

PET SEMATARY

by
Stephen King

Based on the Novel by
Stephen King

That most persistent summer SOUND: crickets in high grass--
ree-ree-ree-ree... This in dark which slowly

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A GRAVE MARKER - SUMMER DAY

It's a plywood cross leaning aslant. Written on the crossarm
in black paint which has faded: SMUCKY HE WAS OBEDIENT. The
letters are straggling and ill-formed -- the work of a child.

EXT. OTHER MARKERS - DAY

MAIN TITLES BEGIN over series of DISSOLVING SHOTS. We see a
child's printing again, this time on a chunk of warped
crating: BIFFER BIFFER A HELLUVA SNIFFER UNTIL HE DIED HE
MADE US RICHER 1971-1974. On two flat boards: IN MEMORY OF
MARTA OUR PET RABIT DYED MARCH 1, 1965 and GEN PATTON (OUR!
GOOD! DOG!) APRIL 1958. We can read PLYNESIA, 1953 and HANNAH
THE BEST DOG THAT EVER LIVED. HANNAH'S tombstone is part of
an old Chevrolet hood, painstakingly hammered flat.

All is silence but for the crickets and the wind stirring the
grass. Around the markers themselves, the grass has been
clipped short, and here and there we see flowers and cheap
vases, Crisco cans, Skippy peanut butter jars, etc. we can't
read all the epitaphs; some are too faded with age (or the
gravestones too degenerated), but we can tell that this
woodland clearing is a rather eerie -- and well populated --
animal graveyard.

EXT. ANGLE ON PET SEMATARY - DAY

CREDITS CONTINUE. From here we can see most of the clearing,
which is surrounded by forest pines. We can see that the
graves - maybe 80 in all - are arranged in rough concentric
circles. On the far side of the clearing is the end of a
patch which spills into the graveyard. The end of that path
is flanked by wooden poles which hold up a crude arch. We can
see no writing on this side -- the words on the arch face
those arriving along the path.

EXT. THE ARCH, FROM THE PATH SIDE - DAY

Written on the arch, in faded black print, is the work of some long-gone child: PET SEMATARY.

AS THE MAIN TITLES CONCLUDE, THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY DOWN to look into the graveyard. From this angle we can see across to a deadfall -- a tangle of weather whitened old branches at the back of the clearing. It's maybe twenty-five feet from side to side and about nine feet high. At either end are thick knots of underbrush that look impassable.

AS THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN on the deadfall we realize there is a horrible snarling face in those branches. Is this an accident? Coincidence? Our imagination? Perhaps the audience will wonder. THE CAMERA HOLDS FOR A MOMENT and then we

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK. And a white title: MOVING DAY.

THE TITLE DISAPPEARS and the black FADES UP ON:

EXT. A HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY - EVENING

SOUND of crickets: ree-ree-ree-ree... The house is a pleasant two-story New England dwelling. In front is a realtor's sign with a big SOLD strip plastered across it diagonally. To the left of the house: a big empty field. Behind it: the woods. Before it: a wide two-lane road.

ANOTHER SOUND, GROWING: the rumble of a truck. A big, big truck. It belts between THE CAMERA and the house -- a tanker with a silver body and the word ORINCO written on the side in blue letters. Its short stack is blowing quantities of dark brown smoke.

Behind the truck comes a Ford wagon which slows, signals, and turns into the driveway of the house we've been looking at.

EXT. THE WAGON IN THE DRIVEWAY - EVENING

As it stops we get a good look at the license plate (Illinois) and a bumper sticker (HAVE YOU HUGGED YOUR M.D. TODAY?).

ELLIE (V.O.)

Is this our new house, daddy?

LOUIS (V.O.)

This is it.

LOUIS CREED, about 32, gets out from the driver's side. RACHEL CREED, his wife, gets out from the passenger side. From a rear door comes ELLIE CREED, a girl of 6. The three meet at the front on the wagon and stare, fascinated, at the house. LOUIS is clearly nervous.

LOUIS

So... what do you think?

RACHEL begins to smile. She turns to LOUIS and hugs him.

RACHEL

It's gorgeous!

ELLIE

Am I really gonna have my own room?

LOUIS

Yes.

ELLIE

Yayy!

ELLIE looks toward the side lawn and sees a tire on a rope hanging down from the bough of a tree. She goes running toward it.

RACHEL

Be careful, Ellie. The rope might be--

LOUIS

Let her go. It's cool

RACHEL gives LOUIS a tired smile.

RACHEL

Louis, the house is beautiful.

They kiss -- gently at first, then more passionately. As he draws her against him, a baby -- GAGE -- begins to cry from the car.

RACHEL

The master of disaster awakes. Come on -- let's parole 'im.

INT. THE WAGON'S FRONT SEAT - EVENING

GAGE is sitting in a car seat amid litter from the road. RACHEL leans in and begins to unbuckle the straps and harnesses. GAGE is wearing only a t-shirt and a diaper. He's fifteen months old.

RACHEL

Decided to wake up and see what home looks like, huh?

EXT. ELLIE IN THE TIRE SWING - EVENING

She's got the swing penduluming back and forth in long wide arcs. She is staring off toward the woods.

ELLIE

Daddy! Mommy! I see a path!

EXT. THE VIEW UP TOWARD THE WOODS, ELLIE'S P.O.V. - EVENING

The field, and a clearly marked and mown path leading up its flank and into the dark woods. THE CAMERA DIPS AND PENDULUMS as though mounted on ELLIE'S swing.

EXT. RACHEL AND GAGE (FRONT OF CAR) - EVENING

RACHEL

(irritated)

Not so high, Ellie! You don't know how strong that rope is.

She puts GAGE down. He totters a bit on his little legs and then stands there, looking at his sister.

EXT. THE ROPE AND BRANCH - EVENING

The bark has rubbed off the branch -- it looks like a bone peeling through decayed flesh. The rope is old, discolored. And it is fraying away as we look at it.

EXT. LOUIS (REAR OF CAR) - EVENING

He has opened the tailgate and is pulling things out.

LOUIS

Ellie, you heard your m--

His eyes widen.

EXT. THE SWING WITH ELLIE - EVENING

SOUND: a heavy twang! as the rope breaks. The tire swing -- with ELLIE still inside it -- goes crashing to the grass. ELLIE creams and begins to cry -- a little hurt and a lot surprised.

LOUIS and RACHEL run to her.

LOUIS

Ellie! Are you all right?

RACHEL

Honey? Are you okay?

They reach the tangle of tire, rope, and six-year-old girl.

ELLIE

Hurrrts! It hurrrrts!

LOUIS

Anyone who can scream that loud isn't ready for intensive care just yet -- looks like she just skinned her knee.

Nonetheless, he begins to rapidly disentangle his daughter from the tire. RACHEL helps.

EXT. THE STATION WAGON WITH GAGE - EVENING

GAGE is standing by the rear of the car, utterly forgotten in the heat of the moment. His diaper is sagging; the boy needs a change. He is looking at a cat carrier which is sitting on the tailgate. A big tomcat, CHURCH, is staring hopefully out through the mesh. Mostly what we're aware of are shining green eyes.

GAGE

Hi-Durch!

CHURCH

Waow!

SOUND: Growing thunder of an approaching truck - a big one. On the road in the background -- quite close by -- a big tanker truck -- silver body, ORINCO written on the side in blue letter -- blasts by. The windlash of its passing blows GAGE'S hair back from his forehead. We should be scared here - not by the truck, but by GAGE'S lack of fear. He's smiling, happy.

GAGE

Druck!

He starts down the driveway toward the road.

EXT. LOUIS, RACHEL, ELLIE (AT THE SWING) - EVENING

ELLIE has been disentangled from the swing. She's sitting beside the wreckage, weeping hysterically (as much from tiredness as from pain) as LOUIS and RACHEL examine her scraped knee.

LOUIS

(to Rachel)

Would you get the first aid kit?

ELLIE
(screaming)
Not the stingy stuff! I don't want
the stingy stuff, daddy!

RACHEL suddenly looks toward the car.

RACHEL
Gage's gone!

LOUIS
Jesus, the road!

They get up together.

EXT. GAGE, AT THE EDGE OF THE ROAD - EVENING

A truck is coming. A great big one. The grille looks like a tombstone that's learned how to snarl.

GAGE takes a step into the road... and then big, gnarled hands grab him. GAGE looks rather surprised at this, but not worried. To GAGE strangers are as interesting as... well, as interesting as Orinco trucks.

The fellow who has picked GAGE up is a man of about eighty in old blue jeans and a work shirt. Over this he wears a faded khaki vest with bright silver buttons. His face is deeply wrinkled and kindly.

JUD CRANDALL
(to Gage)
No you don't, my friend -- not in
that road.

JUD carries him up the driveway to the station wagon. Here he's joined by LOUIS and RACHEL, out of breath and really scared. ELLIE brings up the rear. She's still sniffing.

RACHEL
Gage!

JUD
(hands him to her)
I corralled him for you, missus.

RACHEL

Thank you. Thank you so much.

LOUIS

Yes -- thanks. I'm Louis Creed.

He stinks out his hand and JUD shakes it.

JUD

Jud Crandall. I live across the road. You wanna watch out for that road.

Those damn trucks go back and forth all day and most of the night.

(leans over toward Ellie)

Who might be you, little miss?

ELLIE

I'm Ellen Creed and I live at 642 Alden lane, Dearborn, Michigan.

(pause)

At least, I used to.

JUD

And now you live on Route 15 in Ludlow, Maine, and your dad's gonna be the new doctor up to the college, I hear, and I think you're gonna be just as happy as a clam here, Ellen Creed.

ELLIE

(to Louis)

Are clams really happy?

They all laugh -- even GAGE.

RACHEL

Excuse me. I've got to change this kid. It's nice to meet you.

JUD

Same here.

RACHEL, carrying GAGE, moves away.

ELLIE

(worried)

Daddy, do I really have to have the stingy stuff?

LOUIS

No. I Guess not.

ELLIE

Yayyy!

She goes belting off.

JUD

House has stood empty for too long.
It's damn good to see people in to again.

SOUND: Another truck engine -- but this one is gearing down.
A moving van appears on Route 15. Its signal blinks and it comes lumbering into the Creed's driveway.

LOUIS

Hey -- they actually found the place.

JUD

Movin' in's mighty thirsty work. I usually sit out on my porch of an evening and get outside a couple of beers. Come on oer and join me, if you want.

LOUIS

Well, maybe I --

RACHEL (V.O.)

Mr. Crandall.

EXT. RACHEL AND GAGE - EVENING

GAGE has been changed in the grass, and RACHEL is holding him on her hip now. Both of them are looking at that strange (and oddly enticing) patch which disappears into the deepening twilight.

RACHEL

This path? Where does it go?

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD - EVENING

JUD nods. He smiles, too, but underneath the smile we sense he is serious.

JUD

Oh, ayuh! It's a good story, and a good walk. I'll take you up there sometime, and tell you the story, too -- after you get settled in.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

SOUND: Crickets. Ree-ree-ree-ree...

There's one light upstairs, one downstairs. Perhaps we see the path glimmering away into the woods -- either by virtue of it being mown, or by virtue of some gentle optical trick.

INT. GAGE'S ROOM - NIGHT

RACHEL, wearing a nightgown, looks in on GAGE, asleep in his crib. She quietly closes the bedroom and moves down the hall.

INT. ELLIE'S ROOM - NIGHT

ELLIE sleeps on a mattress on the floor of her new room surrounded by a foothill of boxes. Unpacked and cluttered about are billions of Crayolas, Sesame Street posters, picture books and rumped clothes. CHURCH is with her, also sleeping and growling rustily. RACHEL closes ELLIE'S door quietly as she did GAGE'S.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The light from the kitchen just casts a dim glow in here. The room has a fireplace a lovely wooden floor. It's going to be nice, but now it's a big bare box with movers' cartons stacked all over the place.

LOUIS sits on one of the bigger boxes finishing a can of Pepsi. He lights a cigarette and taps into the empty can during the scene. The door on the far side of the room opens and RACHEL comes in.

RACHEL
(crossing to Louis)
Kids are asleep, doc.

LOUIS
Great.

He hugs her. She hugs him back warmly -- for a moment they are just two good people in all the big darkness of their new house.

RACHEL
You're not really going over to have a beer with that old guy, are you?

LOUIS
Well, I've got a million questions about the are, and --

RACHEL
-- and you'll end up doing a free consultation on his arthritis or his urinary problems.

LOUIS
I really do have a million questions.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

Pervasive SOUND of the crickets as LOUIS comes rather hesitantly up the crazy-paved path from the road's edge. From the screened-in porch we hear the SQUEEK of a rocker; we see the dim red fitful glow of JUD'S Pall Mall.

JUD (V.O.)
That you, doc?

LOUIS

It's me.

JUD (V.O.)

Well, come on up and have a beer.

INT. THE PORCH (WIDE SHOT) - NIGHT

LOUIS comes on up. JUD has got a pail of ice beside his chair with some cans of beer in it. He opens one and hands it to LOUIS.

JUD

You need a glass?

LOUIS

Not at all.

JUD

Good for you.

LOUIS drinks half the can at a draught.

JUD

One more time -- welcome to Ludlow.
Hope your time here will be a happy
one.

There's a moment of companionable silence, brocken by the SOUND of a big truck. They look forward:

EXT/INT. THE ROAD (THROUGH THE POARCH SCREEN) - NIGHT

One of those big tankers goes rumbling by -- this one has little amber running light twinkling like earthstars. It's going fast -- it sweeps by in a blast of air.

INT. THE PORCH WITH LOUIS AND JUD - NIGHT

LOUIS

(wincing)

Jesus!

JUD

That's one mean road, alright. You know that path your wife commented on? That road -- and those Orinco trucks -- are the two main reasons it's there. The local kids keep the path nice because they use it. Every spring a bunch of 'em mows it then they keep it nice all summer long.

LOUIS

Where does it lead?

JUD

The pet cemetery.

LOUIS

Pet cemetery?

JUD

It's the road. It uses up a lot of animals. Dogs and cats, mostly.

LOUIS

My daughter's got a cat. Winston Churchill. We call him Church for short.

JUD

I'd get his fixed. A fixed cat don't tend to wander. If it's all the time crossin' back and forth on that road, its luck will run out.

LOUIS

I'll take it under advisement.

JUD

Meanwhile, doc -- here's to your bones.

JUD raises his beer can in a toast. LOUIS clinks his can against JUD'S.

LOUIS

And yours.

They drink.

EXT. ROUTE 15 AND THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

LOUIS crosses from the Crandall side to his own. THE CAMERA FOLLOWS as he walks slowly up the driveway. He pauses for a moment, looking thoughtfully -- hopefully -- at his new house. Then something -- the CRY of an OWL, perhaps -- draws his attention the other way... toward the path.

He walks to its head and stands looking out at it. It glimmers in a wide cut swath that's a bit ghostly in the dark. A SHAPE suddenly lurches out of the high grass at him, and LOUIS recoils with a startled, muffled cry.

It's only CHURCH, the cat. Sure; who -- or what else? We see his big green eyes in the dark as he cries his strange feline hello: Waow!

LOUIS

Church! God, you scared the life
out of me!

LOUIS bends and picks up the cat. As he does, that truck SOUND comes again and he looks toward:

EXT. THE ROAD, LOUIS' P.O.V. - NIGHT

Another Orinco tanker drones by, fast.

Just beyond the road sits the Crandall place. It's too dark to see shapes but we can see the cigarette ember over there. JUD is still sitting up on the porch, as though standing watch. Against what?

FADE TO BLACK.

And in that blackness, we see a second title card: THE SPEAKING DEAD. THE TITLE DISAPPEARS and THE BLACK FADES UP ON:

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

GAGE trots along with a push toy. He stumbles into some packing cartons and flops forward to the floor. Sensing that the others are too busy to pay him any attention, he struggles to his feet again without comment.

LOUIS has unpacked dishes, knick-knacks, silverware, pots and books all over the place. He is slicing up empty cartons with a matte knife.

ELLIE, with an armload of her newly unpacked treasures, comes through the room followed closely by a rather sour-looking middle-aged woman who busies herself dusting as she goes. This is MISSY DANDRIDGE, a household helper and sometimes baby-sitter.

MISSY

I'll be goin' now, Dr. Creed.

LOUIS

Alright, Missy. Thanks.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

MISSY enters and crosses toward the outside door, scooping up a pile of dirty sheets and linens from a counter. At the door she almost bumps into RACHEL who is returning home with two overflowing bags of groceries.

MISSY

I'll do these up and bring 'em back next time, Mrs. Creed.

RACHEL

Can you come on Monday, Missy?
That's Ellie's first day of school and my husband's first day at the college. We oughta be able to get some real work down around here.

MISSY

Always thought it would be lucky to
marry a doctor. Wish I had a doctor
around with my stomach pains so
bad. Guess I'll never be lucky.
Hell, I ain't married to anyone.

She winces slightly as one of those stomach pains hit, then she moves out the door into the autumn sunset. RACHEL sets down the groceries and walks toward the living room.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

ELLIE is feeding CHURCH. GAGE is trying to get involved in the process but ELLIE is ignoring her brother.

RACHEL walks over to LOUIS and they kiss.

INT/EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS AROUND THE CREED HOUSE - DAY

MONTAGE as THE CREEDS busy themselves with making their house a home. Unpacking, painting, papering, sawing, hammering, mowing and edge-trimming.

At one point, JUD comes over to LOUIS, who is sweating in the yard, and hands him a welcome of cold beer. RACHEL comes out of the house with something freshly baked and covered with a towel. She hands it to JUD who can't resist an immediate nibble.

THE KIDS race around the house noisily and CHURCH tries to stay out of their way. The place is getting in shape.

EXT. THE HILL ABOVE THE CREED HOUSE - DAY

THE CREEDS, led by JUD CRANDALL, are climbing the path toward the woods. LOUIS has got GAGE in a Gerrypack. At the top of the hill, JUD stops to let the others catch up.

JUD

Take a look behind you.

They turn and their faces express their wonder.

LOUIS

My God!

RACHEL

It's beautiful.

EXT. THE VIEW, THEIR P.O.V. - DAY

It is indeed beautiful. The CREED house in the f.g., Route 15 behind it (with one of those ever-present Orinco trucks droning along), but behind that is the great sweep of the Penobscot river valley, dozing under a fall sky of clear blue.

EXT. AT THE TOP OF THE HILL WITH JUD AND THE CREEDS - DAY

JUD

I don't think there's very many people that even come up here. It don't look like you could see much because the hill's not very high. But you can see--

RACHEL

You can see everything. Honey, do we own this?

JUD

(before Louis can answer)
It's part of the property, ma'am, but I don't guess anyone owns the look of things.

