pile of open milk cartons.

He opens one, smells it, takes a drink, then sets it aside.

Johnny watches him in awe.

EXT. FRONT OF DRUG STORE - NIGHT

Johnny sits down on the curb in front of the store and
lights a cigarette.

Chuck comes out carrying a gallon of milk.

JOHNNY

Hey, Chuck.

CHUCK

What are you doin' out here?

JOHNNY

Thinking.

CHUCK

You want a ride back to the house?

JOHNNY

Exhausted as I am, I would love one. But I'm not ready to go back to that house just yet.

CHUCK

Man, can I relate to that. Well, see you when you get there.

Johnny nods his head. Chuck walks away.

EXT. CHUCK AND MARY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Johnny walks up the steps to the back porch. One of the steps cracks and a cat comes SCREAMING out from underneath the porch.

Johnny jumps.

JOHNNY

Stupid fucking cat!

He continues walking up the steps to the house, mumbling.

JOHNNY

God damn it.

INT. CHUCK AND MARY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Johnny enters the kitchen.

Chuck sits at the table with a tall glass of milk and a comic book.

JOHNNY

Hi, Chuck.

CHUCK

Mmm.

Mary sits in the living room watching TV. It sounds like The Munster's again.

JOHNNY

I'll be upstairs.

Chuck ignores him.

Johnny turns to his left and heads up the staircase.

MARY (O.S.)

Chuck! You said you'd talk to him about groceries! And he still hasn't cleaned the bathroom.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny sits on his bed smoking a cigarette, staring at the wall across from him.

A knock comes at the door.

He throws the cigarette out of the open window, puts his paraphernalia in the nightstand, and lights a stick of incense.

JOHNNY

Come in.

Chuck walks in, wearing nothing but his briefs. His scars run from his left ear down to the small of his back.

He sits down on the corner of Johnny's bed and looks down at himself, wearing nothing but the underwear.

CHUCK

I hope you don't mind.

Johnny motions his head towards the wall at the end of his bed.

JOHNNY

She might.

CHUCK

Eh, she don't mind.

Johnny smiles.

Chuck's face scrunches up into a serious look.

CHUCK

Listen, buddy, I know you could probably hear every word that came out of that sour old woman's mouth and I'm sure that's how she planned it. So I came up here to tell you not to worry. I'll clean the bathroom tomorrow and don't worry about the groceries. I wouldn't eat here either if I didn't have to. Her cookin' tastes like the devil himself pissed in it.

Johnny smiles.

CHUCK

Listen to me, Johnny. I know you've been snoopin' around Mary's stuff. And you probably found out that she had a daughter named Emma and you probably want to know why I'm going around talking about a ghost by the same name.

JOHNNY

I've seen the ghost, Chuck. I see it all the time.

CHUCK

Bullshit. There is no ghost.

JOHNNY

But I see it and I don't know what it wants.

CHUCK

Well, you need to stop smoking so much dope and get more sleep then.

JOHNNY

But you said you see it.

Chuck sighs and drops his head.

CHUCK

Let me tell you a story. Years ago I was working at a gas station about two hundred and fifty miles west of here. A lot of strange people stopped at that gas station because it was the last one headed west for another two hundred or so miles. One night I'm working the graveyard shift...

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Chuck sits on a stool at the counter.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...it was raining real hard that night and a customer hadn't been in for over an hour...

Chuck writhes in his stool.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...and I feel something brewing down below, if you know what I mean.

Chuck gets up out of his stool and walks towards the front of the store.

CHUCK (V.O.)

So I decide it'll be safe to lock the doors for a minute, turn off the pumps, and take a load off, so to speak.

Chuck locks the door, walks to the back of the station, and into the bathroom.

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM - NIGHT

Chuck sits on the toilet.

The sound of a car pulling into the station is heard.

He shakes his head.

Then the sound of someone trying to open the entrance door.

He looks annoyed but he's not stopping now.

Finally, the sound of the car driving off.

CHUCK (V.O.)

I had just gotten started and I
wasn't about to stop in the middle.
Then I hear another car pull up,
'cept this one pulls up to the
tanks. So I finish what I'm
doing...

He wipes.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...and when I come out of the
bathroom...

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Chuck exits the bathroom and looks toward the pumps.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...I see this beautiful young girl
standing at the pump. But before I
can get to the counter to turn the
pumps back on...

Mary walks up behind Emma quickly and throws a sheet of
thick plastic around her head.

Chuck flinches in horror.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...she started bashing this girl's
head against the car and I just
froze.

Chuck drops behind the counter and sits on the floor
cowering.

CHUCK (V.O.)

Then I hear a car start from around back. It must have been the first car I heard. And it drives up to the front of the station and picks her up...

Chuck peeks over the counter. Mary climbs into the passenger side of a black truck.

CHUCK (V.O.)

...It was a black Chevy truck with big tires and KC lights.

Chuck crawls across the floor to the phone and picks it up.

CHUCK (V.O.)

No dial tone. It did that all the time in the rain...

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CHUCK (CONT'D)

...out in the middle of nowhere.

Johnny sits on the bed staring and Chuck, stunned.

JOHNNY

Weren't you questioned by the police?

CHUCK

Of course I was.

JOHNNY

And...?

CHUCK

And, they never considered me a very good suspect. I had no prior record of any kind and most importantly, no motive. If she had been raped I'd probably be in prison right now since I was the only suspect.

JOHNNY

But you told them what you saw?

CHUCK

No.

Johnny sits up in the bed.

JOHNNY

Why?

CHUCK

Cause they'd find out that I sat there on the floor cowering while an innocent girl was murdered by a woman. Too afraid to stop a woman.

Johnny shakes his head.

JOHNNY

How the fuck does it end with you practically being married to her now?

CHUCK

After the murder I left the town I was living in and got a job with an oil rigging company in Texas. I was out on a barren oil field one day, shutting off oil valves, and I got struck by lightning...

EXT. OIL FIELD—DAY (FLASHBACK)

Chuck stands next to his truck turning an oil valve.

Something makes him stop and look up.

The hair on his arms raise.

CRACK!

A bolt of lightning hits his truck sending a charge straight to his ear and out the small of his back, grounding to the valve.

He shakes for a moment then drops to the ground.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CHUCK

That's where I got these.

He points to his scars.

CHUCK

There was nothing for me to ground myself to at that particular valve. There's always supposed to be a ground so I sued and won a hell of a lot of money. After I got the money I started traveling around the country, just like you, and ended up here, just like you.

JOHNNY

Didn't you--

CHUCK

I knew it was her the second I saw her. I realized immediately that this was my penance and my salvation. That God had sent me here to do something. I just haven't figured out yet what that is, so I taunt her by pretending I see a ghost. Sure she probably wonders if I know more than I'm letting on, but she's not going to be the one to bring it up.

Chuck laughs.

CHUCK

That's for damn sure. Plus I think she really believes that I'm crazy.

JOHNNY

You are crazy. And I'm not going to let this continue.

Chuck shakes his head and rubs his bare leg then looks back at Johnny.

CHUCK

Sure you can.

JOHNNY

I won't.

CHUCK

I didn't come up here to tell you murder mysteries, or stories about me getting hit by lightning, Johnny. None of that is important. What is important is what I've come up here give you. A chance to change this useless lifestyle you're living. That we all live. A chance to do something with yourself. To take advantage of the opportunities that I let pass me by because my agenda was all wrong. It's too late for me, but you, you can do something with the money.

Johnny looks away.

JOHNNY

I don't want your money, Chuck. I want that girl that was murdered to get justice. So does she.

CHUCK

Don't you fuck this up! I didn't want to bring up your dad, but you force me to. I know what you did to him. You're the one who's crazy, Johnny, not me. What's your penance going to be?