EXT. THE FOREST - DAY

These are thick pine woods. There isn't much sunlight, so there isn't much underbrush. Mostly the woods floor is carpeted with fallen pine needles... Except for the path, where they have been neatly swept away to reveal the forest earth. I think the image we're trying for is something like Dorothy's Yellow Brick Road -- but this path is somehow more sinister.

JUD stops at the base of a hill. LOUIS looks grateful for the rest; he's sweating and there are wide dark patches under his arms where the Gerrypack straps are.

JUD
You tired o' totin' that yowwen,
Doc?

LOUIS
Not yet (he lies). How much
farther?

JUD
Less'n a mile.

JUD starts off again, fresh a a daisy. ELLIE scampers after him. LOUIS rolls his eyes at his wife and RACHEL rolls her back. Then they pass on.

EXT. THE ARCH READING PET SEMATARY AS JUD AND THE CREEDS
APPROACH - DAY

JUD
(stopping)
This is the place.

ELLIE tries to read the words on the arch but can't. She whips around to look at her mother.

ELLIE
What's it say, mommy?

A strange expression has come over RACHEL'S face -- she doesn't like this. Not a bit.

RACHEL
It says Pet Cemetery, honey. It's
misspelled, but... that's what it
says.

ELLIE spins and runs through the arch. This makes RACHEL more uneasy.

RACHEL
Ellen--! Be careful.

JUD lights a cigarette with a wooden match, using his thumbnail.

JUD

I told you it was a bad road,
Louis. It's killed a lot of pets
and made a lot of kids unhappy.

The number of graves bears witness to just how many pets --
and how many kids. Now ELLIE romps among the rag-tag markers.

ELLIE

Mom! Dad! Y'oughta see it!

JUD

But at least somethin' good come of
it. This place. Ground's stony.
Couldn't plant nothin' here but
corpses anyway, I guess.

EXT. INSIDE THE SEMATARY - DAY

ELLIE surveys the markers with puzzled delight. As she runs toward the center we clearly see the symmetrical pattern of rings. The others walk slowly through the arch. LOUIS is extremely interested in all this, but it's becoming clearer and clearer that RACHEL is troubled.

RACHEL

How can you call it a good thing? A
graveyard for pets killed in the
road! Built and maintained by
broken-hearted children.

LOUIS

I think it's rather extraordinary.

RACHEL

Extraordinary morbid, maybe.

JUD

We... they have to learn about
death somehow, now don't they,
Missus Creed? The little ones?

RACHEL

Why?

ELLIE (V.O.)

Mommy! Daddy! Look at me!

EXT. ELLIE ON THE DEADFALL - DAY

She has begun to climb the old tangles branches and this looks like an extremely dangerous proposition. ELLIE, however, is having the time of her life. A branch breaks under one of her feet and she switches nimbly to the next one up.

EXT. THE GROWNUPS (AND GAGE) - DAY

JUD

(alarmed)

No, honey! You don't want to go climbing on that! Come on down!

He hurries toward her.

EXT. THE DEADFALL WITH ELLIE - DAY

ELLIE

It's okay, Mr. Crandall --

The branch she's on breaks with a dry CRACK. Her foot drops down suddenly and she totters backward, pinwheeling her arms. JUD catches her as she falls. LOUIS arrives, GAGE jouncing along on his back.

LOUIS

Have you got a death-wish, Ellen?

JUD

Best never to go climbing on old blowdowns like this, Ellie. Sometimes they bite.

ELLIE

Bite?

JUD

Ayuh.

EXT. RACHEL, STANDING AT THE ARCH - DAY

Her discomfort makes one thing very clear -- she doesn't want to come in.

RACHEL

(calls)

Is she alright, Louis?

LOUIS (V.O.)

Fine. Come and see.

RACHEL

I think I'll sit this one out.

EXT. THE GROUP BY THE DEADFALL - DAY

ELLIE

I want to look around, daddy. May I?

LOUIS

For a little while.

JUD looks toward:

EXT. RACHEL AT THE ARCH, JUD'S P.O.V. - DAY

She has retreated a bit. She sits on the pine needle carpet of the path, opens her purse, and draws out cigarettes.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD - DAY

JUD looks at LOUIS as if to say "What's all about this?"
LOUIS looks away.

EXT. THE SEMATARY - DAY

ELLIE

Daddy! Look! This one's a goldfishie!

ELLIE runs from one tombstone to the next, cheerful as maybe only a kid could be in such a place. She looks at BIFFER'S marker; at SMUCKY'S. HE WAS OBEDIENT. LOUIS and JUD slowly walk after her.

JUD

They wasn't all killed by the road,
'specially the ones from back in my
time as a child. The road wasn't
even paved then.

(he points)

There's the Stoppard boys' racing
pigeon that Missus Cowley's cat
got... and I think that's the cat
himself right there, although it's
been so many years I can't tell for
sure. They get older as you go
toward the middle. Harder to read.

(calling)

Missy Ellen! Come over here just a
minute.

ELLIE runs amid the tombstones -- they have worked their way to the center and there are quite a few of them -- and joins the adults.

JUD

I see you're quite a reader for
such a little girl. Can you read
that?

He points again and ELLIE goes over for a look-see. On a small slate marker slanted to one side, she reads the words laboriously, tracing them with her finger.

ELLIE

"Spot a good fellow we love you
boy."

(pause)

"Owned by Judson... Judson..." Gee,
I can't read the rest.

JUD

Last name's Crandall, little missy.
That's were I buried my dog, Spot
when he died of old age in 19 and
14.

ELLIE looks awed. LOUIS looks a little awed, too. JUD sweeps
a hand around indicating the whole cemetery, but he keeps his
eyes on ELLEN.

JUD

Do you know what this place is,
Ellie? Oh, I know you know it's a
boneyard, but a bone ain't nothin'
and even a whole pile of 'em don't
amount to much. Do you know what a
graveyard really is?

ELLIE

Well... I guess not.

JUD

It's a place where the dead speak.

He sees her startled, uneasy expression and laughs. He
ruffles her hair reassuringly.

JUD

No -- not right out loud. Their
stones speak... or their markers.
Even if the marker ain't nothin'
but a tin can someone wrote on with
a Magic Marker, it speaks. Ain't
that so, Louis?

LOUIS

I think it is so, Ellie.

JUD

It says some animal got laid down
here, don't it?

ELLIE

Yes --

JUD

And that someone cared enough about
that animal to mark the spot.

ELLIE

To remember.

JUD

(smiles)

Yes. To remember. This ain't scary
place, Ellie. It's a place of rest
and speaking. Can you remember
that?

ELLIE

Yes, sir.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

LOUIS is at the kitchen table. There are a number of medical
books scattered around him and he's making notes from one as
ELLIE comes in wearing a nightgown.

LOUIS

Hi, babe.

ELLIE

Daddy. What if Church dies? What if
he dies and has to go to the Pet
Sematary?

LOUIS

Honey, Church will be fine.

INT. JUST OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN DOOR - NIGHT

RACHEL is coming along with some dirty dishes. She hears
voices and stops, listening, her face troubled and afraid.

ELLIE (V.O.)

No he won't! Not in the end! He
won't be fine in the end. In the
end he's gonna croak, isn't he?

INT. THE KITCHEN WITH LOUIS AND ELLIE - NIGHT

LOUIS

Lovey... Church might still be
alive when you're in high school...
and that's a very long time.

ELLIE

It doesn't seem long to me. It
seems short.

ELLIE has started to cry. LOUIS folds her into his arms and she hugs him tightly, wanting his comfort.

LOUIS

If it was up to me I'd let Church
live to be a hundred... but I don't
make up the rules.

ELLIE

Well, who does? God, I suppose. But
he's not God's cat! He's my cat!
Let God get his own, if he wants
one! Not mine! Not mine! Not --

She breaks down completely, sobbing, and LOUIS rocks her back and forth.

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She is crying, too -- silently.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

She's asleep with her teddy bear encircled by one arm and her thumb corked into her mouth. CHURCH is in bed with her, curled on top of the blanket near her feet. From the doorway, RACHEL looks at them with infinite love and then quietly closes the door.

INT. THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

LOUIS has the Yellow Pages open on the counter. He is coping something onto a blackboard which hangs on the wall: QUENTIN JOLANDER, D.V.M. He writes an address, then he writes: CHURCH SPAYED, and underlines it.

INT. LOUIS AND RACHEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS walks in to find RACHEL pacing.

RACHEL

She's finally asleep.

LOUIS

She was a little over-exited,
that's all. Poor kid.

RACHEL

It was that damned pet cemetery. It
was the first cemetery of any kind
for her and it just... upset her. I
don't think I'll write your friend
Jud Crandall and thank-you notes
for that little hike.

LOUIS

All at once he's my friend. Rachel!

RACHEL

And I don't want her going up there
again. It's unhealthy. Kids going
up there and tending the graves,
keeping the path. Whatever disease
the kids in this town have got, I
don't want Ellie to catch it. Here
she is thinking Church is going to
die.

LOUIS

Rachel, Church is going to die.

RACHEL

Church is not going to die today,
or tomorrow, or the day after that,
or probably for years.

LOUIS

Honey, we can't be sure of th--

RACHEL

Of course we can!

RACHEL shouts this causing LOUIS to look at her with full attention and concern.

RACHEL

We take good care of him, he's not going to die, no one is going to die around here, and so why do you want to go and get a little girl upset about something she can't understand until she's much older?

LOUIS

There's nothing wrong with a child finding out something about death, Rachel. In fact, I'd call it a necessary thing. Ellie's reaction -- her crying -- that seemed perfectly natural to me. It--

RACHEL

Oh, it sounded natural. It sounded very natural to hear her weeping her heart out over her cat which is perfectly fine.

LOUIS

Ellie has known where babies come from since last year.

RACHEL

That has nothing to do with --

LOUIS

It does, though. When I was talking to her about Church I got thinking about my mother and how she spun me that old cabbage leaf story when I asked her where women got babies. I've never forgotten that lie. Children never forget the lies their parents tell them.

RACHEL

Where babies come from has nothing to do with a goddam pet cemetery! I don't want this discussed on front of Ellie any more, Lou. I mean it. There's nothing natural about death. Nothing. You as a doctor should know that.

She whirls and leaves the room.

INT. JUD CRANDALL'S PORCH - NIGHT

LOUIS and JUD are sitting in the cricket SOUND and sipping beers.

JUD

I come from a different time. We was on closer terms with death. We saw mothers dying with child, and children dying of infection and fevers. If you got cancer, why, that was your death warrant right there. My brother Pete died of a burst appendix in 1912. We knew death as a friend and as an enemy. In those days it came into the house and said howdy and sometimes it took supper with you and sometimes you could feel it bite your ass.

LOUIS stands up and sets down his empty beer can.

LOUIS

I have to go. Big day tomorrow.

JUD

Yes, the merry-go-around starts for you tomorrow, don't it? Come on over tomorrow night and let me know how it went up the college. I'll whip you at cribbage.

LOUIS
Maybe I'll get you drunk first.

LOUIS leaves on the laughter.

EXT. ROUTE 15 - NIGHT

As LOUIS moves from JUD'S house back to his own, where no lights are lit, a big Orinco truck comes droning along, headlights glaring.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - MORNING

CLOSE ON GAGE. Cheerful little clots of scrambled eggs are scattered all the way across the tray of his high chair -- it looks a little like a map of the Pacific islands in yellow crayon. GAGE scoops up Hawaii and throws it.

SPLAT! Eggs land on the serving plate of toast in the middle of the kitchen table where ELLIE, in a pretty first-day-of-school dress, is finishing breakfast.

ELLIE
Yee-uck! Gross!

RACHEL is at the sink, doing dishes (we see the blackboard with its message near her). LOUIS comes in wearing a sport coat and slacks, ready for his first day on the job.

ELLIE
I'm scared. What if school here
isn't like in Chicago? I'm scared
and I want to go home!

RACHEL
You'll be fine, Ellie.

LOUIS down to where the cat-carrier sits by the kitchen door. Inside, CHURCH waows unhappily.

ELLIE
I don't want Church to get his nuts
cut, daddy.

LOUIS

Good God! Where'd you hear that?

ELLIE

Missy Dandridge. She says it's a operation!

LOUIS

The road's a lot more dangerous than any operation. Church will be just the same. Well -- almost the same -- and we won't have to worry about him being turned into catburger by one of those damn Orinco trucks. Church will be alright, honey.

ELLIE

Do you promise, daddy?

LOUIS

Well, honey... you know that...

RACHEL

Don't shilly-shally, Louis. Give the little girl her promise.

LOUIS

(reluctantly)

Church will be fine. I promise.

ELLIE

Yayyy!

She runs off, cheered up. And RACHEL is cheered up, too.

RACHEL

Thank you, Louis.

LOUIS

Oh, you're welcome. Only if something should go wrong while he's under the gas -- it's a one-in-a-thousand shot, but it happens -- you explain it to her.

He leaves the room. RACHEL looks after him, stunned and a little frightened.

GAGE
(conversationally)
Here, Durch!

He picks up the Maui and throws it in the direction of the cat-carrier. CHURCH is close to the mesh. Scrambled eggs hit, driving him back, surprised.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - MORNING

THE CREEDS are all in the front doorway as a school bus pulls up. Red lights flashing. ELLIE runs toward it with her lunch box. LOUIS grabs GAGE'S hand and makes him wave it.

GAGE
Bye-bye!

RACHEL
Have a great day!

ELLIE climbs aboard, the red flashers go out and the bus pulls away. LOUIS and RACHEL look at each other.

LOUIS
Gotta go.

He smiles at her, then he reaches inside the doorway and picks up a heavy brief-case in one hand and the cat-carrier in the other. He moves off toward the station wagon in the driveway. RACHEL watches him go, worried that there wasn't a warmer goodbye.

EXT. THE CREED DRIVEWAY - MORNING

A small car turns into the driveway and parks beside the wagon just as LOUIS is putting CHURCH'S carrier into the tailgate. MISSY DANDRIDGE gets out. Her color is bad. She looks at the cat-carrier.

MISSY
Gonna get his --

LOUIS

-- nuts cut, yes. Thank you, Missy
for introducing that colorful
phrase into my daughter's
vocabulary.

MISSY

Don't mention it.

She opens the passenger side door of her car and pulls out a
big neat pile of folded sheets. She winces suddenly and
presses her hands against her midriff for a moment.

LOUIS

How's that belly-ache of yours?

MISSY

No better and no worse.

LOUIS

You ought to see a doctor about it.

MISSY

It'll pass. They always do.

She starts toward the house with the sheets. LOUIS looks
after her. He doesn't like the way she looks.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE CREED HOUSE - MORNING

RACHEL moves out of the driveway, carrying GAGE. She passes
MISSY, who turns to look then goes into the house.

EXT. THE CREED DRIVEWAY - MORNING

LOUIS has shoved the cat-carrier into the back of the wagon
and closed the door-gate when RACHEL reaches him.

RACHEL

(anxious)

Still friends, doc?

LOUIS appears to consider this seriously for a moment... and
then he smiles and hugs his wife. They kiss. GAGE is mashed
between them.

RACHEL

Thank God. I was a little worried there. Have a great first day at school, doc. No broken bones.

LOUIS

(smiles)

Not so much as a sprain.

EXT. VICTOR PASCOW AND FRIENDS - MORNING

CLOSE ON PASCOW. His fixed eyes stare. Half of his head has been shattered inward. He is in a blanket that is being carried by THREE BOYS and ONE GIRL. They are yelling at each other not to joggle him, not to drop him.

A small knot of horrified college kids moves with bearers. THE CAMERA PULLS JERKILY TO ONE SIDE, allowing the bearers to mount the steps of a brick building, the infirmary. The lookers-on break to either side as the infirmary doors open. The head nurse, MARCY CHARLTON, a tough old babe of about fifty, appeared in the doorway.

CHARLTON

Holy Jesus! Steve! Dr. Creed! Dr. Creed! We've got a mess here! Stat!

The bearers sweep past her and inside, leaving a red smear of blood across the midriff of her uniform.

INT. THE INFIRMARY - RECEPTION AREA - MORNING

(THE CAMERA will show us all we need to see, but its movements will seem almost random; this is like being in the hotel kitchen after Sirhan shot Bobby.)

As THE STUDENTS bring in PASCOW, LOUIS comes running, followed by STEVE MASTERSON, his P.A. Standing to one side are TWO STUDENT NURSES in candystriper uniforms. They're boggled and horrified.

LOUIS kneels. THE CAMERA RUSHES FORWARD, shoving between onlookers. LOUIS looks at the wound. There's shattered bone and pulsing brain tissue beneath. There's A SCREAM; THE GIRL who was carrying one corner of the blanket is having hysterics.

GIRL

Vic! Vic! Oh Christ! Vic!

LOUIS

(to Charlton)

Get her out. Get them all out.

CHARLTON puts her arms around the girl.

GIRL

No! No! He can't die! He can't die!

THE CAMERA MOVES BACK DOWN as LOUIS takes an ophthalmoscope from STEVE and shines it in PASCOW'S bulging, fixed eyes.

LOUIS

Steve, get the ambulance over here right now. He's gotta go to EMMC.

STEVE

The ambulance is at Sonny's Sunoco downtown, getting --

LOUIS

-- a new muffler, oh shit --

PASCOW makes a weird gargling noise. Blood suddenly spurts out of his mouth. He begins to seizure. One of the candystripers shrieks. THE CAMERA JERKS UP TO COVER the student nurses just as one of them turns and throws up on the wall. CHARLTON, who is pushing the gawkers and bearers out the door, rushes back for the candystriper.

CANDYSTRIPER

I can't look at it... I can't stand it...

CHARLTON

(slaps her)

Yes you by God can. Go get the hard
stretcher!

The candystripers starts away, one helping the other down the
hall, and as CHARLTON moves over to where PASCOW lies dying
in his blanket, THE CAMERA DROPS to LOUIS and STEVE again.

LOUIS

Help me hold him.

STEVE

It wouldn't matter if we did have
the ambulance.

LOUIS

It wouldn't matter if we had the
SST.

PASCOW'S spasms begin to quiet.

LOUIS

He's going, Steve, go call the
motor pool. Marcy, roll out the
crash wagon.

CHARLTON

It won't --

LOUIS

I know it won't! But let's for
God's sake do it by the rules!

STEVE jumps to his feet, leaving PASCOW in LOUIS'S arms, and
trots out of the room. MARCY CHARLTON follows, drawing the
drapes behind her so that the doctor and the dying man have
complete if temporary privacy.

LOUIS

There wasn't even supposed to be a
sprain today, my friend. That's
what I told Rachel.

PASCOW'S fixed eyes suddenly roll and his left hand bear traps LOUIS' right wrist. LOUIS stares. The dying man pulls him slowly but relentlessly down until their faces are only inches apart.

PASCOW
... Pet Sematary...

LOUIS recoils, breaking the grips of PASCOW'S hand... but he cannot quite snap the grip of those bright dying eyes.

LOUIS
(whispers)
W-What did you say...?

Blood leaks from PASCOW'S mouth. He struggles hard to speak again. At first he can only gurgle.

PASCOW
The soil of a man's heart is
stonier, Louis... a man grows what
he can... and tends it.

LOUIS leans forward again, terrified, yet needing to know.

LOUIS
How did you know my name?

PASCOW
(gurgling)
I'll come... to you.

LOUIS grabs PASCOW'S bloody shoulder.

LOUIS
(low but urgent)
Dammit, how did you know my name?

STEVE rushes back in, throwing the drape open loudly.

STEVE
Louis, they're...

Suddenly PASCOW spews more blood, covering LOUIS' face. He begins to spasm again. His hand comes up and paws at LOUIS' shirt, leaving a bloody handprint. Then it falls limp back. PASCOW is dead.

LOUIS

Get a sheet.

STEVE leaves again and LOUIS stares fixedly down at the body. He closes the eyes.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

It's the leading edge of Maine fall, sunny and wonderful. Here comes LOUIS' station wagon. As it reaches us, THE CAMERA SWIVELS TO TRACK.

RADIO (V.O.)

Tragedy struck on the first day of the University of Maine's fall semester when Victor Pascow, a nineteen-year-old sophomore was struck by a car on...

INT. THE WAGON WITH LOUIS - LATE AFTERNOON

He abruptly turns off the radio. He still looks shocked by the tragedy. The dying man's bloody handprint is partly visible on his shirt in spite of his sport-coat.

LOUIS

He said my name. I heard it. He said my name.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

All lights are off. It's late.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS and RACHEL are asleep, each on his/her own side of the big double. THE CAMERA MOVES IN ON LOUIS.

SOUND: Loud, hollow BANG. Very loud -- loud enough to wake the dead.

LOUIS sits up. Beside him, RACHEL sleeps on. LOUIS' eyes widen in terror as he stares at...

VICTOR PASCOW, standing in the doorway. He's exquisitely dead. Now pallid as well as smashed up.

PASCOW

Come on, doc. We got places to go.

LOUIS is in terror... But he's also in a state of near trance.

PASCOW

Come on, doc -- don't make me tell you twice.

LOUIS glances at RACHEL. She's still fast asleep. He gets out of bed careful not to disturb her. He's naked except for a pair of pajama bottoms.

PASCOW turns and leaves. LOUIS follows, stopping in the doorway to look back at the bed.

RACHEL is sleeping as before, and LOUIS himself is also in bed asleep, although his rest is uneasy... as if he's having a bad dream.

LOUIS

(relieved)

Oh. Thanks God.

PASCOW (V.O.)

(low)

Hurry up, doc.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

LOUIS enters and crosses toward the door which gives on the shed/garage. This door stands open. LOUIS pauses.

PASCOW (V.O.)

(low)

Come on, doc...

LOUIS goes into:

INT. THE SHED/GARAGE - NIGHT

The station wagon is a dark hulk. LOUIS crosses to it and stands, perplexed. PASCOW looms softly behind him and puts an arm around his shoulder. LOUIS turns and suddenly his face is less than an inch from PASCOW'S mutilated face.

PASCOW

Let's go, doc.

LOUIS

I don't like this dream.

PASCOW

Who said you were dreaming?

He begins to move toward the garage door. After a moment, LOUIS follows.

EXT. THE FIELD BEHIND THE HOUSE - NIGHT

We can see two shapes moving up the path toward the woods -- PASCOW and, behind him, LOUIS.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY - NIGHT

THE CAMERA HOLDS on the arch for a moment, then PANS DOWN to find LOUIS, looking around, obviously afraid. We can see why. By starlight this is one scary place. Suddenly LOUIS sees something and his fear really grabs him.

The face that we saw at the beginning of the movie is back in the deadfall, yawning and snarling. LOUIS walks toward it as if hypnotized. Without warning PASCOW'S hand falls on his shoulder again from behind.

PASCOW

This is the place where the dead speak.

LOUIS

I want to wake up. I want to wake up, that's all. I --

PASCOW

Don't go on, doc. No matter how
much you feel you have to. Don't go
on to the place where the dead
walk.

PASCOW points at the deadfall -- that grinning face -- and
perhaps now there are other effects as well -- subtle, but
there: Dim red light? A misty smoke drifting through the
tumbled dead branches?

After a moment there is A HUGE GRUNTING ROAR from the woods
beyond the deadfall -- it sounds like no animal we've ever
heard before. Then there is the SOUND of something enormous
shifting and snapping a tree like a toothpick.

LOUIS has crumbled to PASCOW'S feet. His eyes are squeezed
tightly shut.

LOUIS

Please, I want to wake up. Leave me
alone. It's not my fault you dies;
you were as good as dead when they
brought you in --

THE CAMERA MOVES TIGHT ON LOUIS, and we hear the SOUND of a
RADIO, up and LOUD:

RADIO VOICE

-- another beautiful day in Maine!
This is Michael O'Hara sayin' that
the git-go ain't gonna be that bad.
Temps are goin' all the way up to
70 and we got the Ramones for
Ludlow... here's "Sheena."

As the Ramones start "Sheena is a Punk Rocker," we CUT TO:

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - MORNING

LOUIS' eyes snap open. He's in his own bed. As he sits up,
THE ANGLE WIDENS so we can see that he's alone. After some
initial confusion and fear, LOUIS looks deeply relieved.
RACHEL'S voice comes from far away, downstairs.

RACHEL (V.O.)

You up, doc?

LOUIS

Gettin' ready.

RACHEL (O.S.)

I got eggs down here!

LOUIS

Good d--

He throws the covers back and freezes. His feet are covered with mud and pine needles. The sheets are greased with wood muck. LOUIS stares in utter terror. After a moment we CUT TO:

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL - MORNING

CLOSE ON LOUIS' hands which enter the frame and dump a bundle of sheets into a laundry chute. LOUIS stands by the chute for a moment, shaken, naked but for a towel around his waist. He's obviously fresh from the shower.

FADE TO BLACK.

In the blackness a third title card: CHURCH

Over this is a SOUND: WAOW!

THE TITLE DISAPPEARS and the black FADES UP TO:

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

CHURCH has returned. ELLIE comes running in from school excited to see him.

ELLIE

Oh, Church. You're home! You're home!

The television is showing a game show to no one. GAGE is crawling after the cat and RACHEL is ironing. LOUIS looks up from his reading and catches his wife's eye. She smiles warmly at him and looks back over at ELLIE.

ELLIE

I used part of my allowance to buy
you a box of cat treats.

She produces the treats and CHURCH limps over to where she sits on the floor. LOUIS watches the cat sadly. His walk is the slow, careful walk of a convalescent. He allows ELLIE to hand feed him. When GAGE moves in too close, ELLIE slaps at him. CHURCH is her cat.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A clock somewhere strikes midnight and LOUIS looks up finally from his books. The house is dark but for his reading light. RACHEL calls from upstairs.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Louis. It's twelve o'clock.

LOUIS

Just comin'.

Hesitantly, he turns out the light and stands for a moment in the dark.

INT. RACHEL AND LOUIS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS snaps out of an almost-sleep. RACHEL breathes evenly beside him, dead to the world.

LOUIS listens to the night sounds -- which are no sounds, except for those ever-present crickets and maybe distant drone of a tanker truck. But LOUIS hears something -- or thinks he does. He throws back the covers, gets out of bed and crosses to the door. His hand hesitates on the knob as he fights back his fear of who -- or what -- might be standing on the other side of the door. Suddenly he throws the door open wide...

Nothing. No one. LOUIS held breath leaves him in a long sigh of relief. He walks back to the bed, curls into the covers and falls asleep with one hand on his wife.

INT. THE INFIRMARY AT THE COLLEGE - DAY

LOUIS and STEVE MASTERSON and another young doctor, an Indian, walk down the hall past MARCY CHARLTON. They greet each other but we don't hear the words. There is only a MUSICAL SCORE which indicates that we are beginning a MONTAGE to indicate time passing.

INT. LOUIS' OFFICE - DAY

The others walk on past the open door and LOUIS comes into the room with his paper-bag-lunch. As he starts to eat a sandwich, he picks up an open file from his desk and, closing it, carries it to a file cabinet. As he plops it into a drawer we see the name on its tab: VICTOR PASCOW. LOUIS slams the drawer shut.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Still part of the MONTAGE. The T.V. now shows The Muppet Show to no one. RACHEL sits in a big armchair with GAGE and ELLIE curled in with her. She is reading them a book. Poor old invalid CHURCH rubs against RACHEL'S legs

LOUIS is working on an antique car model, using glue and tweezers to set the tiny parts in place.

EXT. TREES ON THE HILL BEHIND THE CREED HOUSE - DAY

The brazen color of Indian Summer rioting briefly.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE SAME TREES - DAY

The color has turned brown. The leaves are starting to fall.

INT. THE INFIRMARY - DAY

LOUIS sees patients, students led in by NURSE CHARLTON.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

MISSY DANDRIDGE sits the children while LOUIS and RACHEL leave the house all gussied-up.

INT. A MEETIN HALL -NIGHT

The members of the Council of Colleges are sipping and munching hors doeuvres at a mixer with husbands and wives attending. LOUIS introduces RACHEL around the room. She yawns. No one notices except LOUIS. He pinches her and no one notices that either.

INT. JUD CRANDALL'S PORCH - NIGHT

CLOSE ON ELLIE cacking like a witch. She's dressed in full costume and being escorted proudly by LOUIS on Trick-re-Treat night. She is rewarded for her performance by JUD who produces a treat basket. ELLIE takes an apple and a bite-size Snickers bar.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - DAY

ELLIE removes a Halloween witch from the window and replaces it with a Thanksgiving Pilgrim from Hallmark. It's snowing outside (if nature permits).

We can tell the MONTAGE is over because the MUSIC IS WINDING DOWN.

CHURCH is slinking in and out around a set of packed suitcases. GAGE is playing with a name tag on one of the handles. LOUIS and RACHEL are putting on their coats.

RACHEL

It's not right. I don't like to think of you rattling around the house on Thanksgiving Day. That's supposed to be a family holiday, Louis.

LOUIS

That's why you're going with the kids and without me. As far as your dad's concerned, I'm never going to be part of the family.

RACHEL

I want you around.

LOUIS

I'll be around plenty when you get
back.

She hugs him impulsively.

INT. THE BANGOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

RACHEL'S is being called and ELLIE is bouncing impatiently.

ELLIE

That's us, Mommy. Come on-come on
come on. They'll leave without us.

RACHEL

No they won't.

RACHEL clutches three boarding cards inn one hand and GAGE in
the other.

RACHEL

Louis Creed, I love you.

ELLIE

Mom-eeee.

RACHEL

Oh, alright. Be good, Louis.

LOUIS

Say hello to your folks.

RACHEL

Fun-nee.

LOUIS watches them move toward the boarding ramp.

EXT. THE AIRPORT PARKING LOT - DAY

LOUIS walks up to his station wagon fumbling for the keys.
The wind is zooming with such force, it almost tears his
hunter's cap off. He turns as the big jet carrying his family
off to Chicago rises beyond the terminal building.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

LOUIS runs in whipping off his cap. He rushes to the telephone which is ringing insistently.

LOUIS

Hello?

JUD

(filtered)

Louis? 'Fraid you may a spot of trouble here.

LOUIS

Jud? What trouble?

JUD

(filtered)

Well, there's a dead cat over here on the edge of my lawn. I think it might be your daughter's.

LOUIS

Church? Oh. Oh, Jesus.

EXT. THE CRANDALL HOUSE - AFTERNOON

LOUIS waits for one of those trucks to go blasting by and then crosses. It's cold and windy. Downed autumn leaves fly. LOUIS can see JUD bundled in a big green duffel coat, his face lost in the shadow cast by the fur fringed hood. Standing on his frozen lawn, he looks like a statuary, just another dead thing in this twilight landscape.

EXT. THE CAT'S BODY - AFTERNOON

It's lying on it's belly. It doesn't seem much damaged. LOUIS' hands enter frame and lift the body by the tail. It makes a SOUND -- rrrriipp -- as LOUIS pulls it out of the frost it had set into.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD WITH THE CAT'S BODY - AFTERNOON

LOUIS

Yeah. It's Church.

LOUIS puts one hand under the cat's head and lifts it so the open eyes, now a dull green, stare into THE CAMERA. There's some blood on its ruff. That's all.

JUD

I'm sorry. At least it don't look like he suffered.

LOUIS

Ellie will, though. She'll suffer plenty.

From his jacket pocket he takes a green plastic garbage bag and hands it to JUD. JUD holds the bag's mouth open on the ground while LOUIS kind of shoves the body in. During this:

JUD

Loves that cat pretty well, doesn't she?

LOUIS

Yes.

He twists the bag shut and puts one of those plastic ties on it.

JUD

What are you gonna do with it?

LOUIS

Put him in the garage, I guess. Bury him in the morning.

JUD

In the Pet Sematary?

LOUIS

(shrugs)

Guess that's what it's there for, huh?

During all this JUD has grown peculiarly intense.

JUD

Going to tell Ellie?

LOUIS

I... I'll have to mull that one over a while. Maybe... maybe when they call I'll just tell Ellie I haven't seen the damn cat around. You know, I don't want to spoil her holiday. And Rachel's.

Twilight is falling. It's getting darker. JUD is quiet for a moment then he seems to reach a decision.

JUD

Maybe there's a better way.

EXT. THE START OF THE PATH TO THE PET SEMATARY - EVENING

LOUIS is carrying the plastic bag in one hand and a flashlight in the other. JUD has a pick and shovel and a flashlight of his own. There's a very little light left now.

LOUIS

Jud, this is crazy. It's dark. It's late. And cold.

JUD

Come on. Let's get it done.

LOUIS

It can wait until tomorrow when we can see.

JUD

Does she love the cat?

LOUIS

Yes, but --

JUD

Then come on.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY - LATE EVENING

It's very dark but not quite pitch when JUD and LOUIS enter under the arch.

LOUIS

Well, folks, here we are, in Louis
Creed dreamland.

JUD

What say, Louis?

LOUIS

Nothing.

(pause)

Do we plant him on the outer circle
or start a new one?

JUD

We're still not where we're going.

LOUIS

What do you mean?

JUD

The place we're going is on the
other side of that.

He walks past LOUIS, pointing toward the deadfall.

LOUIS

We can't climb over that. We'll
break our necks.

JUD

No we won't. I have climbed it a
time or two before, and I know all
the places to step. Just follow
me... move easy... don't look
down... and don't stop. If you stop
you'll crash through for sure.

JUD starts up the side of the deadfall, and in spite of its
snarled tangles, he mounts as easily as a man climbing a
flight of stairs. After a few seconds, LOUIS follows.

LOUIS

(low)

Thank God my Blue Cross is paid up.

EXT. THEIR FEET - EVENING

First JUD'S pass the camera, then LOUIS'; partly obscured by the swinging cat-bag. They unerringly find just the right branches and just as unerringly miss holes which look like ankle-breakers.

EXT. THE DEADFALL WITH LOUIS AND JUD - EVENING

LOUIS is grinning, exhilarated.

LOUIS
God, this is amazing!

There are beads of sweat on JUD'S face. He looks both stern and a little scared.

JUD
Just don't stop, and --

LOUIS looks down. A dead brunch snaps under one of his feet like a gunshot and that foot plunges down maybe six inches. LOUIS lurches to the edge of balance, then regains it.

LOUIS
-- and don't look down. Right --

JUD reaches the top and starts down the far side. LOUIS reaches the top.

LOUIS
(amazed)
Holy...

EXT. BIG GOD WOODS, LOUIS' P.O.V. - TWILIGHT

In the dying glow of twilight, this should be a mystic, awe inspired view. There's no more scrub underbrush; no junk pines and juniper-bracken here. Ancient firs rise almost like Sequoias. This is a real forest... an old forest. And winding upward among the trees, clearly marked by large white stones, the path goes on.

EXT. THE MEN AT THE DEADFALL - TWILIGHT

LOUIS has stopped on top of the deadfall, surveying all this with frank amazement.

JUD

(turning to look)

Come on, Louis -- don't stop!

LOUIS

I'm alright! I'm f--

One of the branches snaps. LOUIS' foot plunges. His cuff rips. He steps with his other foot, misses, and goes flying. He does a half-somersault in the air and hits the deadfall on his back. The green garbage bag leaves his hand. His flashlight also goes. Branches crack. White dust puffs out from under him. He thumps to the ground and JUD kneels beside him.

JUD

Louis! You alright?

LOUIS sits up groggily. His pants are torn. His sweatshirt is torn. His ankle is bleeding.

LOUIS

(dazed)

Sure. I guess I just lost my happy thoughts for a second there.

LOUIS gets slowly up and retrieves the bag, which is rather shredded now -- and we can see catfur through some of the rents.

LOUIS

It does bite.

He whaps the flashlight against his palm a time or two and the light comes on. Satisfied, he shuts it off.

LOUIS

Where are we going, Jud?

JUD

You'll see before long.

He starts off up the path. LOUIS follows, carrying the bag.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD IN THE FOREST - TWILIGHT

The sense of awe and mystery heightens as they go toiling up the path dwarfed by those ancient firs.

SOUND of crickets, low at first, then up to LOUD: Ree-ree-ree ree...

LOUIS almost walks into JUD'S back. The old man has stopped suddenly. His head is cocked to one side, his mouth pursed and tense.

LOUIS

Jud? What's --

JUD

Shhh!

SOUND: crackling underbrush and breaking branches. Something is moving out there -- something big. The sound seems at first distant, then very close. It moves away and then moves ominously toward them again. There's sweat on LOUIS' forehead now, trickling down to his chapped cheeks. He shifts the hefty bag with CHURCH'S body in it from hand to the other.

THE SOUND DISAPPEARS... then a shrill, maniacal laugh comes out of the darkness, loud, piercing, chilling. LOUIS is frozen solid as the laughter rises, splits into dry cackles, then sinks into a guttural chuckling that might become sobs before it fades out altogether.

LOUIS

What in Christ's name...?

JUD turns to look at him. In the dim light the old man looks a hundred and twenty.

JUD

Just a loon.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD AT THE EDGE OF LITTLE GOD SWAMP - TWILIGHT

Lots of undergrowth here, and creeping ground mist, too. The CRICKETS are now only part of the soundtrack: BUZZ OF CICADAS, THUMP OF FROGS. Swamp-sounds have been added. LOUIS looks frankly doubtful.

Dead trees poke out of the murk like twisted hands. There's scummy water standing around tussocks covered with long grass, most of it dead. All this fades away into grim, obscuring fog.

JUD

Micmac Indians used to call it
Little God Swamp.

LOUIS

Is there quicksand?

JUD

Ayuh.

LOUIS

(nervous; joking)
Are there ghosts?

JUD looks at him expressionlessly.