They stare at each other.

CHUCK

That money doesn't mean a thing to me. Take what you need to start a new life from scratch, away from this town. God gave me the opportunity for redemption and somehow I got confused. Now I'm giving the opportunity to you.

JOHNNY

Why can't you go to the police? If you want redemption, that's what you need to do. Taunting Mary doesn't achieve anything.

Chuck calms.

CHUCK

It's too late for that. Maybe you haven't noticed, but this town doesn't function as part of the real world. This is somebody's hell, and we're all living in it. You think they're going to give a shit about some girl that was killed over twenty years ago?

JOHNNY

What about Mary?

CHUCK

What about her?

JOHNNY

She's just going to let me walk out of here with her money?

CHUCK

It isn't hers. I have a safe deposit box at the bank down the street. I didn't put it in an account 'cause I don't want anybody knowing about it.

Chuck reaches towards Johnny and opens his hand, revealing a key in his sweaty palm.

CHUCK

Get up early, get the money, then leave town. What you do after is up to you, but don't forget this talk.

Johnny stares at Chuck.

CHUCK

Don't be fucking stupid. Take it.

Johnny reaches out quickly and grabs the key.

Chuck stands up to reveal his underwear has climbed up the crack of his ass. There is a big round scar the size of a June apple above his right cheek.

He looks over at the item on the wall at the end of the bed.

CHUCK

Mary's friend Sweetie, Darrell's mother, painted this about twenty years ago. I think it's fucking hideous.

JOHNNY

What about the black truck?
Somebody else was there. Who was it?

CHUCK

I tried to find the owner of that truck for two years before I gave up. It's probably for the best. I don't know what I would've done. Most likely nothing.

JOHNNY

Wait a minute. Sweetie told me that Mary had a boyfriend at the time. All we have to do is find out--

The floor boards creek outside Johnny's bedroom.

Johnny jerks his head up.

JOHNNY

What was that?

Chuck looks startled.

CHUCK

What was what?

JOHNNY

That noise. Someone has been listening to us.

CHUCK

I didn't hear anything. Besides, it couldn't have been Mary. I saw her go to bed, and once she hits the sheets, you couldn't wake her if you finger banged a chicken two feet from her head.

JOHNNY

What about Emma?

CHUCK

Kid, are you thick? What'd I just fucking tell you? There is no ghost. I made her up.

Chuck heads for the door, paying no attention to the uncomfortable position of his underwear.

CHUCK

This house makes people crazy. Leave tomorrow.

JOHNNY

How do you know about my father?

Chuck stops in the open doorway.

CHUCK

Let it go, Johnny. Your secrets are safe with me.

He turns back to Johnny.

CHUCK

Nothing is stopping you now from doing what you want with your life.

JOHNNY

I just want to do good.

CHUCK

I won't stop you.

Chuck exits, shutting the door behind him.

Johnny sits in his bed staring at the key for a moment, then places it on the nightstand.

INT. PSYCH WARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Johnny sits in his bed looking out of the barred window.

Clyde sits in a chair next to the bed.

CLYDE

We know your not taking your medication. What are you doing with it?

Johnny stares out the window.

CLYDE

Why won't you take it?

JOHNNY

Because I'm not crazy.

CLYDE

Nobody said you were crazy. Just a little sick. That's why we give you medicine.

JOHNNY

I'm not sick. You just don't want to believe me.

CLYDE

That the ghost of your dead brother told you to kill your father?

JOHNNY

You're patronizing me.

CLYDE

I wish I could believe you, John. But it's my job to figure out if there might be another answer.

Johnny looks at Clyde for the first time.

JOHNNY

I just wanted to do good.

Clyde leans in.

CLYDE
One day you will.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny sleeps. The room is dark.

The door to his bedroom opens, revealing the silhouette of a slender young woman. She walks through the threshold.

Johnny wakes and lifts his head off the pillow.