JUD

Ayuh.

JUD starts off, stepping to the first tussock. After a moment, LOUIS follows. JUD'S face is set, strange.

JUD

(walking)
There's a lot of funny things down
this way, Louis.

LOUIS

(walking)
You're telling me.

JUD

(walking)

The air's heavier... more
electrical... something. You might
see St. Elmo's fire... what the
sailors call 'foo-lights'. It makes
funny shapes, but it's nothing.

LOUIS looks up and his eyes widen as he sees a faintly
glowing ethereal shape hanging in the branches of one of the
dead trees. It looks a bit like a corpse. In fact, I think it
looks quite a bit like PASCOW'S corpse. As we watch it
fades... fades... is gone.

LOUIS

It's funny, alright.

JUD

Just don't stop, Louis. You don't
ever want to stop down here in
Little God.

(pause)

And you don't ever want to look
behind you, whatever you hear.

EXT. THE SWAMP WITH JUD AND LOUIS - NIGHT

They move through the mist like wraiths, JUD with his digging
tools, LOUIS with his Hefty bag coffin. The air of the swamp
glows dimly above them.

Those SWAPS SOUNDS surround us, engulf us.

EXT. A LOW, STONY BLUFF OR STEEP HILL - NIGHT

(In the book this is described as being almost a cliff, but a
rocky hill rising out of the woods would serve just as well.)
We can see steps cut into the side, and two figures -- LOUIS
and JUD -- toiling up them. JUD'S panting and out of breath;
LOUIS, if anything, is in worse shape.

JUD

Almost there, Louis.

LOUIS
You keep saying that.

JUD
This time I mean it.

JUD tops the last step and stands under the stars, the wind blowing his hair off his deeply lined brow. LOUIS joins him and stares ahead with undisguised wonder.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURIAL GROUND WITH LOUIS AND JUD - NIGHT

The top of the hill or bluff is bare. There are a number of rocky piles but for every pile of rocks there are ten littered heaps, as if the neat piles had been burst apart. There's a pattern to all this, the same pattern as in the Pet Sematary: concentric circles.

LOUIS
What is this place?

JUD
This was their burial ground.

LOUIS
Whose burial ground?

JUD
The Micmacs. I brought you here to bury Ellen's cat.

LOUIS
Why? For God's sake, why?

JUD
I had my reasons. Soil's thin but you'll manage.

He hands LOUIS the pick and shovel.

JUD

I'm gonna sit over yonder and have a smoke. I'd help you, but you've gotta do it yourself. Each buries his own. That's how it was done then.

JUD walks away, leaving LOUIS with the digging tools in one hand and the flashlight in the other.

EXT. LOOKING DOWN INTO A SHALLOW HOLE - NIGHT

SOUND: The wind. It blows ceaselessly up here.

The hole's about two and a half feet deep. Stubby rocks protrude from the sides. The pick comes down, hits a rock at the bottom, and flashes fire.

EXT. LOUIS AT THE SHALLOW HOLE - NIGHT

He drops the pick and sticks his hurt hands in his armpits.

JUD (V.O.)

Should be deep enough.

JUD joins LOUIS. Those tumbled piles of rocks are very obvious. Cairns. Indian grave markers.

LOUIS

Jud, why am I doing all this?

JUD

Because it's right.

JUD sets the rocks down and walks off again. LOUIS looks after him for a moment, then kneels down. He opens the garbage bag and looks in at CHURCH'S stiffening corpse.

LOUIS

Pax vobiscum. Church old buddy. You were a hell of a good cat. I doubt if you were worth all this aggravation, but you were a hell of a good cat.

He tumbles the bag containing the body into the grave, and then begins pushing the stony soil over it with the spade.

EXT. CHURCH'S GRAVE - NIGHT

LOUIS' hands come into the frame and add a final two or three stones to the finished cairn. He looks at it for a moment and stands up. JUD is right there.

JUD

That's fine. You done real good.

LOUIS looks at him.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

There's a light on in the kitchen, but that's all. There's silence at first, and then the PHONE STARTS RINGING.

LOUIS and JUD are coming down the path with their tools and their lights. They are both clearly fagged out. LOUIS hears the telephone.

LOUIS

Oh, shit! Rachel!

He drops the tools and sprints into the side yard. He runs to the door and inside. JUD stands there at the end of the path, eyes inscrutable.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The PHONE STOPS RINGING. A beat later LOUIS enters the room. He picks up the receiver, although he already knows it's too late. He listens to the SOUND of the dial tone, disgusted. He starts to dial a number from memory.

JUD (V.O.)

Louis.

LOUIS looks up to see JUD standing in the kitchen/living room doorway.

JUD

When you talk to 'em, not one word about what we done tonight. S'far's you know, the cat's still alive. We'll talk more about all this and by then you'll understand more.

LOUIS lowers the phone receiver into the cradle.

LOUIS

Jud... what did we do tonight?

JUD

Why, we buried your daughter's cat.

LOUIS

Is that all we did?

JUD

What we did, Louis, was a secret thing. Women are supposed to be the ones who are good at keeping secrets, but any woman who knows anything at all would tell you she's never seen into a man's heart. The soil of a man's heart is stonier, Louis -- like the soil up there in the old Micmac burying ground. A man grows what he can... and tends it.

During this, he's come across the room to LOUIS and dropped his hand on LOUIS' shoulder... just the way PASCOW had done in LOUIS' bad dream.

EXT. THE ROAD WITH JUD - NIGHT

SOUNDS: Boops and beeps of touch-tone dialing. Ringing. Then:

DORY GOLDMAN

(filtered)

Goldman residence.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Hi, Dory... it's Louis --

During this, another SOUND has been growing: an approaching truck. As JUD gains his side of the road, he looks back and we read fear on his face -- no matter what he said to LOUIS, he's sorry for tonight's piece of work.

A moment later a highballing Orinco truck cuts between THE CAMERA and JUD.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He's on the phone, trying to smile with his voice.

DORY
(filtered)
You want to talk to your daughter?

LOUIS
That's be real fine.

ELLIE
(filtered)
Hi... daddy?

LOUIS
Hi, babe. How are things out there
in Chicagoland?

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ELLIE is dressed for bed in fuzzy pink pajamas. Her Chatty Cathy is crooked in one arm. In her lap is a Garfield transistor radio. Nearby we can see DORY and IRWIN GOLDMAN, ELLIE'S grandparents, RACHEL'S mom and dad. DORY smiles as she watches the little girl. IRWIN looks disinterested -- a little disgusted. He really dislikes LOUIS.

ELLIE
Grandma and grandpa gave me all
sorts of neat things. How's Church,
daddy? Does he miss me?

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

The smile fades off his face. It's replaced with a look of combined guilt and unhappiness. He looks at his hands, which are still dark with the dirt from CHURCH'S grave.

LOUIS

Well... I guess he's just fine,
Ellie. I haven't seen him this
evening, but --

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM WITH ELLIE - NIGHT

RACHEL, holding GAGE, sits on the arm of ELLIE'S chair.

ELLIE

Well, make sure you out him down
cellar before you go to bed so he
can't run out in the road. And kiss
him goodnight for me.

LOUIS

(filtered)

Yuck! Kiss your own cat!

ELLIE

Want to talk to Gage?

Before LOUIS can answer, she puts the phone in GAGE'S hand. ELLIE and RACHEL watch, amused, as GAGE gobbles into it.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

From the telephone comes the SOUND of GAGE talking and chortling. LOUIS is not listening. His eyes -- and his mind -- are far away.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - MORNING

LOUIS is raking leaves on the side lawn, near the tree with the tire swing. After a moment or two of this, he props the rake against the tree and starts toward the garage. He goes in.

INT. THE GARAGE WITH LOUIS - MORNING

It's dim in here. LOUIS is crossing to the door which communicates to the kitchen. As he passes the station wagon, he hears a cat HISS. He turns.

CHURCH is on top of the car. THE CAMERA is so close that the cat looks like he's coming right down our throats. LOUIS recoils and stumbles backward with a cry. He hits a wall-rack and tools fall to the floor with a LOUD JANGLING NOISE. CHURCH jumps down from the car and THE CAMERA TRACKS as he goes flying out the garage door into the sunlight.

LOUIS

Church!

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN WITH LOUIS - MORNING

He's spooning out cat food into a dish. He takes the dish to the door and moves outside.

EXT. THE KITCHEN STOOP WITH LOUIS - MORNING

He puts the dish of food down and sits beside it.

LOUIS

Food, Church... food!

SOUND: Miaow. CHURCH comes slinking out of the bushes and moves slowly toward LOUIS. He stops, looking mistrustful.

LOUIS

Come on, Church! Chow down!

CHURCH crosses to the stoop and begins eating the food.

LOUIS

(to himself)

Christ. I don't believe this.

He picks CHURCH up and the cat miaows again -- he wants the food.

LOUIS
(wincing)
You stink, Church.

The cat is looking at the food, trying to get out of LOUIS' arms.

LOUIS
In a second.

He tilts the head back so he can get a look at CHURCH'S neck. There's some sort of mark here -- a clear remnant of the collision with the truck. A line of white fur, or perhaps a dark red scar where no fur at all grows. LOUIS sees something else as he lets the cat's neck go. He tweezes it out of CHURCH'S whiskers. It's a shred of green plastic.

LOUIS
Chewed his way out. Jesus
Baldheaded Christ, he ch--

CHURCH suddenly claws at his face.

LOUIS
Ow!

He slaps his hand to his face. CHURCH leaps for the food. LOUIS slowly takes his hand away. There are claw marks on his cheek, welling blood.

EXT. JUD CRANDALL'S GARDEN WITH JUD - DAY

The garden is a plot of about half an acre. JUD comes trundling slowly along a row, pushing a wheelbarrow loaded with pumpkins. He notices a real big pumpkin on the ground, stops, and bends over to get it. He slits the vine with a pocket knife, gets the pumpkin in his arms and stands up. He turns... and LOUIS is right there (kind of a cheap jump, but always fun), looking totally stunned. JUD, startled, drops the pumpkin.

LOUIS
What did we do?

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN - DAY

LOUIS is sitting at the kitchen table. JUD comes from the fridge with a couple of long-necked bottles of beer.

LOUIS

I tried to tell myself I buried him alive. I'm not a vet... it was dark...

JUD

Sure it was dark, but his head swiveled on his neck like it was full of ball bearings, and when you moved him he pulled out of the frost, Louis -- sounded like a piece of ticky tape comin' off a letter. Live things don't do that. You only stop meltin' the frost under where you're layin' when you're dead.

LOUIS

I feel like I'm going crazy...

LOUIS drinks about half his beer in one long pull. He needs it. JUD sits across the table from him and settles in for a long talk.

JUD

It was the rag-man told me about the place -- Stanley Bouchard. Us kids just called him Stanny B. He was half Micmac himself.

EXT. JUD AS A BOY (SEPIA TONE) - DAY

The time here is about 1910. JUD is wearing short pants, he's crying as if he means to keep doing it for a long time.

JUD (V.O.)

I loved my dog a lot, Louis. When Spot died, I thought I was gonna die.

JUD is sitting on the front stoop. It's the same house JUD lives in now, but the porch hasn't been added yet, and the road is dirt rather than tar. Along the road comes a horse drawn wagon -- STANNY B.'S wagon, full of junk, rags, bottles... Stuff to sell and swap. Strung across the top are bells, and we can hear their CHIMING SOUND... but faint, like bells heard in a dream.

STANNY B. is old and drunk. Dust spumes up behind the wagon as he draws up to the Crandall house and stops. He gets down, almost falls, takes a bottle out of his back pocket, drinks, and approaches JUD. We can see his speaking, but we can't hear.

JUD (V.O.)

Stanny B. did for me what I did for
you last night, Louis. Only I
wasn't alone when Spot came back.

EXT. THE CRANDALL BACK YARD (SEPIA TONE) - DAY

JUD'S MOTHER is back to THE CAMERA, hanging sheets on the line. The sheets billow and suddenly, pushing out from behind them, quite near her, is a small mongrel dog. SPOT. He's covered with graveyard dirt. His eyes are red and rolling. He splashes the sheets with the muck of his passage.

JUD (V.O.)

My mother was with me,

She sees the dog and backs away, horrified.

JUD (V.O.)

He'd got caught in bobwire that
infected. You could still see the
marks on him.

And so we can, around his neck and along the side of his head. These marks are the counterparts of the marks we've already seen on CHURCH.

The BOY JUD comes rushing out of the house. HIS MOTHER is cringing against the fence at the rear of the yard. SPOT stands in front of her, swaying from side to side, as if doped.

JUD'S MOM

(dim; far)

Get your dog, Jud! He stinks of the ground you buried him in! Come here and get your dog!

INT. JUD AND LOUIS IN JUD'S KITCHEN - DAY

JUD

Spot lived another four years. He dies peacefully in the night that second time, and I buried him in the Pet Sematary... where his bones still lie.

LOUIS

Your mother knew all about it. All about... that place.

JUD

Ayuh. Lots of folks around here know. You best keep quiet, though, they might not take kindly to an outsider having the secret. How many times has this story been passed along, I wonder? A story that's just the same except for the names.

The men sit for a time, their beer bottles empty. Then JUD looks at LOUIS.

JUD

You asked me why I led you up there. A man doesn't always know why he does things, Louis. I think I did it because your daughter ain't ready for her favorite pet to die. Maybe with more time she'll learn what death really is, which is where pain stops and the good memories begin. Not the end of life but the end of pain. If she's anything like me, she'll go on loving her pet. She'll go on loving it... but she'll draw her own conclusions... and she'll breathe a sigh of relief when it finally dies.

LOUIS

That's why you took me up there?

JUD

That's why, but it ain't why. I did it for the same reason Stanny B. did it. You do it because it gets hold of you. You do it because that burial place is a secret place and you want to share the secret. You make up reasons, but mostly you do it because you want to. Or because you have to. Stanny B. had been up there... and he took me... and seventy years go by... and then... all at once...

JUD shakes his head and coughs drily into the palm of his hand.

JUD

Louis, if you was to take your cat out tonight and kill it, I would never say a word. That place... all at once it gets hold of you.

CHURCH looks up at him with dull, muddy eyes.

THE SOUND OF JET ENGINES.

EXT. A DELTA 727 - DAY

Its landing gear unfold preparatory to touching down at Bangor International Airport.

INT. A DEPLANING AREA - DAY

Lots of people making their way up the jetway. LOUIS looking them over anxiously. In one hand he's got half a dozen roses. His face lights up. Here comes LOUIS' family. ELLIE is a little ahead. RACHEL is pushing GAGE in his stroller. ELLIE sees LOUIS and runs for him.

ELLIE

Daddy!

She leaps into her arms. LOUIS swings her cheerfully.

LOUIS

Hi, sugar!

She smacks him noisily. He smacks her back just as noisily.

ELLIE

Daddy, is Church alright?

LOUIS' face changes. All at once he's watchful.

LOUIS

Yes... I guess so. He was sleeping on the front porch when I left.

ELLIE

Cause I had a dream about him. I dreamed he got hit by a car and you and Mr. Crandall buried him in the Pet Sematary.

LOUIS

(trying to smile)

That was a silly dream, wasn't it?

ELLIE
Is he really alright?

LOUIS
Yes.

ELLIE
Because you promised.

LOUIS
I know.

RACHEL reaches them. She's pretty tired. Hair hanging in her face, good travelling clothes now looking a bit wrinkled and a bit stale.

RACHEL
Want to take you son, doc?

LOUIS does. GAGE is ecstatic. LOUIS kisses RACHEL deeply.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

CHURCH is at the door, waiting to be let in. ELLIE does the honors. The cat oils out into the shed/garage and Ellie closes the door. She looks distressed. She crosses the kitchen again.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

RACHEL, in a flannel nightgown, is watching TV. LOUIS is reading a medical tome and making notes. GAGE, zipped into a warm blanket suit, is sacking on the couch.

ELLIE
(entering)
Can cats have shampoos?

RACHEL
Yes -- you have to take them so
someone who grooms animals, though.
I think it's pretty expensive.

ELLIE

(still upset)

I don't care. I'll save up my allowance and pay for it. Church smells bad.

LOUIS

I've noticed it, too. I'll cough up the money, Ellen.

ELLIE

I hate that smell.

LOUIS looks both grim and sad -- a man discovering that what you pay for you own, and what you own always comes home to you.

LOUIS

Yes -- I hate it, too.

BLACK. And on it, a fourth title card: MISSY DANDRIDGE.

SOUND: a pen scratching over paper.

THE TITLE DISAPPEARS and the black FADES UP ON:

INT. A STUDY DESK - NIGHT

A single sheet of lined paper is spotlighted by the glow of a desk lamp. On it, MISSY'S right hand is just finishing: "Doctor says Intestinal Cancer. Cannot face this pain. Sorry."

INT. THE DANDRIDGE CELLAR - NIGHT

A light comes on and we see a hangman's noose strung over a beam. It dangles above a kitchen table which has been relegated to cellar duty.

SOUND: Descending footsteps.

INT. THE NOOSE - NIGHT

SOUND of MISSY climbing onto the table. Her fame enters the frame. She looks very sick. She puts her head into the noose and rakes it tight to the hyoid bone.

EXT. THE DANDRIDGE HOUSE - NIGHT

One light on... a cellar light.

SOUND: Ree-ree-ree... then...

SOUND: Kick! THUMP!

SOUND: Ree-ree-ree...

INT. THE CELLAR WITH MISSY DANDRIDGE - NIGHT

She hangs limply, hands dangling at her sides, above the table, which now lies upon its side. We can see the note clearly. She pinned it to the bodice of her housedress.

SOUND: Car engines starting up.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE GRACE METHODIST CHURCH - DAY

People are coming out and getting into their cars and turning on their headlights. In the immediate f.g, is a hearse. Four pall-bearers are loading a coffin into it.

EXT. LOUIS AND ELLIE ON THE CHURCH STEPS - DAY

ELLIE

They're all turning on their
lights! Daddy, why are they turning
on their lights in the middle of
the day?

JUD, dressed in a rusty old black suit and a black tie, comes out and stands with them. He looks haggard and old.

JUD

They do it to honor the dead,
Ellen.

ELLIE

Is that right, dad?

LOUIS

Yes. To honor the dead.

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETERY - DAY

The mourners are gathered around the grave of MISSY DANDRIDGE. The coffin rests above it on runners.

MINISTER

May the Lord bless you and keep
you; may the Lord make his face to
shine upon you, and comfort you,
and lift you up, and give you
peace. Amen.

As the mourners begin to break up, LOUIS, ELLIE, and JUD start back toward LOUIS' car. THE CAMERA DOLLIES WITH THEM.

JUD

Rachel not feeling well?

LOUIS

Well... a touch of the flu...

ELLIE

She's in bed. She was throwing up.
Ever since Mrs. Rogers called and
said Missy --

LOUIS

That's enough, Ellen.