The young woman gets to the side of his bed and looks down at him. She wears a white button down shirt and black panties.

He looks up at her.

She slowly crawls on top of him, pulling the sheets down to his knees.

Straddling him with her crotch fixed firmly against his, she leans her face closer to his.

He reaches up into the white shirt, and slides his hands around her back.

They kiss violently.

She gyrates on top of him.

Suddenly she stops and pulls her head away, but only inches.

EMMA
(whispering)
Mary is in here...to kill you.

Johnny looks around the room. It's dark, but he sees nobody.

He turns back to Emma.

The plastic is wrapped around her head. The face behind it, dead.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny sits up and gasps.

The silhouette of someone stands at the end of his bed.

JOHNNY

Emma?

The person walks around to the side of the bed.

MARY

You do some really fucked up shit
in your sleep. What are you
dreaming about?

Johnny tries to focus on her.

JOHNNY

Mary, what are you doing in here?

MARY

I'm not going to let you take our
money you little fucking freeloader!

Johnny flips on the nightstand lamp.

Mary stands before him, eyes wild, hair disheveled, holding a butchers knife.

Johnny is still half asleep and the light from the lamp burns his eyes.

He reaches toward the nightstand, keeping his eyes on Mary while he looks for the key with his hand.

JOHNNY

I won't take it, I swear! Here take
the key.

His hand frantically scans the nightstand, but the key isn't there.

MARY

I'd rather you were dead.

Mary lunges at Johnny with the knife, but he catches her arm.

He pushes her backward and throws her into the nightstand.

The lamp and alarm clock drop to the floor. The lamp pops and goes out as it hits.

The room is dark but for the soft blue light coming from the window.

Johnny throws Mary onto the bed and climbs on top of her.

He holds her knife hand down and hits her across the face.

Mary writhes beneath him.

He wrestles the knife from her hand and raises it up.

He glares at her, enraged and panting from the struggle.

She lunges at him with impressive force, throwing them both onto the floor with a THUD.

Mary lands on top.

She drives a knee into his crotch.

His eyes widen and his mouth opens but no sound escapes.

She grabs his face and tries to tear the flesh away.

He sees Emma.

EMMA

Kill me you little fuck.

Johnny brings his knife hand up quickly.

SLASH!

Mary stops pulling at his face.

DRIP. DRIP. DRIP.

Pellets of blood hit Johnny's face, then large droplets, then streams.

THUMP. Mary's body falls on top of him.

He pushes her off, then lies on his back panting, covered in blood.

Emma appears in the doorway and watches him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chuck lies sleeping on the couch.

TV light flickers on his body as the end song from M.A.S.H. plays on the TV.

Johnny appears in the archway between the kitchen and the living room, holding the butchers knife, wet with blood.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Johnny enters the room, his face long and pale, covered in a film of perspiration. His clothes are blood soaked.

He sits down in a corner of the bedroom and rests his back against the wall, breathing deeply.

INT. JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Johnny flies up out of his sheets and looks around the room.

He jumps out of bed, throws open his closet door, and grabs his backpack.

He fills it with clothing.

He rushes to the nightstand and empties the contents of the drawers into the pack.

He turns to leave, but the key on the nightstand catches his eye.

He picks it up and stares at it for a long moment, then puts it into his pocket, takes a survey of the room, and rushes through the bedroom door.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Johnny crashes through the screen door, onto the porch, and into the backyard carrying his backpack over one shoulder.

He stops ten feet from the house and turns back to look at it.

He stares at it for a long moment, then drops his pack to the ground and walks back into the house.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Johnny walks through the screen door and enters the kitchen.

He walks slowly and his shoes make noises on the sticky floor.

He looks at the knife holder next to the kitchen sink. Most of the knives are missing but the biggest is in its slot.

He pulls it from its sheath. It sticks for a moment then comes free.

Thick coagulated blood lines its sharp edge.

He drops the knife into the sink.

He continues forward through the kitchen door to the living room

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Cartoons play on the television. A weird, crazy looking chicken with big teeth chases the farmer's wife around with a chainsaw. She runs around screaming while holding her farm dress off the ground.

Johnny walks away from the television set towards Chuck and Mary's bedroom door. It's open just a crack.

He pushes the bedroom door open slowly.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The kitchen door rattles for a moment against its frame.

INT. BANK - DAY

Johnny enters the bank and is immediately greeted from across the lobby by MR. FOWLER, a lanky man with a beak of a nose, beady eyes, and a thin neck that causes his large head to bob back and forth. The smile on his face never leaves, even when he talks.

MR. FOWLER

John? How are you? I'm Mr. Fowler, the bank president. I've been waiting for you.

He cocks his head, concerned, but with a smile still on his face.

MR. FOWLER

Are you all right?

Johnny's face is pale and his clothing is soaked in sweat.

JOHNNY

Yes, thank you. You've been waiting for me?

Mr. Fowler walks Johnny towards the back of the bank.

MR. FOWLER

Yes, absolutely. Chuck called me first thing this morning and told me you'd be here with a safe deposit key and that I shouldn't give you any trouble.

JOHNNY

Chuck called you?

MR. FOWLER

Yes. Does that surprise you?

JOHNNY

Uh...no, he was just asleep when I left. I appreciate that he called you.

INT. BANK VAULT - DAY

The two enter the safe deposit box room.

MR. FOWLER

Well, he told me to leave you in privacy, so I'll leave you, but if you have any trouble just come find me and I will personally help you.

Mr. Fowler puts his key into one of the large safe deposit boxes on the bottom of the wall and turns it to the left.

MR. FOWLER

Let me know when you're done.

JOHNNY

Thank you, sir. I won't be too long.

Mr. Fowler leaves Johnny in the vault alone. Johnny looks down at the key in his sweaty palm.

He gets down onto his knees, puts his key into the keyhole, and turns it to the right.

The lock makes a click and the box becomes loose.

Johnny pulls the box out of its casing and opens the lid.

The drawer is long and deep and holds clips of hundred dollar bills.

He opens the top flap of his backpack and empties the contents onto the vault floor, then begins grabbing money from the safe deposit box.

When he finishes emptying the box of its money he finds a folded piece of paper at the bottom.

He reaches down and grabs the piece of paper.

Unfolding it reveals a map. He turns it over in his hands, studying it, then folds the map and shoves it into his pocket.

He kneels down on the floor and fastens the clips of his backpack shut.

The safe deposit box that was once full is now empty.

The floor of the vault is covered in Johnny's clothing and belongings.

Johnny reaches into the side pocket of his pack and pulls out the black automatic handgun he had stashed there earlier.

He looks down at it for a moment, then places it in the box.

He picks up a shirt and places it in the box, then a pair of pants, then quickly starts shoving his belongings as fast as he can into it.

EXT. BANK-DAY

Johnny exits the bank and walks to the street.

He takes a last look at the town, then turns right and starts walking.

A police car pulls off the road and stops in front of him, blocking his path.

The Sheriff gets out of the car.

SHERIFF
Where you headed?

Johnny shrugs his shoulders.

SHERIFF
Looks like you're fixin' to leave town.

Johnny stares forward at him.

SHERIFF
Not just yet, son, you better get in the car.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

Johnny sits in the back, as the Sheriff drives down the highway.

SHERIFF

Just got an APB from the highway patrol about fifteen minutes before I saw you come out of that bank. Say they found a guy in a ditch just off the highway that fits the description of Justin Garret. So I called Sweetie and she told me that neither her nor Darrell had seen him since two nights ago. They both said that you were the last to see him.

JOHNNY

The only reason Darrell didn't see him was because he was passed out drunk. I had to carry him to the truck. Justin said he was staying with the waitress. That was the last time I saw him. Darrell was right there hanging onto my shoulder. He couldn't even stand.