They've reached the CREED station wagon. LOUIS opens the front passenger door.

LOUIS

Hop in.

Ellie does, and LOUIS closes the door.

JUD

Poor Missy. I don't know why God takes someone like her, who should have a bunch o' years still in front of her, and lets an old shit like me just go on and on.

LOUIS

My father used to have a saying, Jud -- "God sees the truth, but waits."

JUD

Ayuh... how's your cat, Louis?

LOUIS

It's Ellie's cat.

JUD

Nope. It's your cat now.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS sits watching the news. ELLIE comes into the room and he uses the remote control to shut up the TV. She's dressed for bed. She comes toward him slowly.

LOUIS

What's up, sugar?

ELLIE

Daddy, do you think Missy Dandridge went to heaven?

INT. THE KITCHEN WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She'd putting away the last of the supper things. She hears this and moves toward the living room door to listen. She doesn't look at all well. Her eyes are red from crying and her face is haggard.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ELLIE

At school Michael McDowell said she was gonna fry in hell. Michael McDowell says all sewersides fry in heaven.

LOUIS

Well, I think Michael McDowell is so full of shit he probably squeaks when he walks... but don't you dare say that.

ELLIE

I won't. Is Missy in heaven, do you think?

LOUIS

I don't know, honey. Different people believe all sorts of different things. Some believe in heaven or hell. Some think we're born again as little children. Some think we just wink out... like a candle flame when the wind blows hard.

ELLIE

Do you believe that?

LOUIS looks toward the sofa where CHURCH is sleeping.

LOUIS

No. i think we go on. I'm not sure what happens after we die, but I think we go on, yeah -- I have faith in that.

ELLIE

You believe in it.

LOUIS

Oh, faith's a little more than just believing.

RACHEL stands in the kitchen door, listening intently.

INT. LOUIS AND RACHEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS is in bed reading. RACHEL, wearing a robe over her nightgown, comes in and sits on the bed, an indication that she wants to talk.

RACHEL

I heard you and Ellie tonight.

LOUIS

I thought maybe you did. I know you don't approve of the subject.

RACHEL

I just get... scared. And you know me. When I get scared, I get defensive.

LOUIS

Scared of what? Dying?

RACHEL

(struggling to get the words out)

My... my sister... Zelda...

LOUIS sets down his book and gives her his full attention. She's going to talk about Zelda... for the first time in their marriage.

LOUIS

I know she died... spinal meningitis.

RACHEL

She caught it... and she was in the back bedroom... she was in the back bedroom like a dirty secret. Louis, she was dying in there, my sister died in the back bedroom and that's what she was, a dirty secret.

Suddenly RACHEL breaks down completely. LOUIS, alarmed, reaches for her and catches a shoulder but she pulls away.

LOUIS

Rachel -- babe -- don't --

RACHEL

Don't tell me don't. Don't stop me, Louis. I've only got the strength to tell this once.

LOUIS

Was it that horrible?

RACHEL

Worse than you can ever imagine. We watched her degenerate day by day and there was nothing anyone could do.

INT. ZELDA'S BEDROOM (SEPIA TONE) - DAY

The scene has the same dream-like quality as in JUD'S story about STANNY B. We see ZELDA in her bed. She is shriveled -- pulled in on herself -- her shoulders hunched up and her face pulled down as though it were a mask. She's monstrous, with hands like birds' feet.

RACHEL, a little girl of eight, comes in with a tray.

RACHEL (V.O.)

I had to feed her sometimes. I hated it but I did it.

RACHEL feeds ZELDA some kind of sickening-looking soup. ZELDA feeds from the big spoon, drooling all over her front.

RACHEL (V.O.)

We wanted her to die, Louis, we wished for her to die, and it wasn't just so she wouldn't feel any more pain, it was so we wouldn't feel any more pain. It was because she was starting to look like a monster... she was starting to be a monster...

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

RACHEL

I wake up some nights... even now I wake up and think... I think 'Is Zelda dead yet? Is she?

RACHEL catches her breath. LOUIS takes her hand and she squeezes his fingers with savage tightness.

RACHEL

Near the end the drugs stopped working. She started screaming then and none of us could remember the way she was before.

INT. ZELDA'S BEDROOM WITH ZELDA (SEPIA TONE) - NIGHT

ZELDA is hideously deformed now and screaming like a demon. We hear the screams as though they are far off.

RACHEL (V.O.)

She was this foul, hateful, screaming thing in the back bedroom.

INT. THE GOLDMAN HOUSE (SEPIA TONE) - NIGHT

DORY and IRWIN are dressed in evening clothes and leaving through the front door. RACHEL, age eight, is left alone with those dim screams.

RACHEL (V.O.)

My parents were gone. When she died, my parents were gone. I was alone with her... and she was still screaming...

The SCREAMS start to echo, now, and warp.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

RACHEL

I was eight. I had started to think Zelda hated me because my back was straight, because I didn't have the constant pain, because I could walk, because I was going to live. I started to imagine she wanted to kill me.

LOUIS holds her tightly against him now. She's in a bad way but determined to get the rest of the story told.

RACHEL

When she stopped screaming... I went to see if everything was alright.

INT. ZELDA'S BEDROOM (SEPIA TONE) - NIGHT

ZELDA is curled in bed, her body twitching violently.

RACHEL (V.O.)

I thought she must have swallowed her own tongue. She was choking to death. I didn't know what to do! I was eight!

Little girl RACHEL rushes to ZELDA'S side. There is spit coming down ZELDA'S chin and she is making the same SOUND that PASCOW made when he was dying in LOUIS' arms: Gaaaaaaa --

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS

Rachel, that's enough.

RACHEL

I'm explaining. I'm explaining why
I didn't go to poor Missy's funeral
and why we had that stupid fight
that day.

LOUIS

Shh -- that's forgotten.

RACHEL

Not by me, it isn't. I remember it
well, Louis. I remember it as well
as I remember my sister Zelda
choking to death in her bed.

INT. ZELDA'S BEDROOM (SEPIA TONE) - NIGHT

THE CAMERA shows us what RACHEL narrates in gruesome detail
with the images slightly distorted and possibly in slow
motion. The SOUND still has that far off quality.

RACHEL (V.O.)

I turned her over on her belly and
thumped her back. It's all I knew
to do. Her feet were beating up and
down... and her twisted legs. She
started to... to convulse... and I
thought, oh, she's choking. Zelda's
choking, and they'll come home and
say I murdered her by choking,
they'll say 'You hated her,
Rachel', and that was true, and
they'll say 'You wanted her to be
dead', and that was true, too...

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

RACHEL is regressing, reliving the nightmare. LOUIS clings to
her but she doesn't seem to know he's there.

RACHEL

I turned her over again and her face had gone black and her eyes were bulging and her neck was swelled up. Then she died. I started to scream. I ran out of the house screaming. 'Zelda's dead! Zelda's dead! Zelda's dead!' And the neighbors... they came and they looked. They thought I was crying but I think... I think maybe I was laughing. I think maybe that's what I was doing.

LOUIS

If you were, I salute you for it.

RACHEL, the story told, starts to calm down.

LOUIS

Yes, I salute you for it. And if I needed another reason to... to really dislike your mother and father, I've got it now. You never should have been left alone with her, Rachel. Never. Where was the nurse? There should have been an R.N. They went out, they actually went out and left an eight-year-old kid in charge of her dying sister, who was probably clinically insane by then? Where was the R-fucking-N?

LOUIS gets up out of bed and moves toward the bathroom.

RACHEL

Where are you going?

LOUIS

To get you a valium.

RACHEL

You know I don't --

LOUIS

Tonight you do.

In the bathroom he rummages through some pill bottles which are high in the medicine chest.

LOUIS

If you told me this before, it would have explained a hell of a lot.

RACHEL

Lou, I couldn't. I've been... I guess a little phobic on the subject.

LOUIS

Just a little phobic. Yeah, right.

He comes back with the pills and a little Daisy cup full of tap water.

RACHEL

That day I blew up at you... I'm sorry, Louis.

She takes her valium and swallows it with the water. LOUIS strokes her hair.

LOUIS

No apology needed. But what the hell, I accept it anyway, it it'll make you, feel better.

RACHEL

It does, you know. I do feel better. I feel as if I just sicked up something that's poisoned part of me for years.

RACHEL lies back on the bed and her eyes slip closed. LOUIS curls in beside her, stomach-to-back, and soothes her with his hands.

RACHEL
(drowsily)
Don't blame it all on my father,
Louis. Please. That was a terrible
time for them.

Then she seems to fall asleep, leaving LOUIS alone with his thoughts.

FADE TO BLACK.

A fifth card: GAGE

SOUND: An idling truck motor.

EXT. THE GRILLE OF A TRUCK - DAY

It looks monstrous... as high as a mountain. It's an Orinco tanker. The driver, a young man in khaki fatigues and a baseball cap, climbs up into the cab. He slams the door and jams the truck into gear.

EXT. THE ORINCO SHIPPING YARD - DAY

The truck comes rolling slowly toward the main gate... stops so the driver can look both ways... and then pulls slowly out onto Route 15.

EXT. ROUTE 15 WITH THE TRUCK - DAY

Getting up to speed.

EXT. A KITE - DAY

There's a hand holding it -- LOUIS'. The kite begins to move and THE CAMERA TRACKS IT. It flaps and flutters.

EXT. THE FIELD BESIDE THE CREED HOUSE - DAY

LOUIS runs with the kite beneath a gorgeous sky in which fat white clouds move like airy ocean liners.

ELLIE (V.O.)
Go, daddy!

At a picnic table the remains of lunch are spread. In attendance: RACHEL, ELLIE, and JUD CRANDALL. Looks like everyone ate well.

GAGE

Go, dayee!

They all laugh -- JUD ruffle the kid's hair. LOUIS runs through the field paying out string as the kite goes up.

INT. THE CAB OF THE ORINCO TRUCK - DAY

The driver is whistling. A transistor radio hangs from the rear-view mirror on a strap. He turns it on. The Ramones. "Sheena." Hey-ho, let's go.

EXT. ROUTE 15, TRUCKER'S P.O.V. - DAY

Unrolling before us at a good clip - too good, maybe.

INT. THE TRUCKER'S FOOT - DAY

Stamping the pedal closer to the metal.

EXT. ROUTE 15 WITH THE ONCOMING TRUCK - DAY

Belting toward THE CAMERA, SOUND of the growling engine.

EXT. THE FIELD - DAY

LOUIS has gotten the kite up okay. He's holding the string, looking up at the sky. Now he looks back at the picnic table.

LOUIS

Hey, Gage!

GAGE gets down and runs toward his father. The others watch, GAGE'S chubby legs bring him to LOUIS who transfers the ball of string into his little hands.

GAGE

Dat?

JUD'S lighting a cigarette. RACHEL is picking up paper plates.

ELLIE

I want to fly it! Can I fly it now, mommy?

RACHEL

In a minute, hon. Let Gage finish his turn.

LOUIS runs along behind his son. This is the last moment of happiness in this man's life -- so let's make it very happy -- as he and GAGE stare up at the kite.

There's a strong gust of wind. The ball of string falls out of GAGE'S hand.

ELLIE

It got away from him! That numb shit!

RACHEL

Ellen Creed!

SOUND: The oncoming truck.

EXT. THE TRUCK - DAY

Slamming towards us -- a brutal leviathan on eighteen wheels.

EXT. THE FIELD - DAY

LOUIS is looking -- looking toward his people at the picnic table.

LOUIS

(shrugs, good humored)
What can you d--

Alarm hits JUD'S face. He rises.

JUD

Don't get him go in the road, Louis!

RACHEL looks; registers terrible alarm.

RACHEL

(screams)

Get him, Louis! GET THE BABY!!

Jud starts running toward the road, although he'll never get there in time; only LOUIS has a chance. Horrible understanding dawns on LOUIS' face. The kid's almost in the road; the ball of twine is in it.

RISING DRONE OF THE TRUCK.

GAGE

Geddit-geddit-geddit!

EXT. EVERYONE, KITE'S P.O.V. - DAY

GAGE reaches the road as the truck enters frame. LOUIS is running across the field, getting close. RACHEL is clutching ELLIE by the picnic table. JUD is helplessly trying to wave the truck down.

EXT. VARIOUS ANGLES - DAY

GAGE reaches the broken white line and grabs the ball of string.

SOUND of the incoming truck. GAGE turns his head.

GAGE

(not afraid)

Druck!

In the cab, the driver's face turns into a Halloween mask of horror. He BLASTS THE AIR HORN.

LOUIS

(shrieks)

NO!!

A shadow falls over GAGE'S face. There is an audible CLICK!
And we FREEZE FRAME.

What we have now is a tremendously winning photograph of a little boy, not quite two, with a ball of string in his hand... and a shadow lying across his face.

MONTAGE of other still photos, each appearing with a loud camera CLICK!

a.) LOUIS is pushing RACHEL out of a hospital door. RACHEL is in a wheelchair and looks radiantly happy (so, for that matter, does LOUIS). I think we may safely assume that the small blanketed bundle in RACHEL'S arms is GAGE.

b.) LOUIS, bare to the waist, is tubbing, a two-month-old GAGE in a baby-tub. He's laughing. The infant looks confused but calm.

c.) The whole family by the Christmas tree, following an orgy of present-opening. ELLIE, about five, has a doll in each hand. LOUIS and RACHEL are in pajamas. GAGE, about five months, is lying in a drift of wrapping paper. He looks.

d.) A child's sneaker lying in the road. It's splashed with blood.

e.) GAGE -- he's about nine months old in his nap -- is propped up in the angle of a sofa. There's a big white rabbit in his lap. GAGE looks c. but c.

f.) ELLIE and GAGE, bundled up against the Chicago winter. ELLIE is pulling a child's chair-sled. GAGE is propped up in the chair. He's about eleven months old in this snap. He's laughing.

g.) The Orinco tanker, overturned on the far side of Route 15.

h.) This one has taken at GAGE'S first birthday party. He's wearing a party-hat and looking at a birthday cake with a single candle on it while LOUIS kisses one cheek and RACHEL kisses the other.

i.) LOUIS, in the road. He's holding GAGE'S jumper, which is torn, blood-soaked, and inside-out. LOUIS is looking up toward the sky and screaming.

j.) Here is a full-face studio portrait of GAGE. He is smiling at us, heartbreakingly lovely. While THE CAMERA HOLDS on this, we hear:

JUD (V.O.)
Sedative finally took hold.
Rachel's asleep.

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He's holding the studio portrait (j.) In his hands and looking at it fixedly. The other photoes (the good ones, that is; not the screamers -- those we may assume exist only in LOUIS' tortured memory) are scattered on the table. We only saw a few; there are actually hundreds.

LOUIS puts the portrait down as JUD comes in and crosses to the fridge and gets a couple of beers.

JUD
Your father-in-law and his wife
ain't stayin' here, I see.

LOUIS
No... squatting out there at the
Holiday Inn like a couple of
vultures. He wants Rachel to go
back with them after the funeral.
Her and Ellie.

JUD
Louis --

The swing door opens and ELLIE walks in looking dazed and shocked. There are brown circles under her eyes, but otherwise her complexion is much too white. She's wearing fuzzy pj's. She's carrying the picture of her pulling GAGE on the sled.

ELLIE
(coming to the table)
I want to go back to my own room. I
can't sleep with mommy. She keeps
stealing the covers.

JUD

What you got there, Ellie?

At first she doesn't want to show him, but JUD is very kind.

JUD

(studying it)

Why, that's real nice... you
pullin' him on a sled. Bet he liked
that, didn't he?

ELLIE nods. She is starting to cry. JUD is also leaking at
the eyes.

ELLIE

(crying)

I used to pull 'im a lot.

LOUIS looks down at his hands, nods.

ELLIE

I'm gonna carry this picture, Mr.
Crandall, until God lets GAGE come
back.

JUD reacts violently. And LOUIS looks up, dully curious...
but hasn't the thought already passed through LOUIS' mind?
Yes -- I think it has.

JUD

Ellie... God doesn't do things like
that. I know you loved your
brother, but --

ELLIE

He can if he wants to. He can do
anything, just like Inspector
Gadget on TV. I have to keep his
things ready for him, that's what I
think. I've got this picture and
I'm gonna sit in his chair --

LOUIS

Ellie --

ELLIE

-- and I'm gonna eat his breakfast cereal, too, even though it tastes like boogers. And... and...

She bursts into tears.

JUD

Louis, take care of your little girl... she needs you.

LOUIS' face is stricken. As THE CAMERA HOLDS on him, we hear:

IRWIN GOLDMAN (V.O.)

I knew something like this would happen. I told her when you were first married. 'You'll have all the grief you can stand, and more,' I said.

INT. A FUNERAL CHAPEL WITH IRWIN GOLDMAN AND LOUIS - DAY

There are others in the background, all concentrating on the scene the old man is making. LOUIS looks terribly shattered (they both do, actually). He's staring at RACHEL'S father as if he cannot in the least comprehend what he's saying.

IRWIN (CONT'D)

And now look at this!

He gestures toward the front of the chapel where, half-buried in floral tributes, is a child-sized coffin. GAGE'S.

IRWIN

(weeping)

Run over in the road like a... a chipmunk! I hope you rot in hell! In hell, do you hear me?

Everyone can hear him; by now he's screaming his head off.

IRWIN

Where were you while he was playing
in the road? Thinking about your
stupid medical articles? You
stinking shit! You killer of
children! You --

But there is now way IRWIN can express his outrage with more words. As LOUIS stares numbly at him, IRWIN punches him in the nose. LOUIS, taken off guard, sprawls backward, falling over a pew onto the floor.

RACHEL and her mother, DORY, are at the rear of the chapel. RACHEL screams and starts forward. DORY pulls her back.

RACHEL

Louis! Daddy! Stop it! STOP IT!

LOUIS starts to get up groggily. His nose is pouring blood.

IRWIN

How do you like that you son of a
bitch? I should have done it
sooner!

IRWIN kicks him in the stomach. LOUIS "oofs" and doubles over. Among the other mourners we see STEVE MASTERSON and MARCY CHARLTON.

STEVE

Hey!

LOUIS is slowly straightening up. IRWIN, in a sour frenzy of glee, hauls back to kick him again, but when the foot comes forward, LOUIS grabs it and pushes with both hands. IRWIN goes stumbling and falling backwards... strikes the coffin... knocks it off its bier. A SCREAM goes up from the mourners.

The coffin hits the floor with a huge crash. The latch snaps and the lid pops partially open. Inside, LOUIS can see -- in that split instant before the lid slams shut again -- a flash of gray (GAGE'S suit) and a bit of pink (GAGE'S hand).

RACHEL screams. Her mother struggles to hold her but she easily breaks free and goes down the aisle.

MARCY CHARLTON

(to Steve)

Stop them. Right now.

STEVE charges toward the front of the chapel where IRWIN is picking himself out of a tangled mass of coffin and overturned floral tributes. His suit is wet from spilled water. He's weeping loudly now. LOUIS leaps off the floor to attack the man. That stunned look is gone. STEVE MASTERSON gets between them as the last possible moment.

STEVE

Stop it! Jesus, what's wrong with you, LOUIS? It's your son's funeral!

This gets to LOUIS. He drops his first. That stunned expression creeps over his face again -- that look that says he doesn't have the slightest clue as to what's going on or how it could possibly have happened.

LOUIS turns toward the front pew. IRWIN shuffles toward him, hands outstretched.

IRWIN

I don't know what happened to me,
Louis, please --

LOUIS brushes by him with no acknowledgement that IRWIN even exists. He kneels down slowly by the coffin and puts his head against it. RACHEL steps up and stands over her husband for a moment. DORY comes up behind her and RACHEL turns, falls into her mother's arms, and weeps uncontrollably.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS comes in with ELLIE in his arms. He puts her gently into her bed and pulls the covers up. She's already mostly asleep.

LOUIS

(kisses her)

Good night, Ellie.

ELLIE

G'night daddy.

He starts to the door, but turns back when he hears ELLIE'S voice.

ELLIE

God could take it back if He wanted to, couldn't he? If he really, really wanted to? Can I have faith in that?

LOUIS stands at the door looking at her for a long time, apparently thinking about this quite deeply.

LOUIS

Yes -- I suppose, you can. Good night, Ellie.

He steps out, closing the door. ELLIE, in some measure comforted -- it may be poison comfort but she surely doesn't know this -- turns over on her side to go to sleep. We can see the picture of GAGE under her arm.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS peaks in on RACHEL. He reacts first with surprise, then a species of horrified disgust. CHURCH is crouched on RACHEL'S sleeping form. LOUIS comes in and swats the cat a good one.

LOUIS

(low snarl)

Fuck off, hairball!

The cat hisses at him through a mouthful of fangs, its eyes big green balls... and then it flees out the door.

RACHEL stirs and mutters thickly, then lies still again. She's almost certainly doped to the gills. LOUIS bends over and kisses her gently. Then he leaves the room and closes the door behind him.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

His face wears an expression of "How's he get in there in the first place?" The light in the hall is dim. LOUIS looks around and a slight fear brushes the back of his neck. He starts toward the stairs.

INT. THE STAIRS - NIGHT

It's really dark here. LOUIS starts down, not holding the bannister.

CHURCH is there on one of the risers. LOUIS trips over it -- or did it trip him intentionally?

For a moment he's pinwheeling madly for balance, on the verge of falling. He manages to save himself. The cat shoots down the steps, runs across the dining room toward the kitchen. LOUIS regains his equilibrium after a bit and continues on down.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

JUS is letting himself in through the shed/garage door. CHURCH darts pass his feet.

As LOUIS enters from the dining room, he finds JUD watching the cat run off into the night.

LOUIS

Jud, I buried my son today and I'm very tired. I wonder if we could just --

JUD

You're thinkin' of things best not thought of, Louis.

LOUIS

I'm thinkin' about going to bed.

JUD

I'm responsible for more pain in your heart than you should have tonight. For all I know, I may even be responsible for the death of your son.

LOUIS

What...? Jud, don't talk crazy.

JUD

Now you're thinkin' of putting him up there. Don't deny the thought hasn't crossed you mind, Louis.

LOUIS doesn't reply, but his body language changes, and his thought change, too. He's no longer thinking of going to bed. JUD moves to a chair at the kitchen table and LOUIS doesn't object.

JUD

(rhetorically, to himself)

How far does its influence extend?

LOUIS watches the man's face in the dim light from the living room.

JUD

You asked me if anyone had ever buried a person up there in the Micmac grounds. I lied to ya when I said no. It's been done. What you've been thinkin' of has been done.

EXT. A COUNTRY RAILROAD STATION (SEPIA) - DAY

The time is the late summer of 1944. The sign on the station reads LUDLOW. There are a few 40's cars parked near the station -- and a hearse. An UNDERTAKER is trying to talk to BILL BATERMAN, a man in his forties. BILL walks away. He doesn't want talk; he doesn't want comfort. He's grief stricken, bitter man.

A train is pulling into the station.

JUD (V.O.)

Timmy Baterman was on his way home from the war with his Purple Heart when he got killed in some stupid car accident down in Georgia. Bill was bitter -- his son survived the Japs only so he could get run down by some drunk salesman with a glass eye.

EXT. THE TRAIN - IN FRONT OF THE DEPOT (SEPIA) - DAY

The door of the mail-car opens. The UNDERTAKER and three trainmen are unloading TIMMY BATERMAN'S coffin, which is draped in a flag. BILL BATERMAN stands by, watching balefully as they load his son into the back of the hearse.

The rear doors close. The hearse drives away. BILL stands looking after it.

JUD (V.O.)

Bill Baterman was too bitter and too grief-stricken to get to the bottom of the truth.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN WITH LOUIS AND JUD - NIGHT

LOUIS sits down now, still staring at JUD.

LOUIS

I'll bite -- what's the bottom of the truth, Jud?

JUD

Why... that sometimes dead is better. That's all. Sometimes dead is better.

LOUIS

(bitter)

Tell to my wife and little girl.

JUD

It ain't your wife and little girl that's got me worried, Louis.

EXT. MARGIE WASHBURN ON HER PORCH (SEPIA) - DAY

She's a middle-aged woman dressed in mid-forties style. She's got a rug-beater in one hand; the other is up to her eyes to shade the sun. She's staring at something, horrified.

A young man dressed in jeans and a plaid shirt is shambling up the road. His eyes are vacant. His shirt is half untucked. His hair is sticking up in a wild crow's-nest thatch. There is an ugly mess of healed scars on his neck and one side of his face. I think one of his ears may be gone -- torn off by the accident.

JUD (V.O.)

It was four or five days later when
Margie Washburn seen him walking up
the road toward Yorkie's Livery.

MARGIE WASHBURN begins screaming -- we hear her faintly.

He turns toward her and grins. He looks like a devil.

JUD (V.O.)

Lots of people saw Timmy Baterman
walking back and forth between the
home place and the town line. But
it was Margie who finally went to
some of the menfolks and said it
had to be stopped. She knew it was
an abomination.

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE (SEPIA) - SUNSET

It's a ramshackle old farm which looks remarkably like the estate of that gentleman farmer Jordy Verrill. An old Ford pulls into the driveway, and the four men get out.

SOUND BLEEDS IN: Most of all the SOUND OF THE CRICKETS.

They go to the door, and YOUNG JUD is wordlessly elected as the prime honcho. He knocks. No answer. Again. No answer.

SOUND: Crazy laughter from inside the house.

BILL BATERMAN (O.S.)
Stop that, Timmy!

The four men look at each other.

JUD
Come on.

They start around to the back.

EXT. THE BACK YARD WITH BILL AND TIMMY (SEPIA)

TIMMY BATERMAN is staring directly into the setting sun, his eyes glowing with green fire. He's laughing like Goofy gone insane. BILL, scared, is trying to make him stop, to turn away from the sun.

The four men come around the side of the house. They freeze when they see BILL and TIMMY.

ALAN
Ohy holy Jesus lookit that.

BILL whirls around and sees them.

BILL
You men get out of here!

Now TIMMY also turns around and comes shambling forward.

TIMMY
(laughing)
Ge ow! Ge Cwise off eye an!

GEORGE
(revolted)
Oh Jesus, Jud! He's dead. I can smell him!

BILL
(screaming)
GET OUT! YOU HEAR? GET OUT!!!

Abruptly TIMMY reaches up with both hands and scratches down his cheek, goring deep grooves in his flesh. Blood flows sluggishly out. Very weird looking blood.

TIMMY

(laughing)

Dead! We love dead! Hate living!

BILL grabs TIMMY, who's still laughing wildly, and gets him turned around. TIMMY shambles back to where he was originally standing. BILL goes with him like a man who has charge over a trained baboon. A stupid trained baboon.

JUD

God help you, Bill.

BILL

(snarls)

God never helped me. I helped myself.

TIM goes back to staring directly into the setting sun and laughing wildly, mindlessly.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN WITH LOUIS AND JUD

LOUIS

What happened?

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE - NIGHT

We see legs and hands holding tin cans of gasoline. They splash it from the cans along the sides of the house.

EXT. THE BATERMAN PORCH - NIGHT

YOUNG JUD rings the bell -- an old-fashioned twist type.

BILL (O.S.)

Who's there?

TIMMY

(laughing, screeching
voice)

Ooo air? Ooo air?

JUD

Get out, Billy -- the place is
going up.

He walks away. BILL BATERMAN wearing a strappy tee-shirt,
looks out the window.

EXT. A WALL OF THE BATERMAN PLACE - NIGHT

A match is struck... and applied to wet boards. Whoosh!

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE - NIGHT

Burning. Going up fast.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR OF THE BATERMAN PLACE - NIGHT

It bursts open. We see two men struggling at the forefront of
an inferno -- correction, one man and an undead monster.
TIMMY is giggling and screaming, trying to pull his father
back into the flames.

BILL

(struggling)

No! No, Timmy! Let me go!

TIMMY

(laughing)

Love dead! Hate living!

He sinks his teeth into his father's arm. BILL screams. And
TIMMY pulls him back into the inferno.

EXT. THE FOUR MEN BY A 40'S STYLE CAR - NIGHT

They stare, horrified, the fire reflected on their faces.

EXT. THE BLAZINF FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

TIMMY

(faint, shrieking voice)

Love dead! Hate living!

INT. THE KITCHEN WITH LOUIS AND JUD

JUD

(flatly)

There was a fire, that's what happened. And that's all I got to say except that sometimes dead is better. Do you see, Louis, what I'm getting at? Do you understand?

LOUIS

You're saying the place knew Gage was going to die.

JUD

The place might have made Gage die because I introduced you to the power. I may have murdered you son, Louis.

FADE TO BLACK.

And in the blackness, a sixth title card: THE DEAD WALK.

SOUND BLEEDS IN: JET ENGINES.

THE TITLE DISAPPEARS and the black FADES UP ON:

INT. AN AIRPORT BOARDING GATE WITH LOUIS AND RACHEL - DAY

LOUIS

This can be the start of patching things up with your folks. If something good doesn't come of Gage's death, I think I'll --

GATE AGENT

Final call for United's flight 61 to Chicago. All passengers should now be on board.

LOUIS

Better get goin', hon.

He guides her over toward the jetway where DORY and IRWIN GOLDMAN are waiting with ELLIE. We CUT IN CLOSER in time to hear:

ELLIE

I don't want to go to Chicago,
gramma Dory.

DORY

Why not, darling?

ELLIE

I had a bad dream last night. A
nightmare.

IRWIN

(kindly)

About what?

ELLIE

About Daddy. And Gage...

(pause)

And some named Paxcow.

Luckily -- or unluckily -- LOUIS doesn't hear this. He arrives just too late with RACHEL on his arm.

LOUIS

Come on, you guys -- before you
miss the boat.

IRWIN

Louis, I am sorry. What can I say?
That I lost my mind? It's the truth
but no good excuse.

LOUIS

We all lost our minds, Irwin.

LOUIS kisses RACHEL. Then he kneels and hugs ELLIE.

LOUIS

Be good to your mother, darlin'.

ELLIE

Come with us, daddy. Please come with us!

LOUIS

I'll be there in three days -- four at the most. I've gotta get the electricity shut off and square things with your school so the truant officer ain't after you, and-

ELLIE

Please, daddy! I'm scared!

LOUIS

Of what?

ELLIE

I don't know.

LOUIS

Everything's going to be alright, Ellie.

ELLIE

Do you swear?

LOUIS

I swear.

The voice of authority has spoken. We can tell by ELLIE'S face that while things are still not right, they are a little better.

She joins the others and the four of them, RACHEL, ELLIE and THE GOLDMANS, start down the jetway. ELLIE looks back once... and then they're gone.

LOUIS' face changes. Now it's a stony, contemplative face. Not, when you get right down to it, a very nice face. He turns and strides away.

EXT. THE AIRPORT PARKING LOT WITH LOUIS - DAY

We hear the SOUND of jet engines. LOUIS reaches the station wagon. He turns and watches, as he did once before, while a United Airlines 727 lifts into view and banks away. Face set, LOUIS gets into the wagon and drives off.

EXT. MAIN STREET IN BREWER (A NEIGHBORING TOWN) - DAY

The CREEDmobile pulls up across from the Brewer Tru-Value Hardware and LOUIS gets out, crosses the street, and enters the store.

INT. THE HARDWARE STORE - DAY

On the counter: a six-cell flashlight, Duracell D-batteries, a pick, a shovel, and a nylon drop-sheet in cellophane packaging. Now the CLERK drops a pair of heavy work gloves onto the pile.

CLERK

Anything else for you today?

LOUIS

I think we got it all.

CLERK

Looks like heavy work.

LOUIS

It could be.

The quality of LOUIS' reply is somehow unnatural. The CLERK looks at him, momentarily unsure, then starts ringing things up.

INT. THE UNITED JETLINER WITH ELLIE AND RACHEL - DAY

RACHEL is holding a paperback but not reading it. Her eyes are red. She's looking into space.

THE CAMERA DRIFTS TO ELLIE. She's in the window seat, asleep... but her sleep is not easy. Her head turns from side to side, as if in negation. She starts to mutter. Suddenly her eyes flare open and she screams.

THE GOLDMANS, in the seats behind the CREEDS, are startled. So are other passengers. A stewardess comes running.

ELLIE

Paxcow says it's almost too late!

RACHEL

Ellie... Ellie, what...

ELLIE

Paxcow says it's almost too late!
We have to go back! Paxcow says
it's almost too late!

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETERY - EVENING

The CREED wagon turns in and drives up one of the lanes. It stops and LOUIS gets out. He walks to a fresh grave on which the first flowers are already starting to wilt. He sits down and plucks a flower. Holding it in a trembling hand, he looks at the grave steadily.

LOUIS

It's wrong.
(pause)
What happened to you is wrong.

PASCOW (V.O.)

Remember, doc.

LOUIS looks around. VICTOR PASCOW, bloody and mutilated, is standing beside a nearby tomb.

PASCOW

The barrier was not meant to be
crossed. The ground is sour.

LOUIS is not put out of countenance in the slightest by PASCOW'S appearance; he probably knows PASCOW is just a figment of his conscience or imagination, and so do we.

LOUIS

I'll tell you where the ground is
sour -- the ground in my heart is
sour. Let me tell you something
else, Vic-baby; Wrong is wrong.

LOUIS looks back down at the grave. He starts to cry.

LOUIS

He was my son! He wasn't even two
and he was run down in the fucking
road and he was almost in pieces.
And if don't think I'm going to
try...

He looks back up at the tomb, but PASCOW is gone. LOUIS starts to cry harder. Abruptly he reaches out at the floral tributes and knocks a bunch of them over. He talks to himself now.

LOUIS

If it doesn't work -- if he comes
back like Jud said Timmy Baterman
was -- I'll put him back to sleep.
And they don't even need to know.
Rachel and Ellie never need to
know, I've got to try.

EXT. THE GOLDMAN HOUSE IN LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS - NIGHT

We might recognize the place from RACHEL'S account of her sister, ZELDA. Crickets chirp here, but they're not the same, maddening crickets that we hear in Ludlow.

INT. THE GOLDMANS' UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY along this hallway, which is lined with pictures of RACHEL, ELLIE... and GAGE (there may even be a couple in which LOUIS is featured, but damned few). Near the end of the hall a door is open and light is spilling out.

RACHEL (V.O.)

Honey, you just had a bad dream.
You know that, don't you?

ELLIE (V.O.)

It wasn't a dream. It was Paxcow.

THE CAMERA GOES THROUGH THE OPEN DOORWAY and into the room where ELLIE is staying. She's in bed, badly upset. RACHEL is sitting beside her. There's a single lamp lit on the bedside table.

ELLIE

Paxcow says Daddy's going to do something really bad. He --

RACHEL

Who is this Pax Cow? Is he like the boogeyman?

ELLIE

He's a ghost. But he's a good ghost. He says he was sent to warn us. He says he's near daddy because they were together when his soul was dis -- dis -- I can't remember!

ELLIE starts to wail, frustrated and frightened. RACHEL holds her.

RACHEL

There are no ghosts, Ellie. I want you to go to sleep and forget all this nonsense.

ELLIE calms down some. RACHEL lays her down gently, tucks up the covers, leans over and turns off the bed-lamp.

ELLIE

Will you at least call and make sure daddy's okay?

RACHEL

Of course I will.

She kisses her daughter, gets up and leaves the room.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

PASCOW is here, halfway down the hall of the stairs, bloody as ever. RACHEL doesn't see him. She stops beside him, though. He makes her stop, I think. She looks perplexed... a woman trying to think of something.

RACHEL

Pax-cow. Why do I know that --

PASCOW

Pascow.

RACHEL suddenly straightens. She looks startled and afraid.

RACHEL

Pascow? Was she saying Pascow?

ELLIE

(voice in Rachel's mind)

He said he was near daddy because
they were together when his soul
was dis -- dis --

PASCOW

Discorporated.

RACHEL suddenly bolts for the stairs.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE IN LUDLOW - NIGHT

It's dark; no lights. A beat of silence. Then the TELEPHONE
STARTS RINGING.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

IRWIN and DORY are watching RACHEL with some anxiety. RACHEL
is holding the phone to her ear. We can hear the FILTERED
SOUND of one ring after another. She hangs up.

RACHEL

He's not home.

DORY

Probably went out for a hamburger
or a chicken dinner, dear. You know
how men are when they're alone.

RACHEL is dialing another number.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN WITH JUD - NIGHT

The PHONE STARTS TO RING and JUD shuffles over from the
fridge with a bottle of beer. He picks up.

JUD
Hello -- you got Judson.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

RACHEL
It's Rachel Creed, Jud. I'm calling
from Chicago.

JUD (V.O.)
(filtered)
Chicago! Is Louis with you?

RACHEL
No... we're going to be here a
while. He needed a few days to
close things up back there. I just
wondered if he was with you.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN WITH JUD - NIGHT

His face says this very seriously.

JUD
No -- but if he drops by, I'll tell
him to call you.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

JUD
No -- but if he drops by, I'll tell
him to call you.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

RACHEL
(making up her mind)
Don't bother. I'm coming home.

JUD (V.O.)
(filtered)
Rachel!
(alarmed)
NO! You don't want to do th --

RACHEL

I have to do it, Jud. Goodbye.

She hangs up.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN WITH JUD - NIGHT

JUD

Rachel! Rachel --!

The BUZZ of an open line. Connection broken. JUD slowly replaces the receiver. The man looks very grim.

INT. THE FRONT HALL OF THE GOLDMAN HOUSE - NIGHT

RACHEL comes down the stairs, dressed for travelling. She's carrying a tote-bag in one hand. Her parents meet her at the foot of the stairs.

DORY

Rachel, darling... you're upset...
a night's sleep...

RACHEL

I have to go. The connections are
tight and I have to be at O'Hare in
forty minutes. Will you drive me,
daddy?

IRWIN

Maybe I ought to say no. I think I
might have a responsibility to put
a stop to this craziness.

ELLIE

Don't you dare!

They all look up. ELLIE is coming down the stairs.

ELLIE (CONT'D)

It's not crazy! It's NOT!

RACHEL moves a few steps up and takes ELLIE in her arms. THE GOLDMANS look at them, now getting a little nervous themselves.

DORY

Go ahead and drive her, Irwin. It's what she wants.

ELLIE

Please hurry.

RACHEL

I will. Kiss me.

ELLIE does, with trembling lips.

INT. THE GOLDMAN CAR WITH RACHEL AND IRWIN - NIGHT

They're speeding along on one of Chicago's freeways.

IRWIN

I'll come with you if you want.

RACHEL

(shakes her head)

I've got three planes to catch and I got the last seats on two of them. It's like God saved them for me.

EXT. O'HARE AIRLINES TERMINAL - NIGHT

IRWIN'S car heads toward "DEPARTURES".

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETERY - NIGHT

A quiet city of the dead. Spooky. SOUND of crickets: Ree-ree ree-ree...

At the grave of GAGE CREED, LOUIS sets down his grave-robbing equipment. He tosses aside the remaining floral tributes and takes up his newly bought spade. He looks down for a long second.

LOUIS

(low)

Gonna bust you out, son.

He starts to dig.

CLOSE ON the shovel. Digging... throwing... digging again. Already the shape of the excavation is beginning to show. The work is easy; this earth is new and fresh.

EXT. A RUNWAY AT O'HARE - NIGHT

A United jetliner in a lineup of jetliners.

INT. THE UNITED JETLINER WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

Everyone looks impatient, but RACHEL looks half crazy.

PILOT (O.S.)

This is the Captain speaking. I'm sorry about this delay, folks, but we've got a real low ceiling to night and air traffic control's playing it safe. I'm gonna turn off the NO SMOKING sign till we get clearance.

SOUND: Bing! There's a general groan. RACHEL has closed her eyes. I think she's praying.

EXT. GAGE'S GRAVE - NIGHT

Now it's pretty deep. Four feet, maybe. LOUIS is standing in it. We see his feet as the shovel goes up and down, up and down.

LOUIS is sweating and streaked with dirt. Suddenly, as he spears for another shovelful from the grave, we hear a SCRAPING SOUND. He tosses the shovel aside and squats. There's a white streak at the bottom of the grave-the top of GAGE'S coffin. LOUIS swipes a hand through the loose dirt, uncovering more, then he begins to sweep off -the top of the coffin with both hands.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH - NIGHT

JUD comes out wearing a light jacket. He's got a six-pack. He looks at:

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE, JUD'S P.O.V. - NIGHT

It's still dark over there across the road. A truck blows past.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH WITH JUD NIGHT

He sits down in his ladderback rocker.

JUD

You-done it, you stupid old man...
Now you got to undo it.

He cracks a beer. Lights a cigarette. And begins to watch.

EXT. GAGE'S GRAVE WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He climbs out of the hole and opens his duffle bag. He starts to pull out the new pick but he's stopped by:

The SOUND of an approaching car.

LOUIS freezes.

A police car comes cruising slowly along. The spotlight on the driver's side comes on and runs along the graveyard's stone wall. LOUIS watches, waiting, hardly breathing.

The police car reaches the end of the wall. Everything looks jake. The spotlight goes out and the car speeds up. LOUIS relaxes perceptibly. He takes the pick and drops back into the grave.

He inserts the tip of the pick under the flange of the coffin and levers it. CRACKING SOUND. Again. More CRACKING. Again. And the lock breaks. The coffin lid comes up a little, dirt gritting at the hinges.

CLOSE ON LOUIS. Here's a man on the thinnest edge between sanity and madness.

EXT. O'HARE RUNWAY - NIGHT

The United jetliner lifts off.

INT. THE JETLINER WITH RACHEL AND HER SEATMATE - NIGHT

SEATMATE

Think you'll make your connection
in Boston?

RACHEL

I have to.

EXT. GAGE'S GRAVE WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He's lying on his stomach, reaching in. We hear the SOUND of dirt grating in hinges again. We're looking up into LOUIS' face. If GAGE had a P.O.V., this would be it. Suddenly the face fills with a terrible grief as the lid clears and LOUIS can see his dead son.

LOUIS

Oh, Gage -- oh, honey.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH WITH JUD - NIGHT

His chin slips to h There's a long round ash on his cigarette in the tray. A couple of empty beer cans on the table beside him. Another truck blasts by, startling him out his doze. He jerks his head up suddenly... and slaps himself. He's okay... for now.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He is sitting on the edge of the open grave, holding his dead son in his arms, rocking him. GAGE is back to us. We see only a small, limp figure in a gray suit. Hair flops limply.

LOUIS

It's going to be alright... I swear
it's going to be alright.

The nylon drop-cloth is spread open to the right. LOUIS lays his son down on it.

CLOSE ON the ground beside the cloth. It's littered with flower petals. One limp two-year-old hand appears among them.

LOUIS closes the cloth over GAGE, making a roll. He then produces a rope from the duffie bag. He cuts the rope and begins to tie one piece around one end of the roll.

INT. THE GOLDMAN HOUSE IN LAKE FOREST - NIGHT

THE CAMERA IS PULLING BACK through the upstairs hall where all those pictures were hung earlier. We might notice 'than now those pictures are gone. The furnishings are different, too. What we see now is what we saw when RACHEL told her story about ZELDA.

RACHEL appears at the top of the stairs, dressed the way she was dressed on the jetliner a moment ago... what's going on here?

She moves slowly down the hall, gaining on THE CAMERA.

A door is open, and a dim light comes from within. It's the bedroom where RACHEL comforted ELLIE earlier... the back bedroom... the bedroom where ZELDA died.

RACHEL reaches the open doorway and looks inside.

ZELDA is on the bed, hideous, deformed, her face black as it was when she choked to death.

ZELDA

I'm coming for you, Rachel. And this time I'll get you. Gage and I will get you. For letting us die.

PILOT (V.O.)

Good evening again, ladies and gentlemen...

INT. THE JETLINER WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She snaps awake, terrified. Her SEATMATE is knitting something beside her. Across the aisle sits VICTOR PASCOW, bloody but serene, hands clasped in his lap, looking straight ahead. RACHEL doesn't see him, neither, mercifully, does any one else.

PILOT

We've had a strong tailwind and we expect to arrive at Boston's Logan Airport almost on time.

PASCOW clenches his fist in a "That's one for our side." gesture.

RACHEL

(softly)

Thank God.

Her SEATMATE looks at her a bit strangely.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He's got the bundle containing his son and the duffle bag with the tools. He's running, bent over. He reaches the stone wall and is stopped by the SOUND of another motor. He freezes.

Here comes that same police car, its spotlight running along the wall on the other side. LOUIS crouches against the graveyard side of the wall, expecting the car to drive on as it did before... but it stops.

A COP gets out and walks slowly this way... right toward the spot where LOUIS is crouching. The COP looks over the top of the wall... if he looks down... but he doesn't. Instead he turns around so we see his back. LOUIS looks up, miserably scared, pouring sweat.

Silence. Then: SOUND of the COP taking a whizz. The COP'S body reads "Ah! Relief." Another SOUND: his fly being zipped. He looks back at the cemetery for a moment.

COP

I ain't afraid of no ghosts.

He walks back to his cruiser, gets in, and hauls ass.

LOUIS gets up and looks cautiously over the wall. Nothing there but the CREEDmobile, parked a little way down on the other side of the road. LOUIS tosses the duffel bag over and gently puts the nylon roll containing GAGE on top of the wall. He vaults to the other side.

EXT. THE STREET SIDE OF THE WALL WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He gathers up the roll, gets the duffle bag hooked over his shoulder, and runs across the road like a soldier crossing enemy territory. He goes to the rear of the wagon.

He puts the body down and feels in his pocket for his keys. No keys. Mild consternation. He looks around, feeling exposed. The other pocket. Still no keys. More consternation. He begins to hunt feverishly through all his pockets, pants and jacket. Nope.

SOUND: An approaching car.

LOUIS sees that it's a civilian not the ubiquitous COP. The car rolls past, its radio blasting. The teenagers inside never see anything.

LOUIS turns his pockets out, now, spilling change everywhere. No keys. Suddenly a little light goes on in his eyes. He goes to the driver's side door and looks in at:

INT. IGNITION, LOUIS' P.O.V. - NIGHT

The keys are in the switch.

EXT. LOUIS - NIGHT

He snatches the keys and returns to the back of the wagon. He unlocks the doorgate. He puts GAGE'S body carefully inside, then the duffle bag. He closes the doorgate and returns to the front of the car. He opens the driver's door and freezes.

He returns to the rear, gets his keys from the doorgate, comes back to the front, gets in, and drives away.

INT. A JETWAY AT LOGAN INTERNATIONAL - NIGHT

People are debarking into the gate area. Through them comes RACHEL, moving fast, pushing some people, excusing herself incoherently. PASCOW is walking along beside her.

PASCOW

There's just time. If you run.

RACHEL doesn't see PASCOW, nor does she hear him... not with her ears... she hears him in her mind. She takes off her shoes and starts to run.

INT. THE CONCOURSE WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She's sprinting down the concourse -- look out, O.J.

INT. GATE 27 WITH GATE AGENT AND PASCOW - NIGHT

The AGENT is starting to close the jetway door.

PASCOW
Don't do that, babe.

The AGENT looks puzzled, as if she's just had a thought (or maybe a gas pain). She stops closing the door just as RACHEL runs into the area.

Through the gate windows, RACHEL can see a jet plane starting to swing ponderously away from the gate.

RACHEL
Make it come back!

AGENT
I can't -

RACHEL bolts down the jetway. The AGENT stares after her, and then runs for her stand, where we can see FLIGHT 61 and BANGOR on the slide-card. The AGENT picks up a microphone.

EXT. THE JETWAY - NIGHT

RACHEL stands all alone at the end of the giant chute.

AMPLIFIED SOUND of JET ENGINES.

RACHEL
COME BACK, MOTHERFUCKER!!!

Slowly, the big jet stops. It starts to swing back to pick her up.

RACHEL is crying. PASCOW appears behind her and puts a hand on her shoulder. She doesn't feel it.

PASCOW
You're doin' just fine.

INT. JUD CRANDALL ON HIS PORCH - NIGHT

He's fast asleep.

SOUND: An approaching car.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

The station wagon turns in and parks. LOUIS gets out. He opens the back, removes the body and the duffle bag filled with tools. He manages to get everything together and walks to the edge of the side yard. He looks at:

EXT. THE PATH TO THE PET SEMATARY, LOUIS' P.O.V. - NIGHT

Off it goes, glimmering in the dark.

EXT. LOUIS - NIGHT

He hugs the wrapped corpse of his little boy to him.

LOUIS
Please, God -- let this work.

He sets off.

INT. JUD ON HIS PORCH - NIGHT

Zonked out. He missed the whole thing. Nice going, JUD.

EXT. THE ARCH TO THE PET SEMATARY - NIGHT

LOUIS passes under like a ghost.

EXT. INSIDE THE SEMATARY - NIGHT

LOUIS is crying as he moves through the crude markers and crosses to.,

EXT. THE DEADFALL - NIGHT

LOUIS

Ain't gonna stop, Gage. Ain't gonna
look down.

He begins to climb. Woven into the deadfall, facing the Pet Sematary, is that snarling face. LOUIS doesn't see it because he doesn't look down.

He reaches the top and stands there a moment looking into the Big God Woods. The path winds onward through those gigantic fir trees -- it glows slightly.

EXT. BIG GOD WOODS - NIGHT

LOUIS moves up the path, laboring under his load.

EXT. THE EDGE OF LITTLE GOD SWAMP WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

That phosphorescent glow is a lot more pronounced than it was last time. SOUNDS of crickets and frogs. The water is mucky and still. Hummocks stick up like knobs on the back of a creature best not seen. Fog drifts through the dead trees. LOUIS doesn't want to go in there.

But he does.

INT. AN AIRPORT HERTZ DESK WITH RACHEL, A CLERK -AND PASCOW -
NIGHT

CLERK

I'm sorry... it's been very busy
tonight. I really don't have
anything.

PASCOW

What about the Aries K with the
scratch on the side?

Something dawns on the CLERK. She starts looking through her papers.

CLERK

I do have an Aries K, but it came
in sort of beat up -- there's a
long scrape up one side --

RACHEL

I'll take it.

EXT. LOUIS IN LITTLE GOD SWAMP - NIGHT

He comes walking toward THE CAMERA with GAGE in his arms and the duffle bag over his shoulder. Mist swirls around him. There are a lot of swampy, marshy SOUNDS now -- too many. It sounds almost prehistoric.

Suddenly: HARSH, SCREAMING LAUGHTER.

LOUIS stops. He looks slowly around. A demonic face takes shape in the mist and floats slowly toward THE CAMERA. It runs a tongue out that's about nine feet long. It's eyes blow out. Blood ann thick, gooey stuff runs from the empty sockets.

LOUIS closes his eyes. After a moment he opens them. Nothing there.

LOUIS

See? Just imagination.

EXT. DEEPER IN LITTLE GOD SWAMP - NIGHT

MYRIAD SOUNDS, none of them pleasant laughter, gobbling howls, screams. Sound's like the swamp has been invaded by a pack of escaped lunatics.

LOUIS enters frame. He's obviously tiring now, but he keeps moving along.

SOUND: Approaching footsteps. Big ones. Thudding ones. Something is coming which sounds approximately the size of a Tyrannasaurus Rex. It keeps getting louder and louder and louder. LOUIS looks plenty scared.

ANOTHER SOUND: A falling tree. And the footsteps get even closer... closer...

A second tree falls -- we see this one. Then the footsteps begin to fade.

EXT. LOUIS (A NEW ANGLE) - NIGHT

In the extreme foreground is the tree which has just fallen -- it's no small tree, either, but a great big old fir. LOUIS approaches. Stops. Looks down at the forest floor.

Here's a gigantic animal track -- if it was full of water, LOUIS could swim in it. It looks like no animal track we've ever seen before. Three big claws at the end of it.

LOUIS looks up again. His face is set and hard.

LOUIS

It doesn't matter. Come on, Gage.

He starts to walk again.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND - NIGHT

SOUND: The wind, lonesome, keening.

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY over the top of the bluff, dreaming its way over those rocky cairns... most of them burst apart.

SOUND: Tortured breathing. Panting.

LOUIS toils his way up the ancient stone steps and comes into view, carrying his bundles. He reaches the top and makes his way slowly into the burial ground. Before long, he stops, looking down at...

... a broken cairn, and the grave beneath. We can see the shredded remains of a green garbage bag.

LOUIS slowly kneels. He puts the nylon roll to one side and wearily takes the pick and shovel from the duffel bag. By now he is a man approaching total exhaustion.

INT. THE ARIES K. WITH RACHEL AND PASCOW - NIGHT

Both of them look tense. RACHEL is bolt upright behind the wheel. Suddenly, BANG! as one of the tires blows.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The Aries K. goes skidding and slueing across the pave, the left rear tire half off the rim. The car climbs the curb and hits a tree.

INT. RACHEL - NIGHT

She lurches forward, but she's wearing her seat-belt -- good girl! She unbuckles and gets out.

EXT. RACHEL BY THE WRECKED CAR - NIGHT

She looks at the little Aries, which now has quite a bit more wrong with it than just a scratch up the side. She slumps, near tears.

RACHEL

Now what?

PASCOW comes from behind the tree. He looks urgent and upset.

PASCOW

It's trying to stop you. Do you hear me? It's trying to stop you.

RACHEL looks around uncertainly... a little afraid. As she scans the scene she looks at -- and through -- PASCOW.

RACHEL

Is anyone there?

After a moment of silence she turns back to the road. Lights appear and brighten as a car approaches. RACHEL steps to the shoulder and stick's out her thumb, surely for the first time in her life.

The car sweeps by without slowing.

EXT. GAGE'S CAIRN - NIGHT

LOUIS puts the last rocks on the pile, rocks back on his haunches and surveys his work. Beside him is the nylon drop cloth, now open and empty. Absently, LOUIS stuffs the cloth into the duffel bag (where his tools have also been replaced) and stands up with a wince, one hand going to his lower back. He looks down at the cairn.

LOUIS
Come back to me, Gage. Come back to
us.

EXT. ANOTHER ROAD WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She's walking down the shoulder with her three-quarter-heel shoes in one hand, her tote bag in the other. She sees the lights of another car coming up behind her. She turns, thumb out. The car blasts by.

RACHEL
(shouts)
MAY THE SEWERS OF RANGOON BACK UP
IN YOUR BEDROOM, ASSHOLE!

She starts walking again.

EXT. THE FIELD BESIDE THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

LOUIS is moving down the path.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH - NIGHT

JUD is still fast asleep. A snore almost wakes him... but doesn't.

INT. THE CREED GARAGE - NIGHT

LOUIS slings the duffel bag wearily to one side and goes into the kitchen, shutting the door behind him. CHURCH is under the station wagon, its eyes glowing.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS.HALL OF THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

SOUND of LOUIS plodding up the stairs. He comes into view, dirty and exhausted, his hair hanging in his face. He walks down the hall toward:

INT. THE MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

The clock on the bed table reads 2:17 A.M. LOUIS falls face first on the immaculate bedspread and lies still.

(In this shot we should note that the closet door is standing open.)

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND, FEATURING GAGE'S CAIRN - NIGHT

THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN. HOLDS. Nothing for a beat. Then a small white hand slams up through the rocks, hopefully scaring the living shit out of us. The hand begins to feel around. It takes one of the rocks and pushes it aside. Another. Another. Another.

The SOUNDS are not encouraging. It is GRUNTING and GROWLING. There is nothing human here. Rocks begin to tumble on their own as GAGE starts to come out of his grave.

EXT. ROUTE 15 WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She's still trudging along on foot. But here comes another vehicle. As the lights appear, RACHEL suddenly does a Claudette Colbert, pulling her skirt up and exhibiting a very lovely leg.

The lights -- it's an Orinco truck, naturally -- spotlight her. The truck stops. The DRIVER leans over and opens the passenger door.

DRIVER

Hop in, baby.

RACHEL

Thank you.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN - NIGHT

Silence, then A SOUND: the doorlatch. GAGE is coming in from the garage. Dead dry breath. Low snarling noises. Small feet in dirty black shoes. Those shoes grit slowly along the linoleum, leaving tracks. CHURCH, eyes glowing, follows along.

INT. THE BEDROOM WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

CAMERA HOLDS ON LOUIS as those gritting footsteps approach. Then IT PANS TO THE CLOSET AND MOVES IN TIGHT.

On the floor is LOUIS' little black bag. The footfalls near. A small white hand enters frame and opens it. Both hands search around inside and bring out a scalpel.

The GAGE-THING makes a contented SOUND.

EXT. THE ORINCO TRUCK ON ROUTE 15 - NIGHT

It sweeps past THE CAMERA.

INT. THE CAB WITH RACHEL AND THE DRIVER - NIGHT

RACHEL

Can't you go any faster?

DRIVER

Lady, I got nine points on my license right now.

RACHEL

I understand. It's just that --

She looks at him, pleading. He speeds up.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Thank you. If you only understood how important this is -

DRIVER

That's alright, babe. Only if we get stopped, next time I'll be the one hitchin' and you can give me a ride.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH WITH JUD - NIGHT

More deeply asleep than ever. Suddenly he straightens up ... so suddenly he almost falls off his chair. Something startled him, but what? A dream? Or something nearer? He collects his senses. He looks across the road at:

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE - NIGHT

No lights on. No movement. Just the cricket SOUND.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH WITH JUD - NIGHT

He looks down and sees small muddy tracks on the porch floor. They lead into the house through an open door which JUD had closed earlier. He gets up and rushes inside.

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JUD turns on the light and looks around, frowning. He hears little SOUNDS, bumps, footfalls.

JUD
(sharply)
Who's here?

He walks toward the door which gives on the hall.

JUD (CONT'D)
Somebody playin' games?

INT. THE HALL WITH JUD - NIGHT

It's dimly lit by light-spill from the living room. MORE SOUNDS, from overhead this time. JUD follows them, climbing the old wooden steps.

INT. JUD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JUD enters and looks around. It's dark in here but he can see more of those muddy tracks and we can tell from his face that he knows who it is that's come to call.

JUD
Gage? Are you the one playin'
games?

Silence. He goes to the window and looks out at:

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE ACROSS ROUTE 15 - NIGHT

Quiet, still, dark.

INT. THE BEDROOM WITH JUD - NIGHT

He turns slowly around and walks toward the bed.

JUD

Gage? Come on out.

He reaches in his pocket and brings out a pocketknife. He unfolds the blade and it kicks light.

JUD (CONT'D)

I brought you something.

SOUND: Miaow!

JUD looks down. CHURCH is crouched in the doorway, green eyes shining.

JUD (CONT'D)

How did you --?

A small hand holding a scalpel shoots out from beneath the skirt of the bedspread and slashes JUD'S calf. He screams with pain and staggers backward. The other hand shoots out, grabs one of JUD'S ankles, and pulls. With a startled yell, JUD falls. He loses his pocketknife.

The GAGE-THING lurches out from under the bed and we finally see it. It should be clear to us that its really not GAGE at all. Some demonic presence is riding inside the mouldering, disfigured shell.

There is a struggle. JUD is repeatedly slashed with the scalpel. GAGE screams and gibbers -- nothing intelligible; only SOUNDS.

JUD expires.

GAGE sits on top of him... and bites into his throat.

EXT. ROUTE 15 BETWEEN THE CRANDALL AND THE CREED HOUSE -
NIGHT

Headlights. RACHEL'S 'truck has arrived. It pulls up on the CRANDALL side of the road. RACHEL opens the passenger door which faces JUD'S house and gets out.

Suddenly PASCOW is sitting in the passenger seat which RACHEL just vacated.

RACHEL

Thank you so much.

PASCOW

Think nothing of it.

DRIVER

I didn't get a ticket, so you're welcome, lady.

(And, more seriously)

Whatever your problems are, I hope they work out.

PASCOW

It's the end of the line for me, too -- I'm not allowed any further.

RACHEL

I'm sure things will be fine.

PASCOW

I'm not.

She closes the door and steps away. The truck starts off with a HISS OF RELEASED AIR BRAKES. As it pulls past her, RACHEL hears:

GAGE (V.O)

(soft)

Mummy!

She freezes. Her face wears a "did I hear that?" expression. She looks over her shoulder at:

EXT. JUD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The one place in the whole world we do not want RACHEL to go.

GAGE (V.O)

(soft)

Mummy!

EXT. RACHEL - NIGHT

She walks up the paved walk and slowly climbs the steps to the porch. She sets her tote-bag down on the top step and opens the screen door. Of course, it creaks.

INT. THE PORCH WITH RACHEL - NIGHT

She looks very uncertain. This is the wee-hours of the morning, and someone else's house. But... that voice....

GAGE (V.O)

Mummy, I need you!

RACHEL looks stunned -- rocked. She steps onto the porch and the door slaps shut behind her.

The door to the living room is open. Inside she can see CHURCH, sitting calmly in the shadows, watching with glowing eyes.

CHURCH

Miaow!

RACHEL

Church!

She crosses to the open door.

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

As she steps inside, RACHEL can see that the cat's fur is streaked with something dark... and red. CHURCH raises one paw and licks it.

RACHEL

Jud?

The house gives back no answer. Only silence.

RACHEL is really alarmed now. She moves through the room and into the hallway.

INT. THE HALL - NIGHT

Suddenly, there's a GROAN from upstairs, low and filled with pain.

RACHEL

Jud? Are you up there?

The GROAN comes again and RACHEL runs up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

She slows up when she reaches the top. She's never been up here before and it's dark.

Another GROAN... from behind the second door on the right, JUD'S bedroom, the back bedroom. RACHEL realizes that the groaning isn't JUD'S at all. She recognizes the voice... and so might we. It's the pained voice of her sister.

She approaches the door, staring all the while at the cut glass doorknob. Her hand stretches out for it... and before she can touch it, the door is snatched open from inside.

ZELDA stands there, hunched and twisted, her body so cruelly deformed that she has actually become a dwarf, little more than two feet high; and for some reason she's wearing the suit they had buried GAGE in. But it's ZELDA, alright, her eyes alight with an insane glee, her face a raddled purple. It's ZELDA.

ZELDA

I finally come back for you Rachel.
I'm going to twist your back like
mine and you'll never get out of
bed again, never get out of bed
again, NEVER GET OUT OF BED AGAIN!

RACHEL is frozen in spiraling, sickening horror as she sees that...

Now ZELDA is gone. It's GAGE. His face isn't black but dirty, smeared with blood, and swollen, as if he had been terribly hurt and then put back together again by crude, uncaring hands.

GAGE

I brought you something, Mommy!

He raises his hand high. The scalpel kicks light.

GAGE (CONT'D)

I brought you something, Mommy! I brought you something, I brought you something!

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM WITH LOUIS - MORNING

He's restless; having a bad dream, from the look. He rolls back and forth. Closer and closer to the edge of the bed. Finally, with a wild yell, he goes over onto the floor.

He comes awake. Sits up. Ouch! He's aches from top to bottom and side to side, but his back is the worst. His hands go to it.

LOUIS

Jesus!

He starts to get up very slowly and his eyes fix on GAGE'S tracks on the bedroom floor. They enter the room, go to the closet, then leave again.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Gage --?

He scrambles for the closet, his aches and pains forgotten. He stares in wildly. His doctor-bag lies open. LOUIS grabs it. His original crazy hope is now tempered with the first signs of fear. He goes through the bag and quickly finds a little black case. The case is empty but the indented shape is clear. There was a scalpel here once... but now it's gone.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

(pause)

Gage!

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN WITH LOUIS - MORNING

He rushes in. There's nothing here. Suddenly the PHONE RINGS and LOUIS almost jumps out of his skin reaching for it.

LOUIS

Hello!

IRWIN GOLDMAN (V.O.)

(filtered)

Hello, Louis -- it's Irwin. I just wanted to be sure Rachel got back alright.

As IRWIN says this, LOUIS' eyes fix on the floor. There are two sets of GAGE-tracks, one coming in from the shed/garage and the other going back out. In his face we suddenly see that LOUIS understands everything... or almost everything.

IRWIN (V.O.)

(filtered)

Louis ... are you there?

LOUIS

(slowly)

Yes -- I'm here.

IRWIN (V.O.)

(filtered)

Did she get there alright?

LOUIS

Yes, she's fine.

IRWIN (V.O.)
(filtered)
Well, put her on at that end and
I'll put Ellie on at this one.
Ellie's very worried about her
mother.
(pause)
She's almost in hysterics.

LOUIS
She... Rachel's asleep.

IRWIN (V.O.)
(filtered; an edge in his
voice now)
Then I suggest you wake her up.
Ellie... she had a dream that her
mother was dead.

LOUIS
I'll call you right back.

IRWIN (V.O.)
(filtered)
Louis --!

But LOUIS, whose last responses have been almost trancelike,
hangs up. He follows the tracks to the shed/garage door and
looks out.

The PHONE STARTS TO RING AGAIN. LOUIS, looking extremely
upset, comes back and picks it up.

LOUIS
Irwin, you'll just have to --

GAGE (V.O.)
(filtered)
I'm at Jud's, daddy. Will you come
over and play with me?

LOUIS is dumbfounded... slack-mouthed with terror.

LOUIS
(a bare whisper)
Gage?

GAGE (V.O)
(filtered)
Mommy already came. We played,
daddy. First I played with Jud and
then mommy came and I played with
mommy. We had an awful good time.
Now I want to play with you.

GAGE begins to giggle... a really awful sound.

LOUIS
What did you do? What did vo --

CLICK! The GAGE-THING hangs up, still giggling.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM - MORNING

LOUIS plops the doctorbag down on the bed and roots through it. He comes up with three syringes, still wrapped in paper. Then he roots around some more and comes up with several ampoules. He holds one up for inspection.

We can read the word MORPHINE on it very clearly.

He carries the things over to the window where he begins filling the syringes (using two ampoules for each syringe -- i.e., enough to kill a polar bear). He looks out the window at:

EXT. THE CRANDALL HOUSE ACROSS ROUTE 15 - MORNING

He goes back to filling the syringes.

LOUIS
What you buy is what you own, and
sooner or later what you own comes
home to you. Wasn't that what you
said, Jud? Wasn't that pretty much
it?

LOUIS is going slowly insane. What remains of his rationality is like a rapidly fraying rope. His hair has gone partially white.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR OF THE CREED HOUSE - MORNING

LOUIS comes out the door. In one hand he's got a raw pork chop. In the other he's carrying a pair of Playtex rubber gloves. He walks to the soft shoulder of Route 15 and waits for an Orinco truck to pass. Then he crosses.

EXT. THE CRANDALL WALK WITH LOUIS AND CHURCH - MORNING

LOUIS walks most of the way to the house, then stops. CHURCH gets up, humping his back warily.

LOUIS

Hi, Church. Want some grub?

He losses the pork chop onto the grass. CHURCH hurries over, sniffs it, and starts to chow down. He looks up at LOUIS, who is pulling the rubber gloves onto his hands.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Don't mind me. Eat it while you can. Eat all you want.

CHURCH goes back to worrying the chop. Smack-smack-smack. LOUIS finishes with the gloves, gets one of the loaded syringes out of his breast pocket, holds it up, squirts a drop out of the tip, then moves toward the cat.

CHURCH looks up. LOUIS stops moving. CHURCH eats again. LOUIS moves closer. All the time he talks to the cat in a voice that tries to be soothing.

LOUIS

Eat all you can... all you want...
that's right... today's
Thanksgiving for cats, but only if
they came back from the dead...

LOUIS grabs CHURCH. It begins to squall and fight but LOUIS holds on.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

No you don't.

The syringe plunges into CHURCH'S haunch. The dose is injected. LOUIS drops the cat to the ground. The needle is still dangling out of its haunch. It looks dazed. It tries to walk and falls over on its side. It tries to get up... and then falls over again.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Go on. Lie down. Play dead. Be dead.

LOUIS walks to the porch steps and sees RACHEL'S tote bag. Any doubt he might have allowed himself the luxury of having is erased by the initials -- R.C., same as the cola.

Twang! one of the few remaining strands of sanity has now parted.

INT. THE CRANDALL PORCH - MORNING

LOUIS climbs the steps and comes in. He strips off the rubber gloves. He tosses them onto the table beside JUD'S beer cans as he moves inside the house.

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM WITH LOUIS - MORNING

LOUIS moves through warily, and into the hall.

INT. THE CRANDALL HALL WITH LOUIS - MORNING

It's dark in here, and spooky.

LOUIS

Rachel?

(pause)

Jud?

(longer pause)

Gage?

No answer. He looks down and sees one of RACHEL'S shoes lying by the foot of the stairs. He goes over and picks it up. It's a three-quarter-heel, and it's pretty badly scuffed. There's a spot of blood on it.

SOUND: A low giggle.

LOUIS looks up the stairs. Mighty dark. Mighty shadowy.

SOUND: Another giggle.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

Gage?

GAGE (V.O.)

Let's play, daddy! Let's play hide
and go seek!

LOUIS

Alright, Gage... let's.

LOUIS takes another of those loaded syringes from his pocket and begins to climb the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS WITH LOUIS - MORNING

LOUIS arrives on the landing. We begin the nerve-wracking business of checking rooms. First, the bathroom... where the shower curtain is of course pulled. LOUIS yanks it back. Nothing.

Next the linen closet. Nothing. A guest room, shadowy and empty. Another closet. A bag falls off the top shelf, and a bunch of ceramics inside it SHATTER LOUDLY. LOUIS flinches back.

Now he's at JUD'S room. He goes in.

INT. JUD'S BEDROOM WITH LOUIS - MORNING

He steps around the bed and sees... a bloodstain. He gets down on his hands and knees to investigate. He is quite close to the skirt on the bedspread. He lifts it....

... he is nose to nose with JUD, who is dead with his eyes wide open, an expression of incredible horror on his face.

The DOOR SLAMS.

LOUIS bolts to his feet as GIGGLES fade down the hall.

Slowly LOUIS kneels back down and speaks to the bedspread skirt, which has mercifully fallen back into place.

LOUIS

I'm sorry, Jud. I'm sorry. I'm

There's a SQUEEKING, SQUEALING SOUND.

LOUIS gets up again. He starts for the door. Then he turns back and speaks to JUD one last time.

LOUIS (CONT'D)

I'm going to set things back in order. I... I know just what to do.

He goes out.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL WITH LOUIS - MORNING

Clutching the syringe in his hand (one spare remains in the pocket) he inches slowly through the shadows... past all those doors.

LOUIS

Gage?

Another SQUEAKING SOUND. And another GIGGLE. LOUIS keeps moving forward. He gets about halfway down the hall -- and our nerves are tuned to the breaking point -- when there is a SQUEALING CREAK and a GRATING THUMP from overhead.

It happens fast. A ceiling trapdoor drops open and RACHEL'S body plunges down. It hangs, swinging, bound around the armpits, a grotesque parody of MISSY DANDRIDGE. Half her face is gone. Eaten.

LOUIS screams and backs against the wall. Twang! The last silver thread of sanity parts.

GAGE leaps down from the trapdoor and lands on the floor waving his scalpel.

GAGE
(screeching)
Allee-allee-in-free! Allee-allee-in
free! Allee-allee-in-free!

INT. LOUIS AND GAGE IN THE UPSTAIRS HALL - MORNING

I won't choreograph all the moves, but GAGE slashes his stunned father up pretty badly, screeching the whole time. LOUIS finally begins to react. He grapples with the little critter and tries to get the syringe into him. No good. It gets batted out of his hand. It breaks.

LOUIS and GAGE fall to the floor. LOUIS gets the last syringe out of his pocket, but it's also knocked away. The only consolation is that this one doesn't break. It rolls off along the floor. LOUIS finally manages to get it again as the struggle goes on, and plunges it into GAGE'S neck.

GAGE
No fair! NO FAIR!

GAGE gets to his feet, clawing for the needle lolling out of his neck. He's lost all interest in his father. He goes staggering away. He's slowing down. He goes to his knees... and falls on his face.

LOUIS watches this and, when it's over, his vacant, half catatonic gaze goes back to RACHEL'S body which swings slowly back and forth in a shaft of morning sunshine.

EXT. THE BACK YARD OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE - DAY

Time has passed. It's late afternoon. LOUIS comes out with a sheet-wrapped form in his arms. RACHEL, of course.

He sets the body down and goes back inside.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN WITH LOUIS - DAY

He's splashing around a can of coal oil. When he's got the room wetted down to his satisfaction he goes to the door, lights a match, and tosses it.

Flame runs across the floor. The fire is slow at first, but it begins to gain rapidly. LOUIS goes out.

EXT. THE BACK YARD WITH LOUIS - DAY

He picks up the sheet-wrapped form of his wife and walks around the side of the house as flames shoot through the kitchen windows.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE FROM ACROSS THE ROAD - DAY

Flames are in all the windows now. LOUIS appears with his shrouded burden and starts to cross the road. VICTOR PASCOW is standing right on the broken yellow line, holding his hands out.

PASCOW

I'm sorry, Louis I'm so sorry. But don't make it worse. Don't --

LOUIS

I waited too long with Gage. But Rachel... it will work this time. Because she just died... she just died a little while ago.

PASCOW

(terrified)

Louis, don't! Don't do th --

LOUIS walks into PASCOW. Through PASCOW. And PASCOW puffs apart like thin air.

EXT. SIDE LAWN OF THE CREED HOUSE - SUNSET

The tire swing is in the extreme foreground. As LOUIS passes it on his way to the path, he sets it swinging. The rope CREAKS. LOUIS' shadow trails along behind him.

EXT. THE PATH WITH LOUIS - SUNSET

His hair is snow white. His mind is gone. His face wears an expression of damned serenity.

LOUIS
It will be alright, Rachel. I
promise. You'll see, Rachel --

SOUND: Crickets. Ree-ree-ree-ree...

EXT. THE ARCHED ENTRANCE TO THE PET SEMATARY - TWILIGHT

LOUIS passes under.

LOUIS (V.O.)
-- a man's heart is stonier.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY WITH LOUIS - TWILIGHT

THE CAMERA TRACKS HIM through the graves -- SMUCKY WAS
OBEDIENT -- to the deadfall. He begins to climb that snarling
face.

LOUIS (V.O.)
A man grows what he can... and
tends it. Because what you buy is
what you own...

EXT. THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH TOWER IN LUDLOW - NIGHT

The hands on the tower clock are at midnight. The clock
starts to toll. One... two...

EXT. THE SMOULDERING RUINS OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE - NIGHT

CAMERA HOLDS for a moment, then PANS OVER to the road. An
Orinco tanker drones past, it's running lights twinkling.

Across at the CREED house, there's one light on in the
kitchen.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Three... four... five...

THE CREED KITCHEN WITH LOUIS - NIGHT

He's sitting at the table, filthy, covered with dried blood.
He is playing at Patience. He holds a handful of cards.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Six... seven...