SHERIFF

Well, the Highway Patrol is waitin' for us out there, so we're gonna go talk to 'em anyway.

JOHNNY

I have a hundred thousand dollars in my backpack.

The Sheriff turns around to look at him.

SHERIFF

What, did you just rob that bank?

JOHNNY

I will give it all to you if you just let me leave town.

The Sheriff turns around and keeps driving.

JOHNNY

I know where Chuck hides his money. A lot more than what's in my backpack. I'll split it with you.

The Sheriff keeps his eyes on the road.

JOHNNY

You've heard the rumors about Chuck
having money. They're true, believe
me.

EXT. DIRT ROAD OFF HIGHWAY - DAY

The police car pulls off the highway and onto the dirt
road.

INT. POLICE CAR-DAY

The Sheriff drives along the dirt road.

SHERIFF

If you're leading me on a wild
goose chase, you will fucking regret
it. Mark my words.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

The police car pulls to the left and comes to a stop.

The Sheriff gets out and walks around to the passenger side
of the car.

He opens the rear door.

SHERIFF

Come on. Get out.

Johnny gets out of the car.

SHERIFF

Let's see it.

Johnny reaches into the car and pulls the backpack out,
then kneels on the ground unclips the top.

He moves to reach inside the pack, but the Sheriff stops
him.

SHERIFF

Hold on now.

He walks over to Johnny and jerks the pack away from him, then looks inside.

His eyes widen for a moment, then he looks up at Johnny and walks over to the car.

SHERIFF
I'm confiscatin' this.

He opens the passenger side door and tosses the pack inside, then turns to Johnny.

SHERIFF
Where's the rest?

Johnny looks around for a long time until he finds the landmark he is looking for.

He points.

JOHNNY
Over there.

SHERIFF
Well, go get it.

Johnny starts walking. The Sheriff watches him go.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Johnny arrives at a giant mound of dirt and looks around until he finds a flat rock the size of a card table.

He reaches down and grabs the side of it, pulling.

It barely moves.

JOHNNY
I need some help.

The Sheriff has followed him to the mound but has kept a safe distance.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Johnny and the Sheriff reach down, grab the rock, and slide it across the dirt, grunting.

They do this a few times until the rock is out of the way, revealing nothing but dirt and sand.

SHERIFF

There's nothing here but dirt. Do you think he'd be stupid enough to hide his money under a rock?

JOHNNY

Yes, actually I do think that Chuck would be stupid enough to hide his money under a rock.

SHERIFF

Well, start diggin' cause it's hot as hell out here and my ass crack is startin' to sweat.

Johnny digs at the sand and dirt with his hands.

He hits rocks but tosses them aside and continues digging.

SHERIFF

How much money you think is under there?

Johnny looks up at the sheriff and shakes his head, then continues to dig.

SHERIFF

I'll tell ya what, I'm gettin' me a brand new Chevy truck. Black, with big 'ol tires, KC lights, and a gun rack.

Johnny stops digging and looks up at the Sheriff.

SHERIFF

Keep diggin'!

Johnny goes back to digging.

SHERIFF

I used to have one just like it, but they took it away from me cause I couldn't make the payments.

Johnny's fingers hit a green object.

Digging faster he reveals a large metal ammo can.

SHERIFF

Get outta here.

Johnny finishes digging and reaches around the side of the can to lift it out of the dirt.

SHERIFF

Move aside, son.

Johnny moves away and sits down in the dirt.

The Sheriff leans down and pulls the large metal box out of the ground with a grunt.

He looks around frantically for a way to open the box until he finds it and flips the lid up, revealing thick stacks of hundred dollar bills.

SHERIFF

I'll be God-damned.

Johnny reaches to his left and grabs one of the larger rocks he dug up.

JOHNNY

So you and Mary had something going on, huh?

The Sheriff keeps his gaze fixed on the money.

SHERIFF

That was a long time ago.

Then looks up slightly concerned.

SHERIFF

Who told you about that?

JOHNNY

Emma.

Wasting no time, Johnny swings the rock at the Sheriff with great force, making contact with the side of his head.

The Sheriff falls to the ground and grabs his ear, screaming.

Without hesitation Johnny reaches down and grabs the Sheriff's pistol from its holster.

He points it down at the Sheriff. There is a brief moment of silence.

BANG!

The sound of the gunshot echoes through the desert valley.

EXT. SHOULDER OF HIGHWAY - DAY

Johnny walks alongside the highway carrying his backpack.

He hails a truck driver.

The truck pulls off the highway onto the shoulder of the road and stops.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Johnny climbs into the cab of the big rig and throws his heavy backpack onto the floor in front of him.

A friendly looking TRUCK DRIVER smiles at him

TRUCK DRIVER

Whew! What you got in that pack,
kid, whole bunch a rocks?

Johnny smiles up at him.

JOHNNY

Naw, just everything I need to live,
you know?

The truck pulls back onto the highway.

TRUCK DRIVER

Actually, I do know. All I need to
live is in this here truck. Where
ya headed?

JOHNNY
Out of this town.

The Truck Driver nods.

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

The Truck Driver looks to his right and slows the rig down.

TRUCK DRIVER
What do we have here?

Johnny looks up to see two Highway Patrol cars and an ambulance.

Justin sits on a stretcher while one EMT cleans dry blood off of his face and another bandages his head. He is alive and conscious.

A Highway Patrolman waves them to keep moving.

The truck picks up speed and drives past.

INT. PSYCH WARD - DAY

Johnny sits on a chair in the main hallway staring at the NURSE who sits at her desk.

He wears pajamas and slippers.

NURSE
John, are you going to sit there all day? Why don't you go down to the rec room with the others?

JOHNNY
I don't want to hang out with the crazies.

NURSE
That's not very nice, John.

Down the hall from them one of the patients has lifted a chair over his head.

The Nurse looks over at him.

NURSE

Jimmy, put that down right now.

Jimmy slams the chair into the wall with force.

The Nurse picks up her phone and pushes a button. Her voice comes over the intercom.

NURSE

Code White in the men's ward.

Jimmy continues to smash the chair against the wall as pieces of plaster chip off.

The Nurse jumps out of her chair and runs down the hall towards the patient.

Johnny immediately jumps and rifles through her desk.

He opens drawers and moves things around frantically until he finds what he's looking for. KEYS.

He grabs them, shoves them into his pocket, then moves briskly down the corridor in the opposite direction of the Nurse and Jimmy, who can both be heard in a struggle.

INT. CHUCK AND MARY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Chuck and Mary lie in their bed, throats slit. They both stare up at the ceiling with gapes on their faces. The blood on the sheets is old and has stained them a rusty color.

INT. CHUCK AND MARY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The sound of a news anchor's voice fills the empty room.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

...police are still looking for
John Shepard of Norfolk, Virginia
who escaped from the...

INT. TRUCK CAB - DAY

Johnny and the Truck Driver listen to the radio.

NEWS ANCHOR

...Virginia State hospital for the criminally insane after being placed there for the murder of his own father--

The truck driver turns the radio off.

TRUCK DRIVER

There're some real nuts out there.

Johnny nods in agreement.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The news anchors voice can be heard slightly from the room next door.

The faucet drips onto a pile of dirty dishes.

STAIRCASE

A cat sits on one of the stairs licking itself.

HALL

The door to Mary's secret room is slightly ajar.

JOHNNY'S BEDROOM

A painting hangs on the wall at the end of the bed. It is a portrait of Emma, wearing nothing but a white button down shirt and black panties. Only the bottom two buttons of the shirt are buttoned, revealing a simple amount of cleavage. She smiles a beautiful smile. It's a terrible painting.

FADE OUT: