

PREACHER

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1 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

Starting from out in the Texas desert, we MOVE SLOWLY in towards the lights of the town of Annville. A little fart of a place, right out in the ass-end of nowhere. West Texas Hicksville. We MOVE DOWN a main street with a few smaller ones off it. A bar, some low light, not much noise. Two drunks support each other for the stagger home. A glance down an alley, a shadow, the sound of breaking glass. A Sheriff's Department cruiser passes us, heading in the other direction. Moving across the town square, we see a third drunk passed out on a bench, with a vile-looking dog raping his unconscious leg. Moving towards the end of town, we glimpse shapes moving at a lit window, a slap, a yelp, a man's incoherent shouting.

We move slowly towards a church, a simple wooden building on the edge of town.

2 INT: CHURCH - NIGHT

The church is an old building, as simple within as without. Just rows of pews facing a lectern on a raised platform, a large black cross on the wall.

The REVEREND JESSE CUSTER (25, tall, James Dean handsome with a tough side) sits on one of the front pews, smoking a marlboro, drinking Jack Daniels from the bottle - which he does the way other people drink water. He seems pissed off, deep in thought. A long pull on the bottle.

He's turned out all the lights except for a little one illuminating the bible on a lectern. Cigarette packet beside him, a dozen squished out butts on the pew.

JESSE (V.O.)

I guess you could say I had a kinda unusual childhood.

3 EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

A tight close-up on Jesse's father. JOHN CUSTER (30, short black hair, tough), circa 1974. He seems nervous, but tries to control it.

JOHN

I need you to be brave for me, son. An' I need to tell you some things, in case we don't get a chance to talk about em later.

Pulling back a little, we realize John - in jeans and t-shirt - is kneeling amidst the tall rows of corn, holding five year old Jesse by the shoulders to look him in the face. Little Jesse is scared, but makes an effort to be brave. He clearly loves and trusts his Dad beyond all else. This is the most important moment in his life, and somehow he knows that.

JOHN

I love you, Jesse. You're my own son an' I'm prouda you. You brought your Mom, God rest her soul, you brought your Mom an' me more happiness than I ever knew there was in this cold ol' world.

(pause)

You be a good guy, Jesse. You gotta be like John Wayne in them movies we saw: you don't take no shit off fools, an' you judge a person by what's in 'em, not how they look. An' you always, always do the right thing.

Close up on little Jesse, crying now, just a little.

JOHN

You gotta be one of the good guys, son.

Close up on John now, fighting back tears.

JOHN

Cause there's way too many of the bad.

With that we pull back and see that JODY (25, a grim, muscular thug with a darkly humorous smile and a sense of low cunning) and T.C. (20, a wiry little rat of a man with the smile of a psycho and a pair of dungarees) are standing over father and son. T.C. covers them with his shotgun, highly amused.

JODY

All finished?

T.C.

Do him Jody! Do him! Do him!

T.C. pulls Jesse back. Jody puts a pearl-handled .45 automatic to the side of John's head. John closes his eyes, grits his teeth, won't give them an inch of satisfaction. Jody pulls the trigger and blows half John's head away.

4 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Sickened at the memory, Jesse takes another pull at the whiskey.

5 INT. GRAN'MA'S HOUSE - DAY

1974 again. In a gloomy library in her mansion, GRAN'MA is teaching little Jesse about his calling.

Gran'ma is a nightmare, a hundred-year old harridan, head of the family. Tick-thin, almost bald, skin like parchment. The crumbling relative your parents made you kiss but times a thousand. Worse still, she clings to her Southern Belle roots and wears a pretty white dress to show off her cleavage - such as it is - with a red rose pinned to the front. She sits in her wheelchair, smiles reassuringly at Jesse. Her "reassuring smile" is a promise of hell. Her voice is a witch's croak.

GRAN'MA

Now that all that unpleasantness is over, Jesse, Gran'ma's going to tell you all about your special friend: God.

Little Jesse is getting progressively warier.

GRAN'MA

God's special because he's with you always, Jesse. He lives in your heart, and he sees everything you do, and he knows what you're thinking, always. God loves you very much, because he made you. And God wants you to love him, because if you do, he'll take you away to live with him when you die.

(pause for effect)

Now: isn't it nice to have a friend like God?

LITTLE JESSE

No Gran'ma. It's kind of scary.

Gran'ma slaps him so hard she knocks him to the floor.

GRAN'MA

(screeching)

You dirty little ragamuffin! You worthless poopy-mouth! How dare you talk that way about the Lord! He loves you! He loves you! And you repay him like this!

She seizes him, sticks her face in his. He's terrified.

GRAN'MA

You're going to be a Preacher, Jesse Custer! It is your duty as the man of this family! And if your wastrel of a father sought to shirk his duty, by God you won't.

(shrieking)

You're going to be a Preacher Jesse Custer!

6 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Jesse stops drinking for a moment. He looks positively ill here, breaking out in a cold sweat.

7 EXT. DOCK - DAY

A small pier runs out into a swampy lake, somewhere in the endless swamps of the Texas-Louisiana border. Couple of little skiffs tied up. Jody, T.C., Gran'ma and Little Jesse are gathered at the end of the pier. Set there is a six foot wooden coffin and a small, motor-operated air compressor.

GRAN'MA

Tell the little rascal his punishment T.C.

T.C.

Yes, ma'am.

He smiles horribly, puts a hand on Jesse's shoulder so Jesse is looking at the coffin, wide-eyed.

T.C.

You go in the coffin. Coffin goes in the water. So you're in the water. Alone in the dark at the bottom of the swamp.

Little Jesse can only stare at the coffin throughout this scene, stunned to terrified silence. Can't believe they're going to do it. Jody turns from where he's working on the coffin.

JODY

For as long as your Gran'ma says, boy.

T.C. slaps little Jesse on the back.

T.C.

Don't you worry none, little Jesse. We
gonna seal it up tight and pump air down
to you.
(laughing)
You gonna be fine.

8 INT. COFFIN - DAY

A last glimpse of the outside world before the lid comes down
on us - Gran'ma, smiling balefully in at us. Then blackness. -

9 INT. SWAMP - DAY

With a splash the coffin hits the water and sinks towards us,
two stone blocks lashed to the side as weights. It's been
sealed with tape. A rubber pipe comes out from one end. The
coffin descends into the gloomy depths, comes to rest on the
murky bottom.

10 INT. COFFIN

Total blackness. Frantic breathing. A hammering heartbeat.
Then silence.

Time passes...

Then...

11 INT. COFFIN - DAY

The blackness bursts into flaring light as the lid opens. Two
shapes appear. A hand reaches towards us.

T.C. (O.S.)

How you doin' in there, little Jesse?

Little Jesse's screams fill the air.

12 EXT. DOCK - DAY

The coffin rests on the pier, open. Jody hauls the pallid,
screaming, filth-smearred little Jesse out of the coffin. Jesse
struggles, tries to shield his eyes, squeals.

JODY

Open them eyes.

He knocks Jesse's hand away, drags his eyelids down.

JODY

Open 'em!

Gran'ma swims slowly, vaguely into focus and Jesse's screams and yells cease.

GRAN'MA

Hello, Jesse.

(pause)

Isn't it funny how time crawls sometimes?
How it seemed like eternity in there, when
it was really only a week? Now...isn't it
nice to have a friend like God?

Jody holds Jesse up by his collar. After a lot of gasping:

LITTLE JESSE

Yes.

GRAN'MA

Good boy.

13 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Jesse is staring ahead, breathing hard. Ashamed of his surrender.

14 INT. BARN - DAY

T.C. comes creeping into the barn with a chicken under his arm, carefully looking this way and that. He sets the stricken creature on a tall stool, then starts undoing his flies, smiling with evil intent.

Teenage Jesse - a lanky boy of 13 - lies asleep in the hay at the back of the barn, copy of the bible open beside him. His eyes snap open as he hears the chicken's first scream.

T.C.

Yeah!

Jesse peeks around the corner.

Low angle on the legs of the stool and T.C.'s feet, both shaking as he thrusts. Jesse can be seen watching from b.g. More screams from the chicken. Gasps and grunts from T.C.

T.C.

Oh yeah! That's it, yeah! Take it, slut!
Say how big it is.

He yells with pleasure. A particularly loud scream from the chicken, followed by a deep, orgasmic groan from T.C.

Jesse slides back around the corner, eyes like saucers. Then he despairs, miserable, knows he's in hell.

15 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Pan round Jesse as he drinks the whiskey, lowers it, looks up at the cross, He seems particularly bitter and resentful here.

16 INT. GRAN'MA'S HOUSE - DAY

Bible study for Teenage Jesse, under gran'ma's instruction. He looks bored, his spirit crushed, plodding through this crap. Suddenly he snaps, throws the bible across the room.

TEENAGE JESSE

Fuck this! An' fuck you too, Gran'ma! You an' them two savages you got to do your killing for you!

Gran'ma glares at him, but says nothing. Her fury mounts. We close in on her, tighter and tighter.

TEENAGE JESSE (O.S.)

That redneck Frankenstein piece of shit that murdered my Daddy an' that chickenfuckin' little weasel - you expect me to believe in this bullshit scripture of yours when you got them two fucks enforcin' your will? Well Goddamn you an' them to hell, 'cause I'll never be a Preacher! You hear me?
(screaming)
I'll never be a Preacher!

Gran'ma just glares and fumes. She knows how to deal with challenges to her authority.

17 INT. SWAMP - DAY

As before, the coffin hits the water and plunges towards us into the gloom. Jesse's screams rise, fade, and die.

18 INT. COFFIN

Blackness. Breathing. A heartbeat. Then-

19 INT. GRAN'MA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The blackness from the previous shot is interrupted by the luminous green blip of an ECG. It climbs and falls, very weak.

Gran'ma lies on her deathbed, hooked up to the ECG and a variety of other life-support gear. She's very weak, attended by a nurse. Jesse - now 18 - stands at her bedside flanked by Jody and T.C., both of whom seem genuinely upset. T.C. is actually weeping. Jesse just wants this over with.

GRAN'MA

(weak)

My time's come, Jesse. I'm going on to my reward. I only hope our saviour's been watching us, seen the love and attention I labored on you - teaching you to do his work. And you are going to do it, Jesse. It's all arranged. The ministry has found a place for you, and Jody and T.C. will always be around to look out for you...

Jody and T.C. move in a little closer, hemming Jesse in. Jody seems particularly grim, determined that Gran'ma's wishes will be carried out.

JODY

We'll be right behind him, ma'am.

Gran'ma reaches out to Jesse, smiling fondly. He's not at all keen, but Jody nudges him forward.

GRAN'MA

Let me hear it one last time, Jesse. Say it. Say it for Gran'ma.

Jesse grimaces, sickened, but Jody's fingers bite into his shoulder and he gives in, beaten.

JESSE

I'm going to be a Preacher, Gran'ma

Gran'ma smiles the smile of a joyful parent. Her eyes close. The ECG flatlines. Everyone relaxes a little bit. T.C. starts to cry on Jody's shoulder.

A long moment....

Then Gran'ma sits bolt upright in bed and points at Jesse, screaming like a banshee.

GRAN'MA

You're going to be a Preacher, Jesse
Custer! You're going to be a Preacher!

She falls back dead. Everyone stares, frozen to the spot.

Jesse gapes in horror. He knows he'll never be free.

20 INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Jesse raises his head, and we see a look of cold fury on his face as he glares at the cross, getting angrier with each second.

He leaps to his feet and hurls the empty bottle at the cross. It hits dead center with a noise like the end of the world.

21 INT. AFTERLIFE

A gloomy land of permanent twilight. In a dark, shadowy, stone-walled room, two figures wait at one end of a long oak table. They turn as a third enters.

This is heaven and these guys are angels, and although that's how they'll be referred to in the script, there'll be nothing in their dialogue or surroundings to indicate their true nature until story's end. We'll keep it ambiguous 'til then.

They're tall and slim, deathly pale. Silver eyes. Curious, alien-looking silver and black tattoos run down the sides of their faces and necks, disappearing below the collars of their simple, loose-fitting black outfits. Cold, grim demeanour. Aloof.

ANGEL

Well?

He's talking to the newcomer.

ANGEL 2

The host have searched the lengths of
heaven and hell. Nothing.

Genesis is loose on Earth.

ANGEL

(grim)
Damnation. What does it want there?

ANGEL 2

It does not "want". It is but an infant sentence, a combination of ideals from both its parents. It lacks a proper consciousness to tell it what to do. It needs direction. So it will attempt to bond with a human soul.

ANGEL

We cannot let that happen. Things have been bad enough since he ... left. If this fucking crossbred whelp achieves full sentence, the game will be up for each and every one of us, whether we stand in paradise or the pit.

(pause)

We need to send someone after it. Someone who never stops

The second angel is becoming scared.

ANGEL

And...never fails...

He turns to the third angel, who's been silent up to now. The second is appalled. Even the speaker is a little wary.

ANGEL

I have work for you, my brother.

ANGEL 3

But give the order, and it is done.

ANGEL 2

You can't.... you can't!

ANGEL

I've got to.

(to Angel 3)

Go to Boot Hill and wake the Saint of Killers.

The penny finally drops for the third angel. He's frozen, shocked. But his comrades have both turned their backs on him. No comfort there.

22 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

Somewhere downtown, midnight. Few hookers, johns, drunks. Light traffic. TULIP (25, thin, beautiful) comes racing around a corner onto the main drag, running for her life, desperate.

She holds a 357 Desert eagle. Cars brake to avoid her. Horns honk.

In b.g., two armed men round the corner after her, stop to fire several shots at her with handguns, then continue their pursuit.

TULIP

Oh Christ - Oh Jesus-

Looking ahead, she sees a pickup truck slow and stop at a red light, at a crossroads 30 yards ahead. She runs towards it.

23 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

CASSIDY (25, scruffy, rogueish, shades) is driving, one arm leant out the window. He sings along with the tape in the stereo, The Pogues' "Rake at the Gates of Hell".

CASSIDY

(singing)

These roses wither may God deliver the
rake at the gates of hell tonight!

Tulip is suddenly in his face, leaning in to stick her gun in his face, desperate. He stares in disbelief.

TULIP

Get out!

CASSIDY

Jesus!

TULIP

Give me the truck! Get the fuck outta the
truck!

Cassidy starts laughing with disbelief.

CASSIDY

Shan't!

24 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

Tulip can't believe him, tries to look tough, gives up.

TULIP

Look, just get out!....Aw, Jesus....!

Cassidy glances back down the street, sees her pursuers gaining. He looks at Tulip. She's miserable. He smiles. For the first time, we notice his Irish accent.

CASSIDY

(exaggerated politeness)

Would yeh like a ride out of town, by any chance?

TULIP

Yes!

She scrambles in.

Back down the street, the two guys following her - couple of big thugs - stop to take careful aim. The nearest fires first.

THUG

Fuckin' whore!

23 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Tulip slams the door. Bullets bounce off the back of the truck. One takes out the rear window.

TULIP

Jesus! Go!

Just as he hits the gas, a bullet smacks into the back of Cassidy's head. He grunts. They take off. Tulip gasps for breath.

In b.g., the thugs keep firing, then quit.

Cassidy is completely unaffected by the bullet. He gingerly pokes at the back of his head. Tulip doesn't notice.

TULIP

I really appreciate this...

CASSIDY

Don't mention it. Yeh've livened up an otherwise boring evening, love.

TULIP

Tulip.

Cassidy examines a smear of blood and brains on his hand, flicks it out the window. He turns slightly so she can't see the hole in his head. He grins rakishly.

CASSIDY

Cassidy.

26 EXT. BOOT HILL - NIGHT

The third angel warily makes his way through the headstones and wooden crosses of the old Wild West graveyard. Spooky. He raises a wooden brand, touches a finger to it. It ignites, forms a flaming torch. He stops in front of a large gravestone.

ANGEL 3

Open.

27 INT. SAINT'S CAVERN

A dark place beneath the earth. An ancient wooden coffin - a simple rectangular box, no shaped sides - lies on top of a heap of skulls. A rattlesnake lies coiled on the lid.

In b.g., a flight of stone steps leads up into a narrow passage, and that's where the only light in here comes from. It flickers, gets brighter, until the third angel appears at the bottom of the steps. Only when he holds up his torch do we see the whole chamber as described above: until then it'll just be shapes in the dark.

He approaches the coffin.

The snake rises, hisses at him.

Distracted, he passes a hand over it - and it turns to dust and blows away.

Scared shitless now, the angel raises the coffin lid.

ANGEL 3

Awake.

View from inside the coffin. A gnarled hand rises, holding an ancient black iron Walker Cold revolver, and blows the horrified angel away.

The angel is flung across the room to land in a heap. His torch rolls across the floor. From now on, the only lighting is sparse and shadowy.

A giant figure rises from the coffin. We see a broad, flat-brimmed stetson, a long duster coat. No other details for the time being. This is the SAINT OF KILLERS.

He strides slowly over to the angel, holstering his pistol.

The angel has a hole the size of a baseball in his chest. Shiny golden blood pours from the massive wound. He speaks with great difficulty.

ANGEL 3

Why...?

The saint's voice is a slow, grinding, growl, not much more than a whisper. Clint Eastwood talking through his teeth.

SAINT

Force of habit. Help you with somethin'?

ANGEL 3

The call has gone out, O Saint of Killers. You have slept beneath the hill this hundred years or more. Waiting. And I have come.

(pause)

A being has escaped from the halls of heaven. Its name is Genesis. And it is mighty. It seeks to join with the spirit of a mortal man. If it succeeds, the two together will hold a power like unto that of God Almighty. Together they could end us all.

The Saint towers over him, an unmoving black shape.

ANGEL 3

Go now from this place and find it. And if it does join with a man: kill him.

The Saint turns to go.

ANGEL 3

You know... this isn't fair. I've carried out my appointed tasks for aeons, never once complained...A million years of faithful service, and now it ends in this pit, with my heart blasted out through my spine...

(Dying)

What...what in damnation's name do you call that?

SAINT

A good start.

26 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

Lovely day. A pickup truck pulls up and parks. Then a battered car pulls up alongside it. More engines can be heard, too.

29 INT. CHURCH - MORNING

Jesse lies across one of the pews, asleep in his clothes. Bright light floods in through the windows.

He slowly raises his head, bleary-eyed. Not looking too good. Hair tousled, unshaven, red eyes, clothes dishevelled. He grimaces as the hangover makes itself known. Slowly he becomes aware of the engine noises outside.

Then he freaks.

JESSE

Oh, fuck!

30 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

About a dozen cars and pickups - none in very good condition - are drawn up in front of the church, some still parking. People, family groups mostly, are making their way towards the door. Jesse's congregation have arrived.

31 INT. CHURCH - MORNING

Jesse rushes desperatley about, attempting to kick the broken glass and cigarette butts under the pew, do up his collar, pull on his jacket, straighten his hair and slap himself awake - all in about five seconds.

JESSE

Sunday! It would have to be fuckin'
Sunday!

32 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

The folks head for the church door. The guy in front reaches to push it open.

33 INT. CHURCH - MORNING

Jesse stands in the aisle between the pews as the light from the open door falls across him. He looks a little bit cleaner, but not much. He plasters on a fake smile and fights hard to look as cheerful as possible.

JESSE

Mornin'!

34 EXT. EARTH ORBIT - DAY

The Genesis entity tears past us, a flaming white comet plunging towards Earth, which lies below like a vast field of blue.

35 INT. CHURCH - MORNING

The congregation have taken their seats, and Jesse stands at the lecturn, leaning on it as he gives his sermon.

JESSE

And that's what Jesus was trying to tell us when he did these things: that God, his father in Heaven, will forgive us our sins no matter what they might be...

Jesse really isn't looking well. The hangover's kicking in but good. He's sweating. He runs a hand through his hair, blinks a lot to try and concentrate.

JESSE

But we have to ask him for that forgiveness.

His congregation are not particularly inspiring material. Maybe 20-25 people, all staring dully back at him or at the floor, bored. Kids look out the windows. Couple of fat guys, a stringy-looking woman, an older guy with no chin, a fat kid picking his nose.

JESSE

And we have to mean it when we ask, or his forgiveness is rendered pointless. We can't expect to sin and be forgiven, sin and be forgiven all throughout our lives.

(MORE)

God can forgive us our sins, but it's up to us to accept his forgiveness and his love, and live from that point on without sin, as best as we are able.

Jesse stifles a belch, swallows hard, sweats, tries to smile and look like a guy who's got the inside scoop.

JESSE

What we can't do is come to Church every Sunday an' say a few quick prayers, and then sin as much as we darn well want for the rest of the week.

As he continues, we focus on one of the fat guys in the congregation again - he's asleep. Then a bored teenage boy, looking down his sister's cleavage. Then the nosepicking kid, and the huge booger he's hauling out of his nostril. Jesse's voice begins to falter.

JESSE

That ain't the way it works, folks. The Lord wants a commitment from us...and

Jesse's eyes narrow as he peers down at them.

JESSE

And, uh.. he wants a promise of faith...

The nosepick kid's booger slides out of his nose, stuck to his finger. It's a biggie all right, all green and snattery.

Jesse's face fall weary in disgust.

JESSE

Because that's how.....

He clams up and we see the anger returning to his face. A moment passes.

JESSE

Aw, fuck it!

That gets their attention.

36 EXT. CHURCH MORNING

The ugly leg-raping dog from the previous night meanders past the church, then looks up to the sky. High in the blue above there's a flash of bright light, a distant crack of thunder, then a faint, descending glow.

The congregation gape at Jesse, transfixed. He rants at them, red-faced and furious, spitting hate. He's like some televangelist on PCP as he pours out his frustration.

JESSE

You bunch of dull-eyed fucks! You stupid worthless, inbred cocksuckers! You sit there like a bunch of fucked-to-death zombies while I spout this fucking bullshit at you - you think I do this for fun? You think this is for your goddamned entertainment? I'm supposed to be looking after your fucking shitty spiritual welfare here, and all you do is sit on your fat redneck asses and stare back at me, 'til I feel like some kinda zoo animal on mongoloid visitin' day! Well fuck you, you hear me? You assholes are doin exactly the kind of shit I was talkin' about, but you can't even fuckin see it!

He points to each particular sinner in turn, beginning with a chinless guy.

JESSE

Harve Collins. I could feed half of India on the grants you get for that farm, Harve - which'd be a lot more than you ever did, you chinless lookin' motherfucker!

The stringy-looking girl is next, horrified. So's Harve.

JESSE

An' what about the little straight to video release that Kate here shot in your barn? You get consent from that stallion, Kate, or were you just trynna broaden his horizons?

HARVE

I've never seen this woman before in my life-

But Jesse has moved on to a spotty youth in the back row.

JESSE

Mark Bannon! Ate dogshit for a dare last Saturday night!

(MORE)

What the fuck is it with you, you don't
eat enough shit workin' in goddamned
McDonald's?

Moving on to a dozy-looking guy in the middle with a steel
plate bolted across his nose, and then the petrified
nosepicking kid.

JESSE

But movin' on past Michael here, the only
Annville boy who ever went to California,
an' you, you dirty little fucker, you
just keep pullin' 'til you haul your
brains outta there too - we come to the
stars of the show...
(going cold)
Pat an' Terry Morrow.

These two, a pair of big, vicious looking rednecks at the back,
glare warningly at Jesse.

PAT

Now you better just watch your fuckin'
mouth, Custer....

JESSE

Pat an' Terry. Who raped that hitcher
girl no matter what their Daddy paid Judge
Shebin. Or how many times this town can
change the goddamn subject.

38 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

The dog is barking now. The white glow in the sky has grown,
gotten nearer, becoming the glowing comet we saw before:
Genesis. It's on collision course with the church.

39 EXT. CHURCH MORNING

Jesse has gone too far. Pat and Terry stride towards him. He
doesn't notice, ranting away. The rest of the congregation get
to their feet. Several shouts.

TERRY

Son of a bitch is dead!

FAT GUY

Fuck you, Custer! We never asked for you!

JESSE

So you tell me, God, 'cause you've got all the fuckin' answers, you tell me what I'm supposed to do here. Tell me how the good people of Annville, Texas figure in the grand design. You bust me up with a girl so perfect I could live a hundred lifetimes an' never meet another like her, an' you send me to this worthless fuckin' shithole so I can minister to all these goddamned throwbacks so come on, Lord! Give me a sign! Give me some incontrovertible evidence that the Almighty ain't got his head shoved firmly up his ass.

A sudden EXPLOSION of LIGHT. The door flies apart. Before anyone can even turn to look the Genesis comet charges into the church and right at Jesse.

His eyes bulge in amazement.

The comet comes at him in slow motion, a white hot ball of light trailing fire. A beautiful, angelic man's face appears in the light, screaming soundlessly. It changes instantly to an equally beautiful but demonic, disturbing woman's face, also screaming.

Then it hits Jesse, no longer in slow motion. Another burst of light, then he's hurled backwards against the cross. The comet disappears. Jesse falls to the ground in a heap.

The congregation stare, then turn to each other, bewildered.

FAT GUY

What the fuck was that?

CHINLESS GUY

What the fuck's up with the Reverend?

Jesse is suddenly flung into the air and hangs there, limbs jerking and twitching, eyeballs rolled over white, sparks and smoke coming off him. A vast figure is glimpsed in the smoke and lights around him, first with huge wings that flicker and disappear, then with cloven hooves and long, curved horns. A distant rumbling.

The congregation stare, riveted, but terrified.

Then the smoking and sparking stops, as does the noise. The figure disappears. Only Jesse is left, hanging there, apparently unconscious.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

A sudden blast of white light from within. Terrified screaming. A pause, then the windows shatter outwards and the roof explodes into the sky. The building shakes, boards flying loose from the wall, but the structure just about holds. The white light flares up and out, filling the screen.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Cassidy's pickup is parked off the road, hidden from traffic by a low rise and some sagebrush. Tulip sits on a rock in the shade, sweating, pissed off, bored. She finishes the last drops from a bottle of water. Tries to read Cosmopolitan. Gets bored fast. She raps the side of the truck.

TULIP

Can we go now?

CASSIDY (O.S.)

(muffled)

Eh?

She stands up. A heavy tarpauling in the bed of the truck conceals Cassidy from sight. He's just a lump under the tarp.

TULIP

Can we go now?

CASSIDY

I told yeh, no. Not 'til it gets dark.

TULIP

But we've been here all day....! Why is it so important you sleep under the tarp until sundown?

CASSIDY

I told yeh that too. It's my business. Now relax, will yeh? Couple more hours an' I'll drive yeh wherever it is yeh want to go...

Tulip gives up, gloomy. She's about to sit when she freezes. There's an almighty flash of white light behind her. An earth-shattering bang. And as the white light fades, a black mushroom cloud rises on the horizon, sparking with bizarre light. Tulip whirls.

TULIP
Jesus Christ!

She leaps into the cab.

42 INT. PICKUP - DAY

Tulip starts up, races off. Immediately:

CASSIDY (O.S.)
Hey! Hey!

TULIP
We've gotta go! There's an explosion up
ahead!

CASSIDY (O.S.)
An' you're drivin' towards it? Stop! Get
out of my fuckin' truck right now!

43 EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

The pickup races onwards.

CASSIDY (O.S.)
I'm tellin' you, Tulip, right fuckin' now:
You pull over an' stop this truck or else!

The truck keeps going. It races past a sign:

WELCOME TO ANNVILLE: PLEASE DRIVE CAREFULLY

CASSIDY (O.S.)
I can't help notice yeh haven't stopped.

44 EXT. DESERT - DAY

Miles from anywhere. Ominous stormclouds hang low overhead.
Rumble of thunder. A sudden duststorm blows right at us,
surrounding us totally.

Way back in the swirling dust a figure can just be made out -
weirdly transparent at first, dust whipping through it. It
moves towards us all the while, getting more solid as it moves
closer. Thus arrives the SAINT OF KILLERS.

As he gets closer we can make out details - the flapping duster
coat, widebrimmed hat hiding his face.

He strides towards us, then past us, an unstoppable quality to his gait, as if he's been going forever and nothing gets in his path. He keeps his head lowered so we never see his face, but we get a glimpse of a holstered pistol, a gnarled hand.

The dust howls around him as he passes - then he's gone.

45 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - DAY

Several people are staring at the weird plume of smoke as it rises over the church, still crackling with lightning..

One turns as Tulip drives up and stops, a scared looking guy.

TULIP

What the hell happened?

SCARED GUY

The ...the goddamn church just blew up

TULIP

Well Jesus Christ, dial 9-1-1! And get some people together, let's get over there!

SCARED GUY

I ain't goin' anywhere near it!

TULIP

You've got to at least try and help! What if someone's been hurt?

Another, smaller bang from the church, more smoke and flame. The scared guy legs it.

SCARED GUY

Fuck 'em!

Disgusted, Tulip drives on.

46 INT. PICKUP - DAY

Tulip guns it, scared but determined. She squints to peer out up ahead.

The church is a wreck. Black smoke pours from the crumbling shell. Tulip screeches to a halt next to the leg-raping dog, now a blackened skeleton.

Out she gets, staring at the ruin.

CASSIDY (O.S.)

Well this is fuckin' charmin', this is. Not only do I pull you out of a fuckin' gunfight, I then give you a ride halfway across Texas, no questions asked, an' this is what I get for my trouble.

Tulip ignores him, stunned, makes her way slowly towards the church.

CASSIDY (O.S.)

See as soon as the sun goes down? You an' I are goin' our separate ways, wee girl.

TULIP

Itit looks like a fucking bomb hit it...

CASSIDY

(softer now)

Tulip?

She turns

CASSIDY

If it's as bad as it smells, fuck knows what's been goin' on around here. You might want to take your gun.

(pause)

Not that I care what happens to you one way or the other, like.

Despite the smoke, the church isn't actually on fire. The walls are badly holed, the roof is gone, the place is a soot-stained wreck, but as Tulip discovers, picking her way carefully through the rubble, the smoke is coming from the remains of the congregation. Their scorched skeletons lie sprawled over the pews or flung back into seated positions, little fires burning inside the ribcages, flesh burnt clean off the bones. A hellish scene.

Tulip advances, shocked, fearful of what's yet to come. She coughs a bit, wafts the smoke aside.

She passes the skeleton of the nose-picking kid, sitting stupidly with a bony finger jammed in its nasal cavity. Then she turns to us, catches sight of something, stifles a gasp.

Jesse lies sprawled across the little platform at the front, burning pages from the smouldering bible fluttering around him. His face is smeared with soot, his hair tangled, his clothes scorched and filthy. Unconscious.

Tulip stares, frozen.

TULIP

Jesse...?

Then she yells in total disbelief, angry and astonished.

TULIP

Jesse fucking Custer?!

49 EXT. CHURCH - SUNDOWN

Two Sheriff's dept. cruisers have pulled up outside the shattered church. A couple of deputies keep an eye on the small crowd watching from the edge of town. Two more stand outside the church with a taller figure, SHERIFF HUGO ROOT. A pair of forensics guys come and go from the church to their car, parked near the cruisers.

HUGO

Ask me, I reckon it was niggers.

Hugo stands with hands on hips, squinting meanly at the church - pretty much the way he looks at everything. He spits from time to time.

With him are DEPUTY FOSTER, a fat guy, and DEPUTY KENNY, a younger guy who clearly doesn't think too much of his Sheriff - and in fact has doubts about the man's sanity.

KENNY

How you figure that, Sheriff Root?

HUGO

(spitting)

Kinda thing they do.

KENNY

What, burn a church full of folks clear down to the ground? Scorch all the flesh off of them? They do that?

HUGO

Martian Niggers, Kenny. Come down from space to abduct white folks. Take 'em away, make 'em do all kinds of sexual shit. Even experiment up their asses with probes.

Hugo doesn't notice Kenny's doubtful look, simply because he rarely bothers to look at whoever he's talking to. He just bangs on with the air of a man 100% certain of his subject. He rarely gets rattled or hurried; the sourness inside him curdles at its own easy pace.

HUGO

Government 'an the F.B.I., they know shit they ain't tellin' us. Got a airforce hangar with a spaceship an' a dead Martian Nigger inside, 'cept they don't reckon we're ready to know about it yet.

KENNY

That pickup seen headin' away from here - none of our eyewitnesses said anything about colored people.

HUGO

Don't have to be colored if they're from Mars, Kenny. You ever read that book Communion?

KENNY

Can't say I have, Sheriff Root.

HUGO

Fella in that knew all about 'em. 'Cept he got the wrong idea.

(patting the 44 magnum in his
belt holster)

Only Communion you Martian Nigger understands is the kind I got right here.

Deputy Foster shouts from one of the cruisers, where he's on the radio. We can hear it crackling.

FOSTER

Sheriff Root, Sheriff Meeker says he's got you the chopper an' marksman you requested, but he wants you to go talk to some media people

HUGO

(unfazed)

You tell him fuck you.

(MORE)

(spitting)
You tell him Hugo Root says fuck you.
Tell him I want that chopper up here now,
an' to keep them media fucks way or I'll
send em' back in bodybags.

KENNY

Sheriff Root? You figure, maybe, the way
these people been blasted to goddamn
bones, we oughta wait for some real back-
up before we go lookin' for 'em?

HUGO

We got air support an' snipers an' half a
dozen roadblocks bein' set up right now,
Kenny. You ain't goin' weak sister on me,
are you?

KENNY

(peevd)
All I'm sayin' is it could be more than we
can handle here.

HUGO

It could be I'm gonna take me a big shit
tomorrow an' find the keys to Graceland in
the bowl, but I kinda doubt that as well.

(spitting)
Martian Niggers, Kenny.
(strolling off)
You wait an' see.

And Kenny is left fuming quietly.

50 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Cassidy's pickup is parked by the side of the road. Jesse lies
unconscious in the back, partially covered by the tarpaulin.

Beside the truck, Tulip and Cassidy are arguing heatedly.

TULIP

No, I don't know why he's dressed up as a
minister, but he used to be my fucking
boyfriend, okay?

CASSIDY

Big fuckin' deal! I told you not to drive
off an' you fuckin' went an' did it
anyway! An' why "used to be"?

TULIP

He ran out on me, okay? After waiting five fucking years to find him again, I think I'm entitled to know why.

CASSIDY

Jesus, I can't imagine! A nice girl like you! Hey, maybe yeh stole his fuckin' truck as well?

Close up on Jesse, out of it.

51 INT. JESSE'S VISION

An instant of madness. Against a backdrop of rolling, shifting thundercloud, riven with golden lightning, two winged figures are locked together in mid air, pumping against each other. Thunder and lightning. Crazy singing, like a choir in some lunatic opera.

52 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Tulip and Cassidy carry on.

TULIP

We'd be at the fucking hospital by now if you hadn't made me stop.

CASSIDY

I don't know the bastard from Adam. Presumably you're hopin' to rekindle the old hard-on he had for yeh, but why should I give a fuck?

TULIP

Go...fuck...yourself.

53 INT. JESSE'S VISION

Another two-second flash.

We move closer to the two. The clouds are blacker now, a glowing redness within. The two figures are actually an angel and a demon. The angel is a full-on, traditional angelic figure, with vast white wings, tanned body, golden hair. The demon is ebony black, female, vicious curved horns, hooves, bat-wings. They're going at it hammer and tongs. The singing is starting to sound more like screaming.

54 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Tulip and Cassidy in each other's faces, furious.

CASSIDY

Oh, fuckin' charmin'! His worship here
dumps yeh, an' he gets a ride to the
hospital! But even after everything I do
for yeh, all I get is go fuck yourself!
Well bollocks to it. You an' yer
Preacher can start hitchin', love.

55 INT. JESSE'S VISION

Another two-second flash.

Close right in. The cloud bursts into a roasting, searing
inferno of flame that stretches to the horizon. Deafening
screams fill the air.

The angel and demon, who've bitten and clawed bloody lumps out
of each other, throw their heads back and howl as they climax.
It doesn't look like they're enjoying it.

56 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Jesse sits bolt upright and screams his fucking head off.
Tulip and Cassidy leap back, freaked.

TULIP & CASSIDY

Jesus!

Jesse is shaking, quivering, looking this way and that.

Tulip and Cassidy watch, wary.

Tulip leans forward, curious.

TULIP

Jesse...?

Jesse turns, recognises her, grabs her, and kisses her.
Initial surprise gives way as she returns the kiss - then her
eyes snap open and she remembers how she feels about him. She
recoils.

TULIP

Get the fuck off! Who the fuck do you think you are, Custer?!

But Jesse has collapsed back against the cab of the truck, shaking again, staring desperately at her. Whatever recognition there was has been swallowed up again by his mental turmoil.

TULIP

What is wrong with you..?

CASSIDY

His fuckin' head's cut.

TULIP

He always used to be kind of... I don't know, eclectic

CASSIDY

Bollicks. All you have to do to be eclectic in this country is own a Chili Peppers album. What he is, is off his fuckin' rocker.

Cassidy turns to go.

TULIP

Wait a minute, aren't you even remotely curious about this?

CASSIDY

Curiosity fucked the cat in the ass. For fuck's sake, Tulip, yeh found this guy intact in a burnt out church full of fuckin' skeletons. He's right at the eye of a force ten shitstorm - can't yeh see that?

She looks at Jesse, weary, uncertain. Cassidy gives up, head for the truck door.

CASSIDY

Right, well I'm not sticking around here to get fucked along with you two spacers. Get him out of my truck an
(sniffng)
Here...I can smell cops

And suddenly the little trio is flooded with light.

Helicopter rotors, car engines, sirens fill the empty night.

A police helicopter roars overhead, pinning the truck in the beam of its searchlight. Several Sheriff's dept. cruisers come over the top of a rise in the road and screech to a halt.

CASSIDY

Aw, fuck!

57 INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

Behind the pilot, a keen young MARKSMAN takes aim with a mean-looking scoped assault rifle at the pickup truck below. He wears a radio headset, over which we hear static.

MARKSMAN

Sheriff Root, I have 'em locked. Repeat, I got a lock on 'em, sir.

58 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

A dozen deputies pour out of the cars, taking aim with pistols, shotguns, even a couple of armalites. In the middle, king of all he surveys, standing with pistol in one hand and bullhorn in the other, is Hugo Root. Kenny and Foster are with him.

MARKSMAN (O.S.)

Just say the word.

HUGO

You fucks put you hands on the truck, legs apart, or you will be fired upon. Do it now or we open fire.

Cassidy and Tulip stare at the cops, stunned.

TULIP

(miserable)

Oh God, I could really do without this right now.

CASSIDY

I can imagine.

59 INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The marksman opens fire even as Hugo speaks, three quick shots.

HUGO (O.S.)
(over radio)
Wake 'em up down there.

60 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Tulip and Cassidy recoil in shock as the bullets punch through the cab of the truck barely a foot in front of them.

CASSIDY
Fuck!

They do like Hugo ordered, pronto.

As the helicopter passes overhead, Jesse can be seen in the back of the truck, holding his head.

MARKSMAN (O.S.)
You got a third subject in back, Sheriff
Root. One more guy.

Hugo shouts again. His deputies are squinting down their gunsights, taking no chances.

HUGO
(over bullhorn)
You in the back, we ain't gonna warn you
again. Get your ass outta there.

Jesse sits up, rubbing his head. He notices Tulip, then Cassidy, both standing with their hands raised. He frowns.

JESSE
Who the fuck's he?

HUGO
(over bullhorn)
Put your hands on the truck an' spread
your legs. Make any other attempt to move
an' I guarantee it: you're fucked.

A couple of deputies move forward, the rest stay put.

HUGO
(spitting)
We got these sons of bitches.

The helicopter makes a low pass on our heroes, now leaning against the truck as per Hugo's instructions. Jesse rubs his head, grimacing angrily.

CASSIDY

This is like a night out with fuckin'
O.J...

JESSE

Tulip, what the fuck is goin' on here?

HUGO (O.S.)

(over bullhorn)

You in the suit: both hands on the truck,
I said.

JESSE

(fuming)

FUCK THIS!

He turns towards the roadblock, grim as hell, lowering his
arms. Tulip gasps.

TULIP

Jesse, stop! They'll kill you!

Hugo snarls again. Lots of clicks as his men cock their guns.

HUGO

(over bullhorn)

Hold it right there, Mister. You put your
hands back on that truck or we will
lawfully blow your ass all over this
goddamned highway.

Jesse raises his head, glares at us. He looks like he really
means business. When he speaks, everything else goes utterly
silent. There's a weird, deep echo to his voice. This is the
WORD OF GOD, the power he's gotten from Genesis.

JESSE

(Word of God)

*Drop the guns. All of you. And let us
go.*

The deputies freeze. So does Hugo. Their faces go blank. A
moment passes. Then they start dropping their guns on the
ground. A loud clatter as the various firearms hit the deck.

61 INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The marksman, equally blank-faced, drops his rifle out the side
of the 'copter. The sound of the rotors can be heard beating
faintly, as if far away.

62 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The marksman's rifle land on deputy Foster's head, dropping him instantly. Hugo is right beside him but can only blink, confused.

Jesse turns to the astonished Tulip and Cassidy

TULIP

What the hell was that...?

JESSE

(to Cassidy very calm)

I gotta tell you, I'd sure as hell appreciate a ride outta here.

Cassidy stares at Jesse, still freaked. Jesse returns his gaze evenly. A beat. Cassidy snaps out of it, starts to smile, amused.

CASSIDY

Aye. Aye, why not?

JESSE

Much obliged.

We pull back as they get into the truck.

63 EXT. DESERT HILL - NIGHT

A battered, grubby, rusty van is parked on a low hill overlooking the drama below. Music can be heard. It's "Dropkick me Jesus through the Goalposts of Life".

64 INT. VAN - NIGHT

View past the occupants, two men sitting in the front of the cab, just figures in the gloom. They're watching the action on the road below.

It's Jody and T.C., but that isn't immediately apparent. Nor will it be until much later.

JODY

Sure is a interestin' trick the boy's learned.

T.C.

Uh-huh.

JODY

We gonna have to play this sneaky.

Close up on T.C.'s hands, cutting a strip of white card off a wider sheet of it.

65 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Cassidy drives the pickup through the police roadblock, narrowly missing a couple of cruisers. The deputies are amazed.

Hugo gapes as he gets a view into the truck: Tulip with a hand over her face, Jesse calmly lighting a cigarette, Cassidy grinning back at Hugo.

Hugo is furious.

HUGO

Pick up yore fuckin' guns, you assholes!

The deputies do so, but by then the truck has raced away.

Deputy Foster gets shakily to his feet, poking at his bleeding scalp. Hugo, having retrieved his pistol, is furious.

HUGO

You bunch of goddamned, by-the-Jesus, stupid, cocksuckin' faggots - you stood there an' let those bastards drive away

KENNY

(amazed)

So did you!

One of the deputies on the edge of the group turns towards us, eyes narrowing.

DEPUTY

Sheriff Root?

Hugo yanks open the door of the nearest cruiser.

HUGO

Well come on, for Jesus' sake! Get after them! You there, you get that chopper on the horn

DEPUTY
(shouting)
Sheriff Root!

Everyone turns, Hugo included. The deputy, rather shaken, points out into the desert.

About thirty yards from the roadblock stands the Saint of Killers. Not too much detail visible on him yet.

The deputies watch, not sure what to make of him. Kenny's eyes narrow, cautious. He's standing slightly in front of Hugo.

Hugo slams the door shut, glare at us.

HUGO
Well, well, well.

The Saint is unmoved, coat flapping a little in the breeze, head lowered slightly so the brim of his hat hides most of his face.

HUGO
Who the fuck have we got here?

No answer comes. Hugo looks annoyed.

HUGO
You look to me like you might be in trouble Mister.

The Saint doesn't move. His voice isn't much more than a slow whisper, but it sounds terribly grim, full of restrained threat.

SAINT
Yeah.

The Saint raises his head, slow and deliberate. His eyes are cold and hard, promising nothing but death. Utterly riveting, terrifying. His lip curls slightly. He speaks through his teeth, unimpressed by what he sees, a hint of disdain in his voice. To him this is just an inconvenience - not worth getting angry or peeved over. He does everything slowly, gradually. He has no need to rush.

SAINT
An' you don't look to me like the man
who'll stop it.

The deputies are suddenly unaccountably scared, looking warily at one another. Hugo grimaces, annoyed.

HUGO
Is that a fact?

KENNY
Sheriff Root

HUGO
Who the fuck does this asshole think he
is? You boys get ready, now...

The Saint pushes his coat back to reveal his holstered pistols. He doesn't pose with his hands over them, or any Hollywood gunfighter bullshit. He acts like he has all the time in the world.

KENNY
(scared)
Sheriff Root, for God's sake! Look at
him!

HUGO
(snarling)
Fuck you, Kenny. The minute he goes for
them pistols, you open f.....

The Saint's hands blur to his holsters and come up with two black iron Walker Colt revolvers. Two massive roaring blast fill the air, flame shoots from the muzzles, smoke belches back.

Deputy Foster's large gut explodes in a welter of gore. Kenny barely registers this as his shoulder erupts in a spray of blood and his entire arm is blown off.

The arm cartwheels past Hugo in slow motion, still holding Kenny's pistol, blood jetting everywhere.

Hugo gasps as blood from the arm sprays into his face.

The Saint steps towards the terrified deputies, cocks his pistols, fires again. He aims casually as he moves forward at a stroll.

The others bring up their guns and open fire. Multiple shots, automatic and shotgun fire. Two of them are flung backwards by the Saint's bullets, torn bloodily open.

DEPUTY
Son of a bitch-

DEPUTY 2
Drop him!

Bullets and slugs smash into the Saint, staggering him slightly. One smashes into his face, turning his head.

He turns back, grimacing, clearly not pleased. There's a hole in his face and several more in his chest, but no blood comes out. It's like dead meat underneath.

The deputies gape in amazement.

DEPUTY

Aw no.

The Saint cocks his pistols as he advances, now barely yards from the parked cruisers. One guy breaks and runs. Another sinks behind the car, cowering in terror. The other two resume firing.

The Saint takes more hits, but isn't worried. He walks towards Kenny, who lies on the ground in deep shock, ruined shoulder pumping blood into a widening pool on the road.

The shooting continues as the Saint's shadow falls across Kenny, who opens his eyes. He dies a rather pissed-off man.

KENNY

(whisper)

Fuck you, Sheriff Root.

The Saint doesn't bother to aim, just pulls the trigger as he walks past Kenny. Another blast. He brings up the second pistol as more bullet smash into him, fires.

A deputy's head is blown completely apart.

The one cowering behind the cruiser is blubbering pathetically, back jammed up against the side of the car. The last guy, still shooting, yells desperately at the cowardly guy.

SCARED DEPUTY

Oh Jesus Christ please save me now, I
fuckin' beg you! Don't let me die here!
Don't let me die!

DEPUTY

For Christ's sake shoot back at him, you
stupid son of a bitch!

The Saint takes careful aim, fires once.

The bullet punches through the side panel of the cruiser, just over the front wheel, with a metallic clang.

On the other side, the scared deputy gapes in amazement as the bullet tears out of his chest in a shower of blood and meat.

The deputy beside him ceases fire, turning to stare. Beyond him, about fifty yards down the road, we see the deputy who broke and ran earlier.

Another roaring gunshot and the nearer deputy loses the front of his head. Beyond him, about a second later, the running deputy throws up his arms and falls.

66 INT. CASSIDY'S PICKUP - NIGHT

Jesse glances backwards, curious. The sparkling lights of the firefight glitter in the distant darkness.

JESSE

Pull over for a second.

CASSIDY

What?

(looking back)

Hey

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Hugo Root kneels at the edge of the carnage, furious, trying to wipe the blood out of his eyes.

HUGO

What the fuck is goin' on? Fuck! Sons of fuckin' whores

He clears his eyes, looks up, blinking, realises the Saint's legs are about three feet away.

The Saint watches calmly, pistols held at his sides. He's been shot about a dozen times, but the wounds seem like nothing more than cuts or bad bruises. He's not so angry now, back to the slow burning disdain.

Hugo stands up slowly, holding his hands up open and empty. He's not so much scared as very, very cautious. His pistol is gone from its holster.

HUGO

Now...you can see I ain't armed

The Saint raises one of the pistols, points it right at us.
The muzzle is a yawning black chasm.

SAINT

Reckon you can see I am.

Hugo closes his eyes, sweating buckets. Weary, disgusted fear at last shows on his face.

Then: multiple gunshots, and the Saint is rocked by the impact of several bullets. The sound of the helicopter rotors comes back.

The helicopter roars back into place over the shattered roadblock.

68 INT. HELICOPTER - NIGHT

The marksman has an automatic pistol dead-aimed with both hands, yelling into his radio headset.

MARKSMAN

(over loudspeaker)

Sheriff Root, run! Get the fuck outta there!

69 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The Saint turns to look up at the 'copter, not too impressed. Behind him, Hugo snaps out of it and runs like hell.

The 'copter hovers barely twenty yards over the cars and scattered bodies, the Saint turning towards it. The marksman can be clearly seen, locked on target.

MARKSMAN

(over loudspeaker)

You! Drop them guns an' raise you fuckin' hands! I don't see 'em empty, I drop you lower'n wormshit!

The Saint raises an eye, not convinced.

MARKSMAN (O.S.)

(over loudspeaker)

You point that pistol an' see if I'm jokin' motherfucker!

70 EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Cassidy and Jesse have exited the truck and are peering back along the road. Tulip watches from the truck, wary.

TULIP

Well?

JESSE

It's hard to see

A sudden flash of light illuminates them as they stagger back, shielding their eyes.

71 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Massive flaring explosion with a rumbling, echoing blast, right on top of the two cruisers, with the 'copter's tail sticking out of the inferno. Pieces of blazing car and 'copter fly into the air.

72 EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Cassidy's freaked. Jesse peers closely at us, shielding his eyes as the flames light his face.

CASSIDY

Fuck me sideways!

73 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

A silhouetted figure takes shape in the flames: the Saint. He strides slowly from the wreckage. His clothes are burnt and sooty, but he seems otherwise unhurt. Slow-burning grimace on his face.

SAINT

(through gritted teeth)

You.

74 EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Jesse's eyes widen, amazed.

75 INT. JESSE'S VISION

Another three second flash. The demon and angel faces again, the angel's hand locked round the demon's throat, the demon biting bloody strips of flesh from the angel's neck - then silver clouds and bright sunlight.

76 EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Jesse turns to the equally freaked Cassidy, and they stare at each other.

CASSIDY

He means you.

Jesse stares at him, then turns to the truck. A second later, Cassidy snaps out of it too.

They scramble into the truck and race off.

77 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Backlit by the flames, the Saint strides towards and then past us, unconcerned.

78 EXT. MASSACRE SCENE - NIGHT

Dead men and blood everywhere. Then movement. A moan. An engine is heard, a vehicle pulls up. Its headlights illuminate the slaughter.

A dying deputy weakly raises his head, a hole in his chest you could stick your fist through.

Music is just audible over the engine: "Dropkick me Jesus through the goalposts of life".

Footsteps, getting closer. Two shadows fall across the dying man. He looks up, imploring.

DEPUTY

Oh God..oh Jesus, help me

JODY (O.S.)

Fraid not, boy.

The Deputy's expression changes to one of horror.

The first angel, the one who gives the orders, stands alone in the gloom. His comrade joins him agitated.

ANGEL

How bad is it?

ANGEL 2

A nightmare. A dozen dead in the first encounter alone. And our brother, too.

ANGEL

Well. We knew the risks when we set him loose.

ANGEL 2

When you set him loose. And I hope you know just what it is you've done. He's out there killing mortals, brother, he's ending human lives like they were nothing

ANGEL

Imagine that. The patron Saint of Murderers and Assassins has been killing people. Whatever next? I don't care if the bodycount reaches triple figures. I don't care if it's innocents: if it's women and children and the firstborn of fucking Egypt. I sent him because nothing'll stop him getting Genesis back.

(angrier)

Because if that hybrid bastard creation remains on the loose, everything, from the kingdom of Heaven to the fires of Hell, all of it: is fucked.

The second angel wisely holds his tongue.

ANGEL

And in case you've forgotten, brother: that means we're fucked too.

A small place on a stretch of desert highway. Facing it across the road is a bar. Most of the stores are closing. The parking lot emptying.

Moving around it, we see Cassidy's pickup parked behind a big 18-wheeler, hiding it from the view of the road.

81 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Jesse sits and smokes alone, ragged, dusty. He seems thoughtful, a little bit fateful, like he knows there's more and worse to come.

JESSE
Cry fuckin' havoc.

82 INT. CLOTHING STORE - NIGHT

The clerk is starting to close up. Tulip is looking through various racks, picking up - throughout this scene - a black jeans, and black leather jacket. She has her handbag over her shoulder. Cassidy is following her around, much to her annoyance.

CASSIDY
The man in black, wha'?

TULIP
It's what he likes.

CASSIDY
You would know, I suppose.

TULIP
We were together a long time. I can't help knowing.

CASSIDY
Ah, I'm not criticisin'. I think it's sweet.

TULIP
(losing patience)
Look, what are you doing here, anyway?

CASSIDY
I'm helpin' yeh pick clothes. We can't have our Preacher goin' around in rags, can we? The cops'll spot him a mile off.

TULIP
Yeah, like I need you to help with that. And what do you mean, "our Preacher"? Why can't you just fuck off?

CASSIDY

(amused)

That's a wee bit cold, isn't it? I'm the one gave yez a ride outta trouble, aren't I? An' yeh never know, I might be able to help yeh again later on.

TULIP

How, exactly?

CASSIDY

Hidden talents, love.

She doesn't seem impressed.

CASSIDY

I'm Irish, for one thing. That never hurts. An' there's somethin' else yeh should know about me too.

TULIP

Oh yes?

He presses a hand to his forehead, concentrates, pretending to read her mind.

CASSIDY

Your surname is ...O'Hare. Yeh've a friend in New York called Amy...an' another one in Dallas called..Macavoy. An' your cellular number's ...lemme see, 0411-435655

TULIP

(stunned)

How do you know all that...?

Cassidy takes a little address book from behind his back, grins.

CASSIDY

I nicked your address book.

TULIP

(grabbing it)

Give that back, pigfucker!

CLERK

(peeved)

I really have to close up now.

Tulip takes her stuff up to the counter, embarrassed.

TULIP

Uh...sorry. Um, do you have any of those little metal things? Like you put on the tips of shirt collars?

The clerk turns away to get some. Cassidy sidles up behind Tulip, whispers into her ear.

CASSIDY

Oh, by the way, when are yeh gonna tell your boyfriend about the gun yeh've got in your handbag...?

83 EXT. MALL - NIGHT

Tulip and Cassidy exit the mall, still arguing.

TULIP

Okay, look: I'm helping him because I want to know why he left me without a goddamn word and became Minister of some shithole in the ass-end of Texas

84 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Jesse sees them approaching, reacts to what they say.

TULIP

and that's all. What's your excuse?

CASSIDY

For fuck's sake, is it not a wee bit obvious? Yeh saw what he did to the cops, didn't yeh? If he can do that sort of thing on a regular basis, the sky's gonna be the limit!

85 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

They get nearer the pickup, Cassidy happy as Larry.

CASSIDY

Just imagine: "Miss Crawford, Miss Schiffer - smear my handsome Irish friend in Southern Comfort, an' then lick it all off. Mr. Jagger, you load Keith's coke in the back of that 747. Then sign this check.

(to Tulip)

He could maybe even get you to stop bein' so bitter an' twisted

TULIP
You really are a complete prick,
aren't you? Jesse leans out of the
pickup, smiling, friendly.

JESSE
Hey, Cassidy?

CASSIDY
Aye?

JESSE
(Word of God)
*Why don't you go stand up by the road an'
moon the traffic for, oh, about the next
twenty minutes?*

Cassidy stares in horror, jaw dropping. Tulip grins with
delight.

86 INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT. BUILDING, OUTER OFFICE - NIGHT

A weary SECRETARY starts to stand as Hugo Root marches
past her, then freezes.

SECRETARY
Sheriff Root, you can't just barge in
- Oh!

87

88 INT. SHERIFF MEEKER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Average sized office, desk and chairs piled high with
files, overflowing filing cabinets, photos on the wall,
noticeboard covered in documents.

SHERIFF MEEKER, an amiable guy in his late forties, sits
behind the desk and sips his coffee, relaxed. Meeker
rarely gets too agitated.

DETECTIVE DINNINGS, 30, sits opposite him reading a file,
not enjoying the coffee he's drinking. He's a pretty
sharp guy, probably destined for bigger things. He's
hard to shock, usually just quietly amused by other
people.

DINNINGS
Did somebody come in this coffee?

MEEKER
(without looking up)
I got excited when I heard you were on
your way. Couldn't help it. So what
d'you make of all this?

DINNINGS

Well, judging by what he said over the radio here, I'd say your Sheriff Root is a one hundred percent

The door opens and in barges Hugo, fuming. He's still covered in gore and dirt, dried blood smeared across his face.

HUGO

Meeker, I want you to get right on that fuckin' phone an' call Washington. I want you to get those government sons of bitches down here to answer for what they done. Those by-the-Jesus, cocksuckin' yankees think they can use us to test their goddamned experiments on, they can fuckin' think again.

Dinnings stands, trying not to smile. Meeker just looks pained.

MEEKER

Now just hold on a minute there, Hugo. You been to the hospital to get yourself checked out?

HUGO

Ain't nothin' wrong with me, goddammit!

DINNINGS

Really?

HUGO

(Disliking him instantly)
An' who the fuck are you supposed to be?

MEEKER

Hugo, this is Detective Dinnings. He's

HUGO

I don't give a good fuck who he is. Do you know what's been let loose out there? Do you know what happened to my deputies tonight?

MEEKER

Well, I heard what you radioed in. One suspect matching the description of the missing Minister from Annville apparently ordered you an' your boys to drop your guns...which you did...and the second suspect was able to withstand multiple gunshot wounds while killing every single deputy in your command.

HUGO

Goddamn right.

A moment passes, Meeker watching Hugo sadly, Hugo glaring back at him, Dinnings smiling as he studies Hugo.

DINNINGS

Shit, case closed.

HUGO

(spitting)

Fuck you.

Dinnings grins. Meeker looks weary.

MEEKER

Hugo...!

HUGO

We're wastin' time here, Meeker. You call Washington, tell 'em we're onto them an' their goddamn F.B.I. genetic experiments. I know all about it, I read all the books. They been usin' Martian Nigger technology, tryin' to keep it quiet from us normal folks.

By now Dinnings is struggling not to laugh, but Hugo doesn't notice. Meeker seems genuinely sad for him.

HUGO

Them sons of bitches built a fella can make you do whatever he tells you, an' a dirty motherfucker cop killer robot, an' they've let 'em both loose on us. (pointing to his face) I got the proof right here. See this? Deputy Kenny. I loved that boy like he was my own, an' now I'm gonna have to go home an' shampoo his outta my hair. An' I wanna know just what the fuck you're plannin' to do about it.

MEEKER

(getting up)

Okay, Hugo, thanks for your report.

(MORE)

We've got boys turnin' out all over the state, an' the border posts have been alerted. We're gonna pick these people up sooner or later, an' as soon as we do we'll let you know.

Hugo fumes. Meeker is sympathetic but firm. Dinnings looks hard at the floor.

MEEKER

Get on home an' get some rest, huh?

Hugo sneers. Then, after a last hard glare at both of them, he turns and marches out of the office, slamming the door as he goes.

Meeker slumps a little, return to his seat. Dinnings rubs his jaw, smiles a little. A moment passes in silence.

DINNINGS

Ain't you gonna call Washington?

MEEKER

(smiling in spite of himself)
Laugh it up. I been workin' with Hugo Root for damn near twenty years now. We're agreed somebody killed his deputies, yeah?

DINNINGS

No doubt about it. I just ain't ready to call the X-Files yet, is all. Any word from the scene?

MEEKER

Tanks went up when the chopper crashed on the cars. Can't establish shit 'til they clean up a little. What you make of Annville, by the way?

DINNINGS

Well, from the looks of things, I'd say somebody waited 'till the good people had gathered to worship an' then laid in twenty gallons of napalm.. Sure would like a word with this Reverend Custer about how he got out of it

MEEKER

(doubtful)

Well

DINNINGS

It's just a theory, Sheriff. Hell, gotta be better than Hugo's, right?

MEEKER

Right...oh, I know he looks like what happened when white met trash, but...

DINNINGS

(smiling)

He looks like a man who's not afraid to fuck his career in the ass.

MEEKER

Mm.You ever hear about what happened to Hugo's boy?

DINNINGS

Til tonight I never even heard of Hugo.

MEEKER

Kid put a twelve-gauge to his head.

DINNINGS

Oh, no shit?

Meeker sits back, thoughtful, links his fingers behind his head..

MEEKER

Not because of Hugo...let's see, now, the boy woulda been about sixteen. You know how kids get at that age, all surly an' rebellious an'disrespectful. Hugo kicked his ass twice a day. Once he even put a cigarette out on his arm. An' all he got for his trouble was fuck you

Dinnings is getting interested.

MEEKER

Now, the boy's a big fan of one of these rock star boys, one of these modern ones , sounds like a downs syndrome set to music. This gets up Hugo's ass double. How's he s'posed to listen to Hank an' Waylon an' Tammy, with that shit comin' through the wall? Well, came the day the rock star blew his damn fool head off, the way these fellas are prone to do. Boy hears the news, tucks Hugo's remington under his chin, an' follows in his hero's footsteps.

DINNINGS

Don't suppose Hugo mourned too much, huh?

MEEKER

Didn't have to.

DINNINGS

(surprised)

The boy's alive? Meeker starts fumbling through a desk drawer.

MEEKER

Bear with me a minute, will you? Yeah, after taking a slug through the face point blank, and six or seven operations to fix him up, the boy is indeed alive. Ah, here we are...

He comes up with an 8x10 photo, which we never see. He looks at it, frowning thoughtfully.

MEEKER

I got a teenage boy of my own, and every time he pisses me off - every dumb thing he says to his Mom, every joint I catch him with, or just when I hear him playing that goddamn rap shit: I take a look at this...and all of a sudden he don't seem quite so bad.

He turns the photo round, holds it up. Looking past it, we see Dinnings gape in shock and horror.

89 EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

ARSEFACE opens the door and sticks his head out at us, filling the screen.

Arseface's dialogue is a stream of grunts - and yet he never sounds anything other than completely cheerful. Try sticking your tongue hard into your lower lip, then speaking his lines. A translation is run in subtitles along the bottom of the screen.

ARSEFACE

(Hi, Dad!)

Hugo barges past him into the house, doing his best to ignore his son completely. Arseface doesn't seem to notice.

ARSEFACE

(How was your day?)

90 INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hugo walks into the front room, fuming quietly as Arseface follows him, chattering away. The house is sparsely furnished, and not very clean. Worn-out furniture, old TV set. Hugo dumps his hat on the coffee table, sits down.

ARSEFACE

(Still no letter from Mom, but I bet she'll be home any day now, huh? You want to relax and I'll bring you a beer? Sound good?)

He heads for the kitchen, turns, gives the thumbs up. -

ARSEFACE

(You betcha!)

91 LEFT ALONE, HUGO STARES HATEFULLY AT THE WALL FOR A MOMENT, PISSED OFF AT HIS WRETCHED LOT IN LIFE. THEN HE CLOSSES HIS EYES, PUTS HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, AND BREAKS DOWN COMPLETELY.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

A big 18-wheeler roars out of the night, headlights blazing.

As it approaches the mall, it's lights pick up a bizarre figure at the side of the road, bent over, pants round his knees, arse in the air: Cassidy.

The lad is furious. He swears in a steady stream of obscenity as the truck goes past, drowning his words with a loud blast of it's horn.

CASSIDY

Fuckin', goat-rapin', dirty, evil, cocksuckin', motherfuckin A car races past, sounds it's horn.

Fuming, Cassidy glances at his watch, grimaces.

CASSIDY

Lousy shiteatin', backstabbin' little redneck son of a bitch

92 EXT. ROADHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

The bar is a wide, one-storey building out in the desert, with several cars and pickups in the parking lot. Across the road from it is a small all night supermarket/mini-mall, with more cars parked outside.

Seems to be closing. The bar, however, is very much open: a large neon sign over it reads THE RATTLER. People come and go. Music drifts out into the night.

INT. ROADHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

Inside, The Rattler is a fairly dead kind of place. Same mix of smoke, neon and gloom that we've seen before. Plenty of people in, but everyone seems to stay in little groups or couples - no dancing, no boisterous groups around the bar. A good place to go to drink yourself into a wretched mess and cry into your whiskey.

Couple of WAITRESSES at work, not exactly rushed off their feet. One is young and pretty.

Tight shot on Tulip, sitting at a table near the back. She has some sort of sopey cocktail with an umbrella in it.

TULIP
(sneering)
Ha!

JESSE (O.S.)
But

TULIP
No! Ha!

Pull back. Jesse sits opposite her, drinking J.D. and ice. He's cleaned himself up and is wearing the clothes she got for him. He looks pretty sharp, actually. White collar slid into the neck of his black shirt.

JESSE
(shrugging)
Just askin'.

TULIP
You think I came to Annville to find you? Don't flatter yourself. Cassidy just happened to be heading that way, is all.

JESSE
Tulip, I know this has gotta be kind of upsettin

TULIP
Yes, I'd say it's pretty fucking kind of upsetting. You walk out on me without a word of warning, you leave me high and dry in Phoenix with thirty dollars to my name, and now I find you and what are you doing? You're worshipping fucking God!

JESSE

Aw, now don't say his name like that

TULIP

Excuse me, I'm a little bit pissed at him at the moment. I'll say his name whatever the fuck way I want. I thought you'd gone back to that skinny slut in Waco, whatsername, or maybe started running hash over the border, or even started up a strip joint or something - but this?!

JESSE

Honey

TULIP

And another thing, how does an ex-car thief qualify for the ministry, anyhow? Or has the church loosened up a bit? Started embracing the kind of shit we used to get up to?

JESSE

Hey, it wasn't all that bad

TULIP

Really? Boosting every Ferrari we saw from Knoxville to San Diego? Sex five times a night with matinees at weekends? Fucking on Elvis's grave? That wasn't all that bad? Look, I don't remember learning too much of that kind thing in Sunday school, but it that's what Christians are doing these days, then please, tell me: where do I sign up?

Jesse has been growing progressively edgier as his old sins are listed. Tulip stares at him, exasperated. Then she saddens a little.

TULIP

You were my dream, Jesse. All that time we spent, running cars into Austin or Vegas or San Antone, and I used to look at you and think - "he's really mine.

(pause)

And you used to look at me and say you'd love me until the end of the world.

Jesse is miserable. This hurts like hell.

TULIP

Why? Why did you hurt me like that? Why did you let me believe you loved me so much?

JESSE

I did love you. I still - I She
looks hopefully at him, a little
desperate.

JESSE

Tulip, I wanted nothin' more'n to be
with you for the rest of my life, I
swear to God. But if I hadn't just up
an' left you when I did, you woulda
got hurt a thousand times worse. An'
I mean really hurt.

Tulip is fascinated, but her question is cut off by the
return of the irate Cassidy.

TULIP

But

CASSIDY

Ha Ha Fuckin' Ha, was that supposed to
be funny?

Jesse turns to him, smiling a little, amused. Tulip
tenses. Cassidy glares at Jesse.

JESSE

You didn't think so?

Jesse's smile is open and friendly, like, come on, it was
a joke. Cassidy is still pissed. He tries to stare
Jesse down. Then, gradually, he can't help it - he
starts smiling too.

CASSIDY

All right, fair enough, I suppose it
was pretty fuckin' funny, really.
(serious)
But don't do it again, all right?

JESSE

(amused)

Sure

The pretty young waitress comes over. She seems to like
Jesse.

WAITRESS

You about ready for another drink,
Reverend?

JESSE

Yeah, same again for me an' the lady,
and

CASSIDY

Beer.

JESSE
An' a beer for this gentleman.

WAITRESS
(flirty)
Comin' right up, Reverend.

Off she goes. Jesse smiles after her, notices Tulip's icy glare, stops. What he doesn't notice are half a dozen REDNECKS at a booth nearby, noticing the semi-flirtation going on, and disapproving. Young bucks with half a dozen beers in them, getting ready to go looking for trouble.

CASSIDY
That's awfully decent of you, I must say.

JESSE
Least I can do, after you given' us a ride outta all that trouble tonight.

TULIP
Least I can do. I'm paying apparently.

CASSIDY
(friendly)
It occurs to me we haven't been properly introduced. My name's Cassidy. You're Jesse an' yeh used to go out wi' Turnip, is that right?

TULIP
(hissing)
Tulip

Jesse and Cassidy are friendly, if a bit guarded, each trying to get a handle on the other, knowing there's more to them.

Tulip smiles lifelessly at Cassidy.

TULIP
Anyway, we really do appreciate your help, but I think we can take it from here. It's been fun. Well, actually

CASSIDY
Ah now, I haven't even got my beer yet. An' I told yeh. I might be of some use to yeh. When yeh've been around for as long as I have, yeh pick up all sorts of useful wee tricks.

JESSE
How d'you mean, as long as you have? You ain't no older than me.

CASSIDY

(winking)

Tell yeh later. I notice yeh're still wearin' the collar, there.

JESSE

(thoughtful)

Yeah. Well, I reckon I still have business with the Lord.

(Lights a cigarette, offers Cassidy one)

I'd like to know what the fuck happened to me today, for one thing. How I came to be able to do what I did to those deputies. An' who the hell that gunfighter son of a bitch is, too.

Tulip nudges him as the waitress returns with their drinks, and they all clam up. The girl pays special attention to Jesse as she sets down the drinks. Nobody notices, but a couple of the rednecks have sidled over eavesdrop.

WAITRESS

I brung your change. Hey, I been wonderin': are you a real Preacher?

JESSE

Now, what would a real one be doin' in a den of sin like this? You go on an' keep it honey.

WAITRESS

(beaming)

Thank you, Reverend.

TULIP

(sarcastic)

Don't mention it.

Tulip forks over a ten-spot, and off goes the waitress. Cassidy waits 'til she's out of earshot before speaking.

CASSIDY

Well, it's pretty bleedin' obvious to me that all this stuff's linked up. I mean, from what you were sayin' earlier: you get hit by this ...whatever it is, you incinerate your congregation

JESSE

Not by choice. Well, probably not.

CASSIDY

You develop this Word of God, an' all of a sudden you've got the gunfighter after you.

JESSE
Cause he doesn't want me doin' this
shit, or somethin'? Yeah that
figures.

CASSIDY
I'll tell you one thing about him: he
looks like a man to avoid like the
fuckin' plague.

JESSE
Maybe so.

TULIP
Maybe so?

JESSE
Like I say, I want some answers. If
it turns out I gotta go to him to get
'em ...there it is.

CASSIDY
Did you see what he did out there
tonight? The bastard can shoot down
helicopters. Bullets bounce off him.
He can walk through a fuckin'
firestorm, for Jesus' sake.

JESSE
(leaning in, annoyed)
I don't care if he can shoot cruise
missiles from his pecker. Nobody - I
mean nobody - fucks with me like I
been fucked with today an' gets away
with their teeth still intact. An' if
that motherfucker wants to get in my
way he's gonna be wearin' his sixguns
up his ass.

A pause. Cassidy seems rather fazed, not sure what to
think.

CASSIDY
You're not much of a one for backin'
down in the face of adversity, are you
Jesse?

Jesse drinks his bourbon. Tulip looks at Cassidy,
wearily shaking her head: No he isn't. Nor was he ever.

We then have a close up of someone's hand tapping numbers
into the jukebox. Whoever they are, they slip quickly
away before we can get a good look at them.

Jesse is just drinking his whiskey when "Dropkick me
Jesus..." starts playing, and he almost chokes on his
drink. He seems frozen, a deer in the headlights.

TULIP

Jesse?

CASSIDY

What's the matter?

But Jesse ignores them, looking left, right, behind. He searches desperately, slightly frantic.

His search yields nothing. Slowly he sits down, snaps out of it.

CASSIDY

I could go an' put some Clash on, if yeh like.

JESSE

Huh? Oh, sorry, I was... They look at him quizzically. He shrugs.

JESSE

It's nothin'. Getting' late. We oughta drink up. EXT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

A very different sort of bar, the TEN-TEN. A number of 18-wheelers parked outside. Loud country music blares from within, along with raised voices, shouts. Sounds good and lively. A truck roars past in the background.

93 INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

This is indeed a much livelier place than the Rattler. The clientele is generally older - truckers in their 30's and 40's cutting loose, a jukebox pumping out C&W at full volume, waitresses getting friendly with the boys. A number of locals about too, a few couples about - basically lots of friends meeting up, enjoying their all too rare times together as they pass through. Several folks dancing.

Up at the bar, a slightly toasted trucker slaps his pals on the back, kisses the barmaid goodbye, and weaves for the door.

TRUCKER

I gotta go, boys. I need to sleep this off an' be halfway to Memphis by tomorrow night. I'll see you.

BARMAID

You say hi to your wife for me, Frank.

TRUCKER
(laughing)
That'll be the day.

Out he goes. The others go back to their conversation.
A moment passes.

Then there's the most god-almighty bang and the trucker is flung back into the bar with half his chest blown away, frantically trying to stay on his feet. He falls backwards, smashes into the jukebox - the music stops. Then he falls on the floor and dies in a bloody heap. Everyone gapes.

A confused buzz of fear and confusion fills the air. People move to the fallen trucker. The one guy turns towards the door, freezes.

GUY
Oh Jesus .

It's the Saint, framed in the doorway, blue smoke curling up from his pistol.

Everyone turns to stare, riveted.

He strides up to the bar, oblivious to their stares.

There's a loud clunk as he sets the revolver on the bar.

He fixes the petrified barmaid with his steely glare.

SAINT
Whiskey

Mouth clamped shut for fear she'll scream, the barmaid sets down a glass and pours him a shot. The noise of the flowing whiskey is the only thing audible.

The Saint knocks it back, sets down the glass. For just a moment he seems thoughtful.

SAINT
First drink I've had since Wounded
Knee.

The moment passes, the icy cold returns to his eyes and he reaches for the pistol. Sudden panic shows on the faces of the people around him. A sense of something terrible about to happen.

94 EXT. ROADHOUSE BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jesse, Tulip and Cassidy have left the Rattler. Tulip isn't too happy. Jesse grimaces a little. Cassidy follows, enjoying their argument.

TULIP

You got a nice little ass, honey. You go on an' keep Tulip's last five bucks.

JESSE

Aw, now that wasn't it at all...

REDNECK LEADER (O.S.)

You don't like it here, drink some other goddamned place.

They turn. Advancing slowly on them are the little band of rednecks from the bar, just drunk enough to want to get into it. The leader is a brawny thug in a baseball cap. Six of them in total.

Cassidy steps in front of Tulip so he's just behind and to the side of Jesse.

Jesse remains cool, even polite.

JESSE

I like it fine. The leader stops about a yard from Jesse.

REDNECK LEADER

That ain't what you said to Mona. Called it a den of sin, or some shit. I heard you.

JESSE

(weary)

Oh, Jesus...look, if she's your girl, relax, okay? I ain't interested. You got me all wrong.

REDNECK LEADER

(turning cap back to front)

I reckon I got you just right
Motherfucker!

Jesse changes in an instant. His eyes narrow. He goes icy cold.

Cassidy steps up behind him, grins.

CASSIDY

You know...I think the problem is that she isn't his girl.

JESSE

I think the problem is that he ain't got a girl, period.

REDNECK LEADER

You sayin' I'm some kinda homo?!

Jesse is icy cold. Behind him, Cassidy's grin becomes positively predatory.

JESSE

I'm sayin' you'd crawl over fifty good pussies to get to a fat boy's ass.

The leader moves - too slow. Jesse slams two fingers up his nostrils, twists, and rips upwards. A terrible ripping and a gout of blood. The guy howls and falls. The others are so surprised, Jesse has time to step in and hook a right, left and another right into the second guy's face. He drops like a ton of shit.

A third guy reaches for Jesse, but Cassidy at his shoulder, smiles nastily, and headbutts him in the face. A massive, almost hollow-sounding impact. The guy's eyes bulge and he falls, nose spread all over his face like a burst tomato.

Jesse ducks a swing from number four, sinks a low one into the guy's stomach. The guy folds up round it, gasping.

Number five jumps on Cassidy's back. The sixth guy dances back out of trouble.

The sixth guy sneakily snaps open a switchblade, waits for his chance.

Jesse holds number four against a car and punches the shit out of him.

Cassidy flips the fifth one over his shoulder. The guy flies at least ten yards through the air.

Tulips eyes widen as she follows the arc of his descent.

TULIP

Jesus Christ...!

Big crash as the guy smashes into the side of a pickup truck like a broken rag doll, upside down.

Tulip turns back to the fight, freaks.

TULIP

Cassidy!

CASSIDY

Yeah?

Cassidy turns right into the sixth guy's attack. He slams the switchblade clean through the plastic lens of Cassidy's shades, on into the eye beyond.

Cassidy steps back, hand going to his eye, then coming away again.

Tulip stares.

Cassidy and the guy look at each other. Cassidy is calm. The handle of the blade juts from his shades lens, blade all the way in. The guy is frozen. Beyond them, we get a glimpse of Jesse still demolishing his own victim.

Cassidy reaches up, holds the shades on with one hand, tugs the blade out of his eye with no discernable pain whatsoever. Blood and jelly slide from the blade, leaking down from behind his shades as well.

CASSIDY

Hang on a second there, mate. I'll be right with you. Pop out comes the blade, slathered in gore. Tulip's eyes widen further.

CASSIDY (O.S.)

Right. C'mere

We hear the guy scream in terror - a scream which is just suddenly cut off.

TULIP

J...J...Jesse?

Jesse quits beating on the redneck, whose face is now pulp. Jesse holds him up with one hand and turns, then drops him. Jesse's jaw drops open in amazement as he stares.

JESSE

Jesus Fuckin' Christ.

Cassidy holds his would-be assailant's lifeless body up by the hair, blood pours down his chin. The blood is from the guy's neck, which Cassidy has just bitten a hole in.

CASSIDY

What?

He hauls the corpse up, sinks his mouth into the wound, and starts drinking the blood as it pours out. Loud gulping noises can be heard.

Tulip still freaked, turns slowly to the riveted Jesse.

TULIP

Say something!

Cassidy quits drinking for a second, gasps with delight.

JESSE

What the fuck you do that for ...?

CASSIDY

I was hungry.

JESSE

So you figured you'd snack on this fella's neck? What are you some kinda fuckin' vampire?

CASSIDY

Well, I just flung a fella twenty feet through the air, I took a switchblade straight in the brain without blinkin', an' I tore a fella's throat open so I could drink his blood. I'd say I was obviously some kind of fuckin' vampire, wouldn't you?

TULIP

Is this why you sleep in the truck all day? Out of the sun?

CASSIDY

Spot on. If I catch a few rays I explode like about a ton of semtex.

JESSE

It...it's impossible

CASSIDY

(laughing)

Oh aye, listen to Mr. Normal! An' I don't know what you're lookin' so innocent about, Tulip, wi' that fuckin' cannon in yer handbag! Jesse stares at Tulip who looks instantly guilty/

TULIP

Well...er... it's just a pistol

JESSE

Just a what?!

TULIP

For Christ's sake, Jesse! He's doing it again! So he is gulping away at the guy's neck.

JESSE

(angry)

Goddammit, Cassidy! Knock it off!

But Cassidy clearly likes it too much, gulping merrily away. Blood dribbles out everywhere.

CASSIDY

(between gulps)

Just - a minute

Jesse snarls, and once again his voice echoes with his new-found power.

JESSE
(Word of God)
Knock it off!

Cassidy is amazed. He flings the corpse to the ground, furious.

CASSIDY
For fuck's sake!

Jesse and Cassidy yell at each other, both furious, right in each other's faces.

CASSIDY
Don't you fuckin' dare do that shit to me! Nobody tells me what to do! An' I don't know if you noticed, but that wee shite stuck a knife in my eye!

JESSE
That don't make him a two-dollar slurpee! An' I'd've told you to fuck yourself the minute I laid eyes on you, if I'd known you were some kinda fuckin' abomination.

Cassidy freezes, stunned. For just a second he looks hurt - then his face sets in a pissed off grimace. Jesse faces him with narrowed eyes. Neither man will give ground.

Then Cassidy turns on his heel and stomps away.

Tulip watches him go, then turns to Jesse, who has turned away and is angrily lighting a marlboro.

Seconds later, Cassidy goes racing past them at the wheel of his truck, staring resolutely ahead. They ignore him right back.

Tulip turns, notices a motel about a hundred yards down the road. She turns to Jesse, starts to speak. Then

They're both suddenly pinned in the beams of twin headlights. They whirl.

The battered van is racing straight at them.

TULIP
Fuck!

She dives aside. Jesse is about to follow when he stops and stares into the light.

Jody is at the wheel of the van, glaring, heading right at us.

Jesse stares, horrified, frozen to the spot.

The van bares down on him.

At the last second, Tulip throws herself forward, crashes into Jesse, knocks him out of the way in the very nick of time.

The van roars past.

Jesse looks up, freaked. Tulip is perplexed.

TULIP
Jesus Christ, Jesse!

The rear doors of the van open. TC stands there, grinning, with the dead deputy from the massacre, he flings the body out. Then he pulls the doors shut and the van races off.

NB - Jody and TC are both in their forties now - older, scraggier, but still the same two fuckers.

Jesse and Tulip get slowly to their feet. Tulip stares at him.

TULIP
Are you okay....?

But Jesse can only walk slowly towards the body, each grim, fateful step taken in spite of itself. He doesn't want to, but has to look.

The white card TC was cutting earlier has been slotted into the deputy's shirt collar, like Jesse's own minister's one.

JESSE
(fearful whisper)
Gran'ma

TULIP
Huh?

Tulip is looking over Jesse's shoulder, curious. He snaps out of it, rounds on her, desperate.

JESSE
Jesus Christ! Tulip, you gotta get outta here!

TULIP
I do?

JESSE
Yes, goddammit! You gotta go, now,
right away! You gotta get as far away
from me as you fuckin' can!

TULIP
You're not making any sense

JESSE
Fuck makin' sense! You stay with me
an' you're gonna get killed! You
gotta get away, Tulip! Go! Go on,
goddammit!

But Tulip just looks sadly back at him, calm.

JESSE
(screaming)
What the fuck is wrong with you? Go!!

TULIP
I'm not leaving you, Jesse. He's
exasperated, staring desperately at
her.

TULIP
I think it's time we told each other
the truth.

95 EXT. ROADHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy's victim lies in a bodybag, face still frozen in
horror. A hand zips the bag shut.

Two paramedics lift the bodybag, carrying it towards a
pair of ambulances parked in the Rattler parking lot.
Three Sheriff's Dept. cruisers are there too, blue
lights slowly flashing. A small crowd watches as the
paramedics load the battered rednecks into the ambulance,
either on stretchers or helping them climb in.

Several deputies are questioning people in the crowd.
Others keep the main crowd back from the crime scene.

Dinnings and Meeker are questioning the one redneck still
standing, the second one Jesse hit. His face has been
bandaged, he's a bit woozy.

REDNECK
.....an' then the Reverend fella,
he hit me so hard I felt like a
goddamn truck went over me an' when I
wake up a minute or two later, the
ugly one's bitin' into Horace's neck
an' drinkin' his goddamn blood!

Dinnings turns away. Meeker eases the guy towards the ambulance, then joins Dinnings

DINNINGS

What the fuck is this, asshole night?

MEEKER

I know, I know. Thing is, I showed him that photo of Reverend Custer we got, an' the guy swears it's some fella kicked his ass.

DINNINGS

This is the guy swears we got Dracula on the loose A deputy comes over.

DEPUTY

Sheriff Meeker? Sir? We just heard, 911 call came in about a half hour ago, from that truckstop out by the county line, the Ten-Ten? Somethin' about shootin' , an' a guy sounds kinda like Sheriff Root's cop killer

MEEKER

And?

DEPUTY

Got cut off.

Meeker and Dinnings look at each other.

MEEKER

That's a hell of a long way from here.. Okay, son. Get 'em ready to go.

Exit the deputy.

DINNINGS

You're really takin' this seriously?

MEEKER

Enough to go take a look. Let's go.

96 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The pickup races past us.

97 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Cassidy is driving, going hell for leather, clearly not in a very good mood.

CASSIDY

YOU REALLY KNOW HOW TO PICK YOU
MOMENTS, CASSIDY. YOU STUPID
BOLLICKS.

He sulks a bit. Then he looks curious, sniffing the air. He seems a bit surprised at what he smells, and pulls over.

98 EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The truck stops at the side of the road. Cassidy cuts the engine and sticks his head out the window. He takes a long, deep breath and freezes, amazed.

CASSIDY

Jesus!

He starts her up again, and the truck pulls away and races off down the road.

Way, way out in the distance, far from the speeding truck, a curious blood-red glow lines the horizon. It's much too red to be dawn, almost like a line of lava spilling from a fault.

99 EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A crummy little collection of cabins, a neon MOTEL sign, and a central office. Few cars parked.

100 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse and Tulip enter. She has the key. It's a shitty room, everything old and worn. A bed, a TV set, a phone, a door to the bathroom. Jesse slips his collar back into place.

TULIP

Mr and Mrs Smith? Jesus Christ, Jesse

JESSE

Fooled him, didn't it? That boy looked dumb enough to jerk off with a fistful of barbed wire. He ain't gonna be callin' any law.

Tulip shrugs, thinks for a moment. She sits on the bed, takes her pistol from her bag, lays it on the bed beside her. Jesse watches, curious.

JESSE

This is it?

TULIP

I said it was time for us both to tell the truth. I want to know why you left me, Jesse. After the pain and shit and misery you caused me, I'm entitled to an explanation. And after what we shared and how hard we loved, I don't think you have the right to deny me that.

Jesse looks at her, anguished. She returns his gaze, gentle but serious. He gives in.

JESSE

No.

TULIP

But first of all, there's something you ought to know about me. Because I'm not ... quite the same person you used to know. And if I want the truth from you, then it's only fair that you should get it from me.

(pause)

Maybe when you hear it, you won't want anything more to do with me, anyway. That's up to you.

Jesse sits down, watches her curiously. She lets out a long breath, steels herself, then drives right in.

TULIP

After I realized you weren't coming back, I kind of got myself into some trouble. I was drinking. A lot. And I didn't have the money to do it, so after a couple of years I was pretty deep in debt

JESSE

Who to?

TULIP

Macavoy

JESSE

That son of a bitch from Dallas? That motherfucker ripped us off on the Lamborghini thing? Why, I swore I was gonna rip.....

TULIP

(cutting him off)

Yes, but I had no-one else to go to, did I?

(calmer)

(MORE)

TULIP (CONT'D)

So what with the drinking and then looking for you in the occasional moments of sobriety, I let the whole thing get out of control and Macavoy called a halt to the proceedings. Wanted his money back. I couldn't pay. So he said I had to do something for him in exchange Jesse is watching her very carefully now.

TULIP

Christ, I don't know. I didn't have any choice. You swear there's things you would never do - you could never do - and all of a sudden circumstances change and you find yourself doing stuff, no matter how awful it is.

JESSE

(quietly appalled)
You...you were a hooker?

TULIP

(exploding)
No I was not a fucking hooker! Jesus Christ, Custer! I can't believe you fucking said that! What the fuck do you think I am?

But Jesse is too busy getting his heartrate back to normal to answer, relieved beyond measure.

TULIP

But I suppose in a way it was worse than that.

101 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

Flashback to Tulip standing on a street corner in a shitty part of town, purse over her shoulder, nervous. She just can't relax. She turns towards us, notices something that sets her even more on edge.

A black Mercedes is parked just outside a bar, which seems to have just closed. Two scruffily-suited thugs wait at the car while a third locks the door of the bar, pulls down the shutters. Also at the car is a fat guy in a slightly better suit, clearly their boss.

Tulip watches, now downright scared.

TULIP

Oh my God. I can't believe I'm gonna do this. She glances down at her purse.

The third guy finishes locking up and gets in the back of the car, with the fat guy between him and another thug. The last one gets in front to drive.

Tulip, staring, terrified, takes a step forward. Then another. And another.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The driver is just about to start up when he notices Tulip coming slowly towards them. He frowns, then smiles and turns to the guys in the back.

EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

Tulip advances like a nervous mouse, not really looking at the car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Everyone in the car busts up laughing.

FAT GUY

What the fuck is that supposed to be?

THUG

Looks to me like too much fuckin' prozac. Hey, watch this

102 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

The thug in the rear seat - on the side facing Tulip - leans out the window and grins at her. We can just see the thug on the other side of the fat guy leaning round to watch.

THUG

Pardon me, Ma'am! Tulip jumps, startled out of her daze.

TULIP

Wahh!

The thug makes a two inch diameter circle with his thumb and forefinger, smiles innocently.

THUG

You reckon you could get your mouth around something this wide? 'Cause if you could, I'd like to marry you.

Tulip freezes, stunned. We hear the carload of jerks crack up laughing. Then Tulip's face changes to a look of total fury and she pulls the Desert Eagle from her purse.

THUG (O.S.)
Holy shit!

And we freeze frame right there.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse is staring wide-eyed at Tulip, mouth shut, but she doesn't notice.

TULIP
See, what had me so terrified was the thought of using a gun on someone. I mean my Dad was a cop, he taught me all about guns and defending myself and everything, and now here was this guy, this rival of Macavoy's I was supposed to blow away... I mean just kill him, put an end to him there in the street...I knew I couldn't do it. I froze. And then that asshole went and gave me whatever it is you need to pull a trigger. Or so I thought.

103 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET

We hold on the freeze frame for an instant, then Tulip completes the draw and fires.

104 INT. CAR - NIGHT

The second thug - not the one who spoke to Tulip, but the one who leant over to see better, get his jaw blown off. Blood flies. Panic in the back of the car.

FAT GUY
Jesus Fuckin' Christ!!

UNHURT THUG
Oh my God!

The wounded guy fumbles in his lap, picks up the severed lower jaw, stares at it. It's a ghastly mess of bone, meat and teeth.

His pals stare at him. He stares at them.

105 EXT. PRESIDIO STREET - NIGHT

Tulip is frozen, smoking gun in hand, eyes bulging from her skull. She claps a hand to her mouth, looking for all the world as if she'd sworn in church.

TULIP
(speaking)

Oh!

Her p.o.v. all four of the guys in the car, staring out at her, frozen to their seats, stunned.

Tulip bolts and runs down the street.

106 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tulip looks up, anxious to change the subject.

TULIP
So anyway, your turn.

JESSE
(fazed)
I don't think so

TULIP
Okay, okay, I know. It was a horrible thing to do. I know that. But just for that instant, after being so terrified, I was sure I could really do it. I think that's what scares me the most.

JESSE
I'm glad to hear that. Tulip looks up curious.

JESSE
Cause the Tulip I remember, the thought of takin' someone's life even a asshole's life, woulda scared the livin' hell outta her.

She smiles a little. So does he. A warm moment between them. Tulip even laughs a little, then more.

TULIP
Yours is gonna have to be a pretty wild fucking story to beat that one, mm?

Jesse stops smiling. It's his turn to steel himself.

JESSE

This is somethin' I never told you about before. It's a thing I carried with me my whole life, that I tried to shut away inside me, tried to run away from...an' in the end, I suppose it's the thing I could never escape.

He reaches into his pocket, comes up with an ancient worn envelope, looks thoughtfully at it.

JESSE

Back when we were together, I wrote you this here letter. It was in case this thing I was runnin' from caught up with me, an' I never got a chance to explain things. Way it turned out, I never even had a chance to send it to you.

He hands her the letter. She stares at him, puzzled.

JESSE

I kept it with me. Carried it always. I didn't know where you were, so I knew I'd never mail it. But...I kept it. I love you, Tulip.
(pause)
I'm sorry.

Slightly scared now, Tulip opens the envelope, unfolds the letter, starts reading.

We melt the shot of her reading into various grainy flashbacks of Jesse's youth, just the images, no dialogue.

His father's murder in the cornfield.

Gran'ma's lessons about the Lord.

The coffin.

His rebellion, and the coffin again.

Gran'ma's death and brief resurrection.

Tulip is clearly appalled by this. She stares at Jesse.

TULIP

You...you were just a little kid! How the hell did you get through this?

JESSE

(faraway)

I remembered somethin' my Daddy said to me. An' his words meant more to me than all the poison an' evil Gran'ma's crew could ever serve up.

(MORE)

You gotta be one of the good
guys... 'cause there's way too many of
the bad

(determined)

He was right. An' the bad guys beat
me, in the end. But by God, that
didn't mean I had to become like them.

TULIP

(gently)

Jesse, this is why you became a
Preacher. It's just... I still don't
understand why you had to leave me.

JESSE

Well, that is a short, sad story. You
probably figured I ran away from home
eventually, an' I did, right after
Gran'ma died. Wasn't long after that
I met you. An' I was happy, Christ,
for the first time in my life I was
truly happy... an' then came that day in
Pheonix. The day you went to buy me a
beer.

107 EXT. PHOENIX PARK - DAY

Beautiful sunny day in a small park. We close in on
Jesse and Tulip, several years younger. She sits on park
bench, he lies along it with his head in her lap.. She
strokes his hair. Young and in love, a lot less tense
than we've seen them up to now.

TULIP

Thirty dollars.

JESSE

Huh?

TULIP

That's how much cash we've got left.
Steal somethin' pricey tonight, will
you?

JESSE

Gonna do that anyway.

(pause)

Wanna hit California in style.

TULIP

(not daring to hope)

Don't be joking. Please don't be
joking.

JESSE

No joke, baby. Way I see it, we seen
enough desert to last us a while.

(MORE)

JESSE (CONT'D)

You want to go check out... San Francisco, maybe?

TULIP

(delighted)

Jesse! God, I love you She grabs him, kisses him.

JESSE

Well, lemme see, now..it is kinda hot. An' there is a liquor store, corner of the square.

TULIP

(amused)

Fucking typical. She gets up, sets off.

TULIP

The things I'm gonna do to you in California, boy! I can't wait!

JESSE

Good.

A tight shot on Jesse. He relaxes, closes his eyes, leans his head on the back of the bench. Quietly, peacefully happy. A moment or two passes like that.

JESSE

Cause that's where I'm gonna ask you to marry me.

We pull back as he opens his eyes, and Jody and TC are sitting beside him on the bench. Jesse freezes. TC is mildly amused, Jody just grim.

JODY

You took some findin', boy. I'll make this real simple. You come with us nice an' quiet an' don't make no fuss, or I'll shoot her through the fuckin' head.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tulip is staring at him horrified. He seems lost, faraway.

JESSE

An' after that I just went belly-up an' quit. You couldn't escape Gran'ma, not even when she was dead. You fought her, you got the shit beat out of you. You ran away, she dragged you back.

(pause)

(MORE)

Jody kicked my ass but good an' I didn't lift a finger to stop him. I did a month in the coffin. An' that's when I learned to love the Lord. 'Cause that's when he's there for you. When you're beaten, when you ain't got a ounce of fight left in you, when you just can't hack it by yourself anymore: You turn to Jesus or you stick a fuckin' gun in your mouth. (bitter smile)
That was the day that I became a Preacher.

TULIP

Why... why didn't you tell me about this before?

JESSE

I didn't want you knowin' the shit I'd been through, thinkin' I was some kinda freak. An' I sure as hell didn't want you thinkin' we could go deal with Jody an' TC - 'cause I know you, honey. You woulda tried. (pause)
Shit, now it's too late, anyhow. Them two sons of bitches have come to us.

TULIP

Well...you've got this power now, haven't you? You could just tell them to go fuck themselves.

JESSE

If I see them before they see me.

Upset, Tulip moves closer. They hug, hold each other tight for a minute, sad.

TULIP

They destroyed you, didn't they? Those monsters. They just about tore you apart.

JESSE

They tore us apart, baby. It's what they do. An' goddammit, look what it drove you to doin'.

- Tulip is miserable. Then she has a thought.

TULIP

Jesse, why don't we just get the hell out of this madness, right now? Just run for it - you use that power you've got to order anyone who messes with us out of our way, and we keep going and don't stop 'til we're far away from Texas.

JESSE

(smiling sadly)

Tulip...I like Texas. An' I'm through
runnin Her face falls a bit.

JESSE

It sure is temptin' to do what you're
sayin' but I can't. A thing like I
got, bein' able to make people do
stuff against their will - that ain't
the kind of thing you can take
lightly. I mean, you see what I just
did to Cassidy? That was wrong. What
right have I got to tell him what to
do? You got the power of God, you got
to use it right.

TULIP

But he fucking killed the guy

JESSE

Guy tried to kill him. You tellin me
if some son of a bitch tried that with
you, you wouldn't blow 'em away with
that cannon you got there?

TULIP

Yeah, I know, but - Jesus, you saw
what he did. He's a fucking monster,
Jesse!

JESSE

Oh hell, I'm already regrettin' sayin'
that to him. "Abomination!...I never
stood in judgement like that on a
fella before

TULIP

I think you had an excuse!

JESSE

Maybe so, but I can't just walk away
from this now. That's what I been
doin' all my life, an' it never once
solved anything. I gotta find out
what the hell's bee done to me an' I
gotta face down the bad guys,,, once
an' for all. An; I gotta do it
without becomin' one of them.

A moment passes as she sadly studies him.

TULIP

Oh, Jesse. You and your goddamn
pride.

(pause)

And that's just it, isn't it?

(MORE)

Maybe I'm the biggest idiot in the world or maybe I'm just a sucker for punishment...but guys who back down when trouble comes along, who eat shit all the time and learn to like it - you can find them anytime you want. But a crazy, hardheaded John Wayne son of a bitch like you - you only come along once in a lifetime.

That surprises him a little. She moves closer, smiles, obviously about to kiss him.

TULIP

You know what I think?

JESSE

(taken aback)

After everything .. She puts a finger to his lips.

TULIP

I think we're stuck with each other, tough guy.

They kiss for a long time, then break off to look at each other, both smiling. Then they kiss again and slowly descend towards the bed.

INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The TV screen - which isn't turned on.

We move slowly behind it, looking over it to see Hugo and Arseface sitting on the couch, watching the TV. Both have bottles of Bud. Hugo fumes quietly, bitter as hell.

ARSEFACE

(Sure wish we could afford to get the TV fixed, Dad!)

No response from Hugo. Arseface bangs on, oblivious to his dad's silent hatred.

ARSEFACE

(Must be real exciting being Sheriff ! Boy, I wish I could come along on one of your cases! You think I could be your deputy one day, Dad?)

Hugo's so uptight he looks like he could crack nuts with his asshole. The bottle starts to shake in his hand.

ARSEFACE
(Father and son lawmen! Me watching
your back! What a team we'd be, huh?)

The phone rings - barely a squeak comes from it before
Hugo snatches it up.

HUGO
Hugo Root here!

108 INT. MEEKER'S CAR - NIGHT

Meeker is driving, talking on the radio. Dinnings sits
beside him.

MEEKER
It's Meeker, Hugo. I ain't
interruptin' anything, am I? Dinnings
cracks up. Meeker just smiles.

HUGO (O.S.)
(over radio)
Meeker, you ain't interruptin' fuckin'
shit. You make that call to
Washington like I told you?

MEEKER
Top of my list, Hugo, top of my list.
Listen, we had word of a shooting out
at the Ten-Ten. From the sound of
things, your perp from the roadblock
just might be involved.

HUGO (O.S.)
(over radio)
The Preacher?

MEEKER
Uh-uh, the other one. The, uh,
gunfighter, I think you described him.
But we did et a positive I.D. on
Reverend Custer earlier on tonight.
Anyhow, me an' Detective Dinnings are
on our way out to the Ten-Ten right
now. Thought you might wanna join us.

109 INT. HUGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hugo is still on the phone, grim. Over his shoulder we
can see Arseface watching and listening, fascinated.

HUGO
Damn right I do, but what about the
Preacher?

(MORE)

He's the son of a bitch disarmed us
an' left us at that other bastard's
mercy in the first place!

(pause)

Oh, you don't? Well, you go ahead an'
rush right on over to the Ten-Ten: I'm
gonna stop by the Rattler an' do some
real investigatin'. I keep tellin'
you there's more to his shit than you
think, an' that Custer's the key to
all of it.

(pause)

Because it's fuckin' obvious, is why.
An' you'd know it too if you weren't
sittin' there sneerin' at me with that
faggot Dinnings. I can hear him
there, laughin' at me. You tell him
fuck you.

(pause)

Then fuck you too, Meeker. I'm gonna
find Custer an' blow this whole
fuckin' thing wide open. I'm gonna
have them fucks up in Washington good
an' tight by their John Thursdays, an'
you know what you're gonna have?
Dick.

He slams down the phone. Arseface creeps out towards us,
unnoticed by Hugo.

110 EXT. HUGO ROOT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hugo exits the house, slamming the door behind him. He
shoves his hat on, buckles on his gunbelt, stomps angrily
towards his car.

111 INT. HUGO'S CAR - NIGHT

Hugo gets in.

HUGO

Fuck you, Meeker. He starts her up.

HUGO

I'll show you some goddamned law
enforcement. EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE -
NIGHT The car speeds away. The rear
lights fade into the night.

Then, from the gloom at the side of the house, Arseface
pedals out on a BMX bicycle that's really far too small
for him. Legs pumping furiously, he races off after Hugo
as fast as he can.

112 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse and Tulip lie in bed, both apparently asleep. Their clothes lie all over the place. Just a sheet over them.

Jesse opens his eyes, dozy for a second. Then he turns to Tulip, studies her for a long moment. He gets out of bed and creeps to the bathroom.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

A small, cramped room with a dim light. Letting the sink fill with water, Jesse dozily watches himself in the little mirror above the sink.

JESSE

Nice goin' , Custer. You think of anything else you can do to complicate things even more, you be sure an' let me know.

He leans down, splashes water on his face.

He stands straight again, freezes. The image in the mirror is now one of roaring, blazing flames. Weird thing is, the light from them is trapped within the mirror, doesn't illuminate the bathroom at all.

113 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tulip wakes up, dozy, then registers Jesse's not beside her. She sits up, wary.

TULIP

Jesse?

114 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jesse stares, face twisted, completely bewildered.

115 INT. MIRROR / VISION

What we get now is an extended version of the scene Jesse was flashing on earlier, before the encounter with deputies. The unearthly flames stretching to the horizon.

Then, centered in shot, we see a small, black object silhouetted against the fire.

Moving closer, we realise that it's two figures locked together, having very violent sex. One is an ANGELIC MALE, just like the one whose face we glimpsed when Jesse was possessed by Genesis. He has vast white wings, golden hair, big muscles, and no clothes. He holds his partner by the throat, roaring in agony and anger. The other is the same DEMON FEMALE we saw during Jesse's possession - huge curved horns, cloven hooves, shiny, jet-black body, clawed hands and big fangs. She has her legs wrapped around the angel's waist as they hump away like crazy. She tears her claws down his back, spraying blood across his wings, and bites chunks of flesh from his chest.

116 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jesse continues to stare, jaw suddenly dropping at what he sees.

117 INT. MIRROR / VISION

The two figures, still locked together, soar upwards until they're high over the flames, both screaming in ecstasy now. The fires are far below them, and then disappear from view as they emerge into a beautiful skyscape of rolling white and silver clouds and sparkling sunlight.

The angel and demon become more gentle, holding each other, looking into each other's eyes.

118 INT. MOTEL BATHROOM - NIGHT

The door opens and Tulip comes in, puzzled, holding a sheet around her. Jesse continues to stare into the mirror, riveted.

TULIP

Jesse?

She moves beside him, looks past him.

All she sees are their reflections.

She looks curiously at Jesse, who's still gaping into the mirror in disbelief, face twisted.

TULIP

Yeah...well...you certainly are hideous.
I'm surprised you Mom didn't sell you
to the circus. Jesse!

JESSE
(snapping out of it)
Huh?

TULIP
Are you okay? What the hell are you
staring at the mirror for?

JESSE
(after a long pause)
Looked to me kinda like an angel of
the Lord an' a demon from Hell.
Fucking.

There's an even longer pause while Tulip takes a hard
look in the mirror.

TULIP
(doubtful)
I see

JESSE
No, wait a minute, goddammit. I saw
them already tonight. Both of 'em.
An' I saw 'em when that fuckin' thing
hit me in the church, just before
everybody got fried. I'm tellin' you,
Tulip: I saw their faces.

TULIP
But what does that have to do with
angels and demons?

JESSE
I dunno, but it's showin' them to me.
It wants me to know what they did. It
gave me this power, the gunfighter's
after me because of it, an' now this

TULIP
And they were really...doing it?

JESSE
They were fuckin' each others'
goddamned brains out.

TULIP
Well, look...this thing that, I dunno,
possessed you, for want of a better
word - if it's showing you them doing
that, and you saw them when it hit you
in church...well, what if the thing in
your head is

JESSE
(incredulous)
Their child?

They stare at each other for a moment, amazed. Then Jesse turns away, wary, thinking hard.

EXT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy exits his truck and walks quickly towards the door of the Ten-Ten. He sniffs the air again. His face lights up and he heads on in. Dim light from within but no noise or sign of movement.

INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy freezes as he enters, face suddenly twisting in disbelief.

The scene that greets him in the low light of the bar is a nightmare. Two dozen bodies lie on the floor of the bar in a vast lake of dark red blood. All bear the massive, gaping wounds that the Saint's guns deliver. Severed arms lie here and there. A couple of bodies are actually headless. Gore is splattered across the walls. Tables have been knocked over - a sense of a panicked rush towards the rear of the room, which no-one quite managed to reach.

SAINT (O.S.)

I knew what you were the first time I laid eyes on you, boy.

Cassidy turns, sees the Saint standing in the gloom by the bar, looking grimly back at him. Cassidy is instantly scared, can't help but show it.

SAINT

An' I knew a bloodsucker like you would come runnin', if I was to set the table for you.

(pause)

That thing inside the Preacher - that'll draw scum like you from miles around. That urge you got to take a look at Texas, weren't you wonderin' where that come from.

Cassidy is startled, realising the Saint is right.

SAINT

Now: I reckon we can make it work the other way around. I reckon you can give that Preacher a call an' he'll come runnin'.

Cassidy's eyes narrow slowly. He gets angry. He points slowly to the carnage on the floor further back.

CASSIDY

You killed them to get me here? The Saint just looks back at him.

CASSIDY

You fuckin' dirty bastard...! D'you think I want any part of this? D'you think I'd sell out Jesse Custer to a piece of shite like you?

(angrier)

Do you think I'm some kind of worthless fuckin' animal or somethin'?

SAINT

That's exactly what I think.

Cassidy loses it, strides towards the Saint, drawing a fist back to strike, but the Saint pulls his pistol, fast as lightning, and shoves it in Cassidy's face. Cassidy freezes, gritting his teeth.

CASSIDY

Is...that supposed to scare me or somethin'? 'Cause believe me, it wouldn't be the first time I got shot through the head.

SAINT

It'd be the first time you didn't get up again.

(pause)

Saint of Killers is what they call me, boy. That name mean anything to you?

Cassidy is sweating now, really scared. Clearly he's heard the name.

SAINT

I thought it might. Fella don't get as old as you have without hearin' my name whispered. I left this world in 1886 an' went to Hell for all the lives I'd taken, an' when I got there I just went right on killin'. Hell's supposed to knock the hat from a sinner's soul, but all it did for mine was burn it blacker. I butchered my way across Perdition an' damn near emptied it of souls except the Lord himself came down an' begged for me to stop. Even offered me a job. Wanted me to take over from the goddamned Angel of Death, who it turned out had no stomach for an eternity of killin'.

He presses the gun into Cassidy's chin, tilts his head back. Cassidy is shitting himself, too terrified to move.

SAINT

But I did. So the Angel of Death gave up his sword, an' forged me this pair of Colt revolvers from the steel. You know who I am, boy. You want to take the risk this gun won't work on you?

He cocks the pistol. Cassidy freezes. A long moment passes.

Then Cassidy crumples, breaking down.

CASSIDY

No

The Saint keeps the pistol on him, nods at a phone on the bar. Cassidy shakily backs towards it, never taking his eyes off the pistol. He picks it up, sweats.

CASSIDY

Okay! Okay.

Cassidy is utterly miserable, wretched.

119 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse and Tulip are halfway through getting dressed when her phone rings. They look at it, then at each other, nonplussed.

Jesse picks up the phone, wary.

JESSE

Yeah...?

120 INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy on the phone, terrified, with the Saint's pistol stuck in his face.

CASSIDY

Jesse! Thank fuck! Jesse, it's me.

JESSE (O.S.)

(over phone)

Cassidy?!

121 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Neither Jesse nor Tulip can believe it

JESSE
What the fuck are you

CASSIDY (O.S.)
(over phone)
Jesse, listen: I've got a message I
have to give to you. I...I haven't got
any choice.. INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR -
NIGHT

The Saint pushes his gun right into Cassidy's face,
twisting it wierdly. He freezes then goes on.

CASSIDY
You have to go back to Annville.
You'll get all the answers you're
lookin' for there.

The Saint relaxes, takes his gun off Cassidy, who freaks
a little and seizes his chance.

CASSIDY
Jesse, it's a trap! Don't fuckin' go!
It's that guy, it's the fuckin' Saint
of Killers.

122 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Jesse grimaces as a massive bang sounds on the line. He
turns to look at Tulip, both of them look pretty freaked
out.

123 INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy lies on the floor, staring up at the ceiling,
amazed. Slowly he raises his head, looks down his body.

A massive hole has been blasted in his gut, blood pouring
from it to pool around him.

A shadow falls over him.

It's the Saint of course, holding his smoking pistol.

CASSIDY
(weak)
He won't come now, you bastard.
You're fucked.

SAINT
He'll come. He's burnin' up, wantin'
to know what it is that's happened to
him. Don't you get any high ideas
about havin' saved him, boy.

(MORE)

SAINT (cont'd)

(pause)
You sold him out.

Cassidy's face falls, miserable.

The Saint cocks his pistol, points it right down at us.

SAINT

You're just an animal thinks it's a man.

CASSIDY

(yelling)
No!!

The pistol roars and the screen goes black.

124 EXT. MOTEL CABIN - NIGHT

Jesse exits, tucking his shirt in. Grim sense of resolve. Tulip hurries after him, wary.

TULIP

Saint of Killers"? There's only one guy that can be...

JESSE

Uh-huh.

TULIP

And you're still gonna go to Annville?

JESSE

Uh-huh.

He stops at a battered pickup, reaches through the half-open window to unlock the door, flips down the sunshade, catches the keys as they fall.

JESSE

Nice to see folks ain't getting' any smarter.

TULIP

I'm coming with you.

JESSE

What? Now hold on there, honey

TULIP

Hold on hell. I held on for three fucking years, wondering where you'd gone and why you didn't love me anymore. Now I know you never stopped I'm not gonna wast a single second I've got with you. I'm with you all the way, Jesse Custer.

(MORE)

TULIP (cont'd)

(pause)
Until the end of the world.

JESSE
(impressed)
Goddamn, girl. That just might be
where we're headed.

125 EXT. ROADHOUSE BAR - NIGHT

The Rattler has long since closed up, all lights off. Hugo Root prowls the parking lot, scowling at the bar, the ground, the desert - as if by giving the world a dirty look he'll get the answers he wants. His cruiser is parked nearby. He rubs at some dried blood on the ground with the toe of his boot, then glares offshot, attention caught. Looking past him we see the MOTEL sign, way off down the road.

HUGO
Well, well. Game's a-fuckin'-foot.

126 INT. MOTEL OFFICE - NIGHT

A dingy little office, with a dumb-looking night clerk immersed in a porno mag; the latest issue of ANAL RAMPAGE. Judging by his intense concentration, the big words are giving him trouble. He looks slowly up as Hugo strides in.

HUGO
You there, nosepick. You seen anyone
lookin' kinda unusual comin' in here?

CLERK
(after a pause)
Well, what would you mean by unusual?

HUGO
I mean not normal, you asshole.
Different.

CLERK
(another pause)
Well, could you maybe be more
specific?

HUGO
What is it with you? You got so many
colorful folks stayin' here, you need
me to narrow it down?

CLERK
If you could.

HUGO

I swear, you musta leaked out of a hole in a goddamn prophylactic. Specifically: I'm lookin' for a ugly fella wearin' sunglasses, a stringy beanpole sort've bitch an' a asshole dressed up like a Preacher. Ring any fuckin' bells.

CLERK

(pause)

As a matter of fact, it does. A Mr. an' Mrs. Smith checked in here about two hours back. 'Cept when they left, Mr. Smith has a Reverend's collar on. An' I guess Mrs. Smith was kinda on the skinny side.

HUGO

Fucked if that ain't them. When'd they check out? They say where they were headed?

CLERK

(after a good think)

You just missed 'em...uh...what was the other question?

HUGO

(pained)

Did they say where they were goin'?

CLERK

Heard somethin' about Annville. You know that's been on TV all day? They in a lot of trouble, then? The Smiths?

HUGO

Well Smith ain't their real name, you fuckin' mongoloid!

CLERK

Hey, I know who you are! You're Sheriff Root, with the son's got a face like a puckered up asshole! Jesus, livin' with a freak like that must be one long endless fuckin' nightmare.

Hugo turns and smashes him across the face, K.O.'ing him instantly. He goes down in a heap.

HUGO

(fuming)

I am Sheriff Hugo Root, the man who took down a renegade Preacher and shot a worthless by-the-Jesus cop killer full of fuckin' holes and blew open a goddamned Washington conspiracy so big it makes Watergate look like a damp bloodfart. You will hear my name again, you worthless son of a bitch.

He turns and stomps out.

127 INT. MEEKER'S CAR - NIGHT

Meeker and Dinnings freeze as they hear

HUGO (O.S.)

(over radio)

This here is Hugo Root. All units in the vicinity to converge on Annville. I repeat, all units make you way to Annville immediately. This thing is goin' down an' that's the town it's gonna happen in. Get me tactical. Abandon the roadblocks. Get everybody out an' get 'em over there: now.

MEEKER

Shit!

128 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The cruiser skids through a 180, then roars off in the direction it came from.

129 INT. HUGO'S CAR - NIGHT

Hugo hangs up the radio, glares out over the wheel at the night beyond. Full of curdling, evil hatred, a man anticipating his chance to wreak cruel, violent revenge on the world.

130 INT. STOLEN TRUCK - NIGHT

Tulip checks her pistol, then puts it back on her purse. She turns to look warily at Jesse. He sits well back, eyes locked on the road. Whatever else he's feeling, he isn't scared.

131 EXT. STOLEN TRUCK - NIGHT

The truck races on down the road 'til its headlights are gone. Then the battered van appears, races after it with a quick blast of "Dropkick Me Jesus...".

At first all we see is pitch black night - then the Saint strides out of it, cold as ice. He passes us without a glance, and we're left with nothing but night again.

133 EXT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Silence. The TEN-TEN sign flickers, then goes out.

134 INT. TRUCKSTOP BAR - NIGHT

Cassidy lies on the floor, shattered, apparently dead. The hole in his guts has been matched by another in his chest - a meaty crate with blood, gore and bits of rib hanging out, right where his heart used to be. Mouth wide open.

We move closer until his face fills the shot. No movement. Then, very slowly, his jaw shifts a little.

CASSIDY

Uh..?

He grits his teeth as he realizes what's up.

CASSIDY

(weak)

Aw no.

(pause)

I'm sorry, Jesse. I just didn't have the balls. An' there's nothin' I can do.

His head slumps to the side beaten.

We look at him past the edge of the vast lake of blood from the Saint's earlier victims. It's gotten pretty dark and gooey now.

He notices it, face slowly twisting as he thinks.

CASSIDY

Oh fuck. Oh fuckin' Jesus.

He stares at the ceiling again, miserable, a little revolted.

CASSIDY

Why me?

Steeling himself for the effort, he grits his teeth and rolls slowly over onto his belly, grabbing for purchase with a very weak arm. He yells in agony.

Then, gasping and sweating with the pain and exertion, he raises his head to look at the lake of gore and shattered bodies...and we FADE TO BLACK.

We fade back in on a smear or ribs, guts and blood on the floor of the bar. We move along it as it becomes a trail, ending in Cassidy - he's hauled himself along the floor and is now lapping hungrily at the lake of blood on the floor. He raises his head, dribbles goeey blood everywhere, looks weakly at the various bodies. He's gasping.

CASSIDY
Sorry, folks.

Cassidy goes back to slurping up the blood, panting as he tries to breathe and drink at the same time. He gets more and more frenzied, guzzling the stuff faster and faster, until he throws his head back and gasps out a long sigh of satisfaction. Smearred with dark red blood, hair matted with it, he looks like hell.

He gets slowly to his feet, staggers a bit, catches himself on the bar. He wipes his mouth, still out of breath.

CASSIDY
Better 'n fuckin' spinach.

Then he turns and staggers towards the door, shaky, nowhere near at full strength.

135 EXT. ANNVILLE STREET - NIGHT

A flurry of activity. Cruisers are arriving from all over, lights flashing. Cops, deputies, state troopers, even SWAT guys run to and fro, taking cover behind cars, houses, anywhere they can find. Citizens are bundled from their homes, escorted to safety behind the various buildings. Much prepping of weapons. Annville is being turned into a giant trap.

SHERIFF (O.S.)
(over bullhorn)
All civilians are to be evacuated, I repeat, evacuated to a place of safety. Please go with the officers, folks. We're expectin' some bad boys here tonight, an' we don't want you people getting' hurt in the shootin'.

A harassed looking Sheriff stands behind a cruiser that's been parked across the middle of the street. Deputies aim M16s across the hood and truck. A third deputy confers with the Sheriff. All around them, the preparations continue.

SHERIFF
(over bullhorn)
Come on now, shake the lead out! I don't know how much time we got, but let's make sure we're ready for these sons of bitches!

(MORE)

SHERIFF (cont'd):
(aside to deputy)
What?!

DEPUTY
Still can't raise Hugo Root, boss.

SHERIFF
Goddammit, where the hell is he? He started this damn thing, least he could do is show up to tell us who the hell to shoot at!

136 INT. MEEKER'S CAR - NIGHT

Meeker is on the radio, pissed off. Dinnings looks sceptical.

MEEKER
Well where the hell is he, then?

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
(over radio)
Sheriff Root's not responding, Sheriff Meeker. We think he's gone off the air.

Meeker angrily dumps the radio on the floor.

MEEKER
Gone off the air, that crazy fucker's gone off the goddamned planet. This is exactly the bloodbath he's been waitin' for, this is his revenge on the rest of us for havin' normal lives.

DINNINGS
What d'you mean?

MEEKER
That fuckin' Hugo. I swear, just 'cause he's got a son looks like Frankenstein an' a two-inch pecker, he's gotta take it out on the whole goddamned world.

DINNINGS
A two-inch...

MEEKER
(regretting it)
I used to fuck his wife.

137 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Quieter now. The lawmen have taken up positions behind their cars, in the storefronts, along the tops of the buildings. Nearly fifty guys, lots of firepower.

The Sheriff and three deputies still wait behind the car in the middle of the street. The Sheriff has a pistol in one hand, the bullhorn in the other.

SHERIFF

Nothin'. An' still no sign of Hugo.

Looking past them, we can see right down the main street and out into the desert night beyond. Pretty quiet, but very tense.

SHERIFF

(turning)

Shit. Hand me out that goddamned radio.

DEPUTY (O.S.)

(over radio)

I think we got somethin'!

138 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

Rear view on the Saint as he stops for a second, about a hundred yards out from Annville. The cops have made a little effort to conceal themselves. The Saint takes a moment to study them, then moves ahead.

139 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Sudden agitation among the cops as they cock their guns, get ready to open up. All very tense.

The Sheriff's eyes narrow; amazed.

SHERIFF

Jesus Christ

The Saint enters town, walking in the middle of the main street. He doesn't bother to even look at the cops.

The sheriff snaps out of it, grabs the bullhorn. The deputy beside him is shaky as hell.

DEPUTY

Who the fuck is that?

SHERIFF

That's the son of a bitch off the A.P.B. The fuckin' cop killer.

(over bullhorn)

You hold it right there, you asshole. We're gonna give you one chance to give yourself up.

The Saint draws and fires once, fast as lightning, still moving coolly ahead. No emotion.

The bullet smashes into the side of the Sheriff's car, blowing a hole in the pan just over the gas tank.

SHERIFF

Fuck-

Barely an instant later the car explodes in a flaring blast, the bodywork separating and flying high into the air, the wheels shooting out to the side. The lawmen disappear in the explosion.

Then there's a dull thud as half the Sheriff's blackened torso and head land in the dirt.

That does it. All the cops in town open fire at once.

140 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

Hugo's cruiser skids to a stop, the fireball from the exploding car in town reflected in its windscreen. Multiple gunshots are heard. Hugo exits the car, staring at us, freaked.

141 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

The cops are giving it maximum: revolvers, automatics, M16s, scope rifles, shotguns, even a few SMGs the SWAT boys brought along. We move along the street from group to group - deputies behind cars, marksmen on the rooftops. Dozens upon dozens of shell casings rattle down on the street.

Most of this actually misses the Saint, ploughing up the ground around him, kicking dust high into the air. Enough is hitting him to stagger him, knock him back. At one point he almost disappears in gunsmoke.

The Saint continues his advance, now a bit ragged - missing chunks of meat from his chest, holes in his hat and clothes, but still just grim, unworried. He ceases fire, then points one gun off to the side without bothering to look.

He's level with the town gas station, level with one of the pumps.

He fires.

The bullet smacks into one of the pumps.

Several cops stare in amazement, riveted.

He cocks the gun, fires again, still not stopping, still not aiming, walking at us.

The bullet sparks against the pump, igniting the rushing gasoline.

He cocks the gun again.

The cops gape. A couple run, but most are transfixed.

The Saint's eyes are full of hate, total commitment, not wavering for an instant.

The gun in his hand firing.

The pump explodes.

Pull way back as, seconds later, the whole gas station goes up too. A vast, flaring explosion of burning fuel. The Saint is glimpsed for a second, then the explosion reaches out and he disappears in the flames.

The cops stare, faces lit by the flames.

Then they start to break and run. Behind them, the fireball rises higher, white and orange, flaring. Blazing fire begins to rain down on the running cops. Shouts and screams. The buildings are hit too, catching fire.

Several cops run around on fire, screaming in horror, dying in agony.

The Saint appears out of the fire, a silhouette at first. He's on fire himself, back and shoulders burning. He resumes firing, cutting down cops as they run.

142 INT. MEEKER'S CAR - NIGHT

Meeker peers into the rear-view, squinting.

DINNINGS
How far to Annville?

MEEKER
Five minutes at most...who the hell is that?

A pair of headlights fill the rear-view with flaring light.

143 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Cassidy's pickup comes roaring up behind the cruiser, weaving to overtake.

144 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Cassidy spits blood, snarls angrily as he drives. He drips blood everywhere. Very pale.

CASSIDY
Get out've the fuckin' way, you bollicks!

145 INT. MEEKER'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Meeker snarls as the pickup draws alongside. He weaves to block its path.

MEEKER
Crazy son of a bitch!

They get a glimpse of Cassidy, yelling angrily at them, gesturing for them to clear the way.

DINNINGS
Wants us to let him through!

MEEKER
Fuck him.
(pointing to side of road)
Pull over, you asshole! Pull over
now!

146 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

Cassidy sneers, jerks the wheel hard over.

147 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The pickup smashes hard into the cruiser, knocking it clean off the road. It spins a couple of times, careers onwards.

148 INT. MEEKER'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Dinnings hangs on for dear life as Meeker struggles desperately to regain control of the cruiser.

149 EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

The cruiser crashes into a creek bed, turning on its side as it slides along, then smashing into a rocky outcrop and stopping. The wheels spin, the engine howls. Then silence.

DINNINGS (O.S.)
Guess this one's all Hugo's.

MEEKER (O.S.)
He fuckin' deserves it.

150 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

CASSIDY
Hold on, Jesse! The Cavalry's comin'!

151 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The pickup races on down the road.

152 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

The battered pickup pulls out and Jesse and Tulip exit, gaping at the burning town. Distant screams and gunshots can be made out.

TULIP

You think that's the Saint?

JESSE

It's his M.O.

View from behind them, with Annville burning away.

Then we move in fast on Jesse. At the last second he starts to turn, and is smashed in the head with a 45 automatic. He grunts and drops like a stone.

It's Hugo.

HUGO

Say hello to justice, you godfearin' fuck.

Tulip freaks and goes for her pistol, but only has it halfway out of her purse when Hugo leans across the top of the truck and points his gun at her face.

HUGO

Go on an' take it outta there. Put it on the truck an' back away. Slowly.

She complies, very wary, totally aware of the delicacy of her situation.

HUGO

That's a good little girl.

He knocks her pistol off the truck - on his side. His face twists, mean.

HUGO

Looks like I got me one of these weird fuckin' by-the-Jesus F.B.I. cocksucker. Reckon I'll take a walk into town an' fetch out the other one.

He throws the cuffs across the top of the cab to Tulip, levels his pistol at her. She glares hatefully at him, scared but determined.

HUGO

But first I will by God have you in irons there, Missy.

TULIP

Fuck you.

Hugo cocks the gun.

Jesse lifts his head, woozy.

JESSE

Son of a...

Hugo stomps his head, knocking him out again. Then he goes back to Tulip.

HUGO

You just lie there, boy. Don't want you givin' any more crazy fuckin' orders...shit!

Tulip is gone. Hugo gapes. Then he sees her, running like hell for the town.

He snarls, blasts off three quick shots.

He misses. Tulip's halfway there.

Hugo aims carefully, two-handed, tracking her as she runs. He can't miss. Nasty smile.

HUGO

Fleein' the scene.

The he shrieks in agony and the gun goes off into the sky. He drops it.

Still on the ground, Jesse is glaring hatefully and clutching Hugo by the balls, squeezing for all he's worth. mHugo screams his head off, howls and howls.

153 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Flames rise into the night. Occasional gunshots and screams come from the other side of town as the Saint does his thing.

Out here, on the edge of town, Tulip dashes round the corner and into the street. She glances left and right, then freezes.

The battered van is parked not thirty yards away.

In an instant, the rear doors fly open, T.C grins, raises his shotgun, and gives us both barrels.

154 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

Hugo flips around on the end of Jesse's right hook, grunts with pain.

In under ten seconds, Jesse punches Hugo five more times, knees him in the balls, and finishes by shoving his head clean through the window of the pickup. Exit Hugo.

JESSE
To be continued.

Then he turns and runs towards the town.

155 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Close up on the front window of a large grocery store. An instant later, Tulip flings herself through it in a spray of flying glass. She rolls, gets up, sprints desperately down the aisle.

156 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

T.C. has exited the van and is reloading his shotgun, pulling two shells from the bulging pocket of his dungarees. Behind him, the huge, impassive figure of Jody can be seen at the van, lighting a cigarette.

JODY
Go get her.

T.C. grins, flips the shotgun closed, sets off.

157 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

Jesse runs towards the town, shouts.

JESSE
Tulip! I got the son of a bitch!
Where are you? Tulip!

158 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jesse rounds the corner into the street. No sign of Tulip or T.C. He squints.

Jody steps slowly out from behind the van.

Jesse's eyes narrow.

Jody smiles.

159 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Tulip peeks around an aisle. Her eyes bulge.

T.C. lets go with his shotgun, right at us.

Tulip dodges back, gasps, as the display of canned foods behind her disintegrates.

TC grins as he reloads.

T.C.
You know what I'm gonna do split-tail?
I'm gonna kill me some pussy.

Tulip's face twists in disgust.

160 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Flames rise in the distance.

Jesse and Jody face off about ten feet apart. Jody is amused. Jesse is anything but.

JODY

Just can't do like you're told, can you? Shoulda done the right thing, boy. Things got all fucked up here in Annville, you shoulda come on home to us.

(pause)

Shoulda trusted your Gran'ma, boy.

JESSE

(bristling)

Those days are gone, Jody.

JODY

Well, we gonna see about that. Ol' T.C., he's in there with that gal of yours. You wanna try usin' that fancy voice you got on me? You know what he'll do then? Best to just come quietly, boy.

JESSE

T.C.'s in there with my girl, don't you make no bets on him walkin' outta there alive. I told you, Jody. It just ain't gonna happen.

Jody takes the .45 from the back of his pants.

JODY

That a fact? Well, there's no savin' your soul, maybe it's time you got what your Daddy got, huh?

JESSE

(furious)

I could tell you to stick that thing up your ass, your worthless pissant fuck. An' you'd do it.

Jody studies Jesse, eyes narrowed, interested.

Jesse glares back, ultra-determined.

JODY

But you ain't gonna, are you?

JESSE

No.

He takes off his jacket.

Jody looks oddly pleased, smiling approvingly. He throws the gun away.

JODY

Well. Hope for you yet, boy.

161 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Tulip crawls along the floor beside a freezer unit. T.C. can be heard stomping around further back.

T.C. (O.S.)

You hear me in there, you little beave? Yeah, sure you can.

T.C. smiles as he stalks along the aisle.

T.C.

Now, you probably think you know what's gonna happen here. You think - oh hell, this guy T.C., he's gonna rape me or somesuch other violation, an' then he's gonna kill me. Well - wrong.

He hears a noise, stops, whirls, blasts off both barrels.

Tulip's eyes bulge as the freezer unit explodes outwards not six inches from her face. She freezes. Frozen peas start pouring out of the shattered freezer. Tulip backs up, very quiet.

T.C. reloads from the seemingly endless supply of shells in his pocket.

T.C.

I'm gonna kill you. Then I'm gonna rape you.

(pause)

I like dead girls.

162 EXT. ANNVILLE STREET - NIGHT

Jesse and Jody, round one. Jesse relies on speed and skill, Jody strength.

Jesse smacks Jody in the mouth, then the nose. He's already opened a cut on Jody's eye. Jody misses with a huge haymaker, fist bashing through the wall of a house.

Jesse kicks him in the balls, drops him to his knees. Jody seethes. Jesse whips in fast, seizes Jody's head in both hands and knees him in the face, putting him down.

Jody struggles to get up, furious.

JODY

You fuckin' little shit - I'm gonna...

Jesse appears behind him, watches calmly.

JODY

I'm - I'm...

JESSE

Getting' old?

Tight shot on Jody's eyes. They snap open, bulge with fury.

163 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

T.C. is striding down the aisle, enjoying himself, spewing out his hateful litany of filth.

T.C.

See, I read me a book about relationships once, an' I think I figure it out: pussy ain't no trouble when it's dead.

He rounds a corner into an aisle full of hardware goods.

T.C.

Dead girls don't give you no trouble. Dead girls don't get no P.M.S. Dead girls don't get no headaches. Dead girls put out any time you like.

As he strides along we move down to see Tulip, lying tucked in on the lowest shelf on one side. She lies incredibly still, not even breathing. T.C.'s feet move towards her.

T.C.

Dead girls don't laugh at yer pecker. Dead girls don't need no flowers an' chocolates.

Up to T.C. again, grinning with vile disdain.

T.C.

Dead girls do it in every position in the Kama fuckin' Sutra.

Tulip's arm snakes out lower down, moves towards his crotch. He doesn't notice.

T.C.

Don't they, cunt?

Her hand squirts lighter fluid all over his crotch, then withdraws. He looks down, bewildered at the large stain on his dungarees.

T.C.

Huh?

Her arm whips out again and she ignites his groin with a cigarette lighter. His pants go up in flames.

His eyes bulge and he screams in agony.

164 EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

T.C. dances about, slapping desperately at the flames licking at his groin, to no effect. He's terrified, know's what's coming. He's dropped the shotgun.

T.C.

Oh no - Oh Jesus.

His crotch erupts in an explosion of smoke and flame as the shells in his pocket cook off very fast, like machine-gun fire. He howls.

165 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Tight shot. Jody gasps, tries to get up. Jesse's boot stomps down on his head and smashes his face into the dirt.

166 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

T.C. is curled up in a ball, hands to his crotch. Blood pumps out between his fingers. All he can do is make pathetic little mewling noises.

Tulip appears behind him, taking all the time in the world. She stoops to pick up his shotgun, then disappears from shot as she walks around him.

T.C. looks up terrified.

Tulip looks down, emotionless. She pokes the shotgun towards us.

TULIP

The name is Tulip, you disgusting little turd.

T.C.'s eyes bulge.

Tulip fires and T.C.'s world ends in a mighty blast.

167 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

That bang makes Jesse turn.

JESSE

Tulip?

He turns back, straight into a huge haymaker from Jody that lifts him off his feet and hurls him clean through a picket fence.

168 INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

A bit freaked as the adrenaline subsides, Tulip backs away from the nasty mess on the floor. She turns as a roaring gunshot splits the night.

Looking towards the front of the store, she sees it opens onto the main street of Annville.

She looks into the main street, to be greeted by a scene of blazing destruction. The buildings are on fire, the street is littered with corpses.

Her eyes narrow as she peers into the distance.

Down at the other end of the street, we can just make out the Saint finishing off the last of the cops. One guy falls to his knees. The Saint puts his pistol to the guy's head.

Tulip's eyes widen.

The gun roars and the guy falls back dead, all in silhouette.

Tulip dodges back round the corner, flattens herself against the wall, freaked.

TULIP..
Oh Christ.

169 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jesse scrabbles around in the wreckage of the fence, shaken, desperate. Behind him, Jody is striding grimly up, ready for more. Jesse seizes a broken fencepost.

He whips around, smashes Jody in the face with it.

Jody staggers.

Jesse stares, bewildered.

- The post is stuck to Jody's face, apparently hanging from his feet, defying gravity. Jody seems puzzled too.

Then he slowly pulls the board away from his face and we see what was keeping it there - two six inch nails protruding from the end of the post. They drip blood as they exit Jody's cheek. He grins, blood sliding down his face.

Jesse gapes.

JODY
Kinda different.

170 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Tulip grimaces as more gunshots sound from offshot. She risks a peek round the corner again.

No sign of the Saint. Just the fire and the scattered bodies.

Her eyes narrow.

Lots of guns on the street too, holstered or otherwise.

Tulip hesitates, then steels herself and scurries out onto the street.

171 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jody is beating Jesse to a bloody pulp, and there's not much our hero can do about it. Every blow knocks him sideways and Jody gives him no time to recover.

Jody holds Jesse up, slaps him left to right. Jesse looks ready to pass out. To wake him up, Jody snaps two fingers on his left hand.

JODY
Wakey, wakey....

Jesse yells his head off.

172 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Lit by the flickering flames, Tulip moves from body to body, collecting guns. She stuffs two automatics down the back of her jeans, shoves a revolver into her jacket, another automatic in the front of her jeans.

She's just picking up a gleaming silver 357 magnum when she stops, realizing the shooting and screaming have stopped. All she can hear are the flames. She looks up.

The Saint stands watching her, pistols holstered, emotionless. Maybe twenty feet away.

173 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jody stands over the smashed Jesse, who can barely lift his head up.

JODY
Brought it on yourself, boy. Couldn't do like you were told. Had of listened to me an' your Gran'ma, we coulda made somethin' outta you.

JESSE
A fuckin' killer like you, you prick.

JODY
Aw no, I'm a killer? Sure am glad you
been payin' attention.

(smiles)
S'pose now you're gonna start whinin'
about me shootin' your asshole of a
father, huh?

Enraged, Jesse struggles to get up and throws a wild
punch, which Jody catches with ease.

JESSE
Fuckler!

JODY
Behave...!

Jody twists Jesse's arm behind his back, hard. Jesse
gasps.

JODY
Course he was a asshole! He's the
reason you turned out so Goddamn soft,
you stupid fuck! Why you think we
gave you such a hard time growin' up,
boy?

He has Jesse in a choke hold, throttling him. Our boy
struggles, but to no avail.

JODY
Trynna toughen you up.
(hissing)
Now you're comin' home with me an'
T.C., you little motherfucker, an' you
ain't gonna stray ever again. But
before we go, I wanna hear you say it
like you Gran'ma wanted: "I'm gonna
be a Preacher".

Jesse's eyes snap open in horror and despair.

174 EXT. ANNVILLE STREET - NIGHT

- Tulip stands facing the Saint. He hasn't moved yet. The
last gun she picked up is not immediately visible.

The Saint watches her, calm.

Tulip's eyes are wide. She clamps her mouth shut, fights
panic.

SAINT
You're the Preacher's woman, ain't
you?

(MORE)

SAINT (cont'd)

I guess that means he made the party.
You call him on in here an' we'll have
an end to this.

TULIP

What...what are you going to do to him...?

SAINT

What I do.

Tulip is horrified. Then the horror turns to disgust and she brings the 357 up at us, the muzzle as yawning black tunnel that fills the screen, then turns to roaring flames.

The bullet smashes into the Saint's eyeball, which bursts in a spray of blood.

And he staggers.

175 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jody is still throttling Jesse.

Tight shot - Jody hissing in his ear, Jesse gasping, succumbing.

JODY

Come on, you little fuck. Quit. You
always quit. "I'm...gonna...be...a...Preacher"

On "Preacher" Jesse loses it. He bites a bloody chunk of meat out of Jody's forearm. Jody screams, from amazement as much as agony.

176 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Tulip advance on the Saint, blasting away with revolver and automatic, the 357 now discarded. He's bent over, staggering along the street, hands to his face. Blood pours out between the fingers. Each bullet knocks him a step further, and Tulip is really pouring it on. A wild scene - lit by fires, the diminutive girl shooting hell out of the giant gunfighter.

The guns in her hands click as they run out. She drops them and smoothly pulls the two automatics from the back of her jeans, resumes firing.

The Saint's hat flies off. Bullets smack into his head and shoulders.

Tulip's face is set - scared, but refusing to panic. Total determination. She keeps firing.

The Saint goes down on one knee, struck repeatedly in the head. He holds one hand up as if to stop her. A bullet punches through it. One hand still over his eye he roars again.

177 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Jesse's turn. Jody staggers back, blood pouring from his arm. Jesse rains blows on him, smashing him back.

A massive haymaker spins Jody round, flings him against the van. He falls, hand clutching for the door, face against the truck, stretched out on the ground.

Jesse hatefully stamps on Jody's spine and it snaps with a loud and terrible crack.

Jody's eyes bulge and he bends in two the wrong way.

178 EXT. ANNVILLE STREET - NIGHT

Tulip keeps firing, grits her teeth.

The Saint is holding himself up with his ruined hand.

Tulip keeps firing. There's a click as one of the guns locks dry. She drops it, takes careful aim with the other, fires.

The Saint starts to crumple.

Tulip fires again.

The Saint falls.

The gun locks dry with a loud click.

The Saint catches himself.

Horrified, Tulip lowers the useless gun.

The Saint takes a moment, breathes deep. Then he slowly rises from the half crouch she forced him into, turns to face her.

Tulip can only stare petrified.

179 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Exhausted by the effort, Jesse falls to his knees beside Jody's broken, inert body.

He turns, finds himself looking Jody in the eyes.

Jody smiles slowly. Fondly. Like a proud father looks at this son.

JODY
Prouda you, boy.

That does it. Enraged, Jesse descend on Jody like the wrath of God and throttles the fucker to death, screaming through gritted teeth.

JESSE
Fucking die!

180 EXT. ANNVILLE STREET - NIGHT

The Saint stands, takes the hand from his face, reveals the butchered, dripping, empty eyesocket.

Tulip is ready to pass out, miserable, despairing. So near and yet so far.

The Saint draws one of his guns, fuming.

181 EXT. ANNVILLE BACKSTREET - NIGHT

Tight shot as Jody dies, death rattle hissing from his throat, eye sliding over white.

Jesse holds him like that for a moment, slow, dull, can't quite believe he's dead.

The he staggers back, sits in the dust. Lights a cigarette. Takes a long, slow drag.

JESSE
Fuck you, Gran'ma.

He seems lost in thought, slowly realizing he's free for the first time in his life.

JESSE
Fuck you an' all a your monsters.

A beat. Then

SAINT (O.S.)
Preacher!!

Jesse looks round, freezes.

The Saint stands at the end of the street, pistol pressed against Tulip's head as she stands beside him.

The Saint's lip curls. Tulip is frozen.

Jesse gets to his feet, very slow. He's exhausted, got nothing left. He barely manages to raise his arm to point.

JESSE
You're next, asshole.

TULIP
Jesse, don't! Get out of here! Run!

Jesse looks sadly at Tulip.

JESSE
Never again, baby.

SAINT
Not one more word or she goes to meet
her maker. Now you come on in here,
an' we'll have an end to this.

To Tulip's horror, Jesse starts walking forward 'til he's
a couple of yards from the Saint.

The Saint turns the gun on Jesse, takes aim. Tulip
freaks.

TULIP
You can't just kill him! You said he
could find the answers here! He's got
a right to know what the hell it is
that happened to him!

SAINT
I ain't got no answers. I don't know
why he's the one that's got to die. I
don't why that damn thing chose him
out of all the millions that it
could've. The ones who sent me,
they're the ones who know. You want
answers, Preacher? Ask the angels.
(indicating the gun)
All I got is this.

Jesse steels himself, grim. The Saint cocks the gun.

Sudden the little tableau is flooded with light.

The Saint turns to see a pair of headlights bearing down
on him. It turns out to be a rapidly closing pickup
truck, engine roaring.

The Saint's eyes narrow.

Tulip stares.

Jesse raises his head to look, bewildered.

182 INT. PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Cassidy braces himself, grits his teeth, furious.

CASSIDY
You!

183 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Harshly lit by the headlights, the Saint grimaces
angrily, plants his feet hard on the ground, throws his
shoulders back and braces himself for the impact.

The Saint fumes, totally unafraid.

184 INT. PICKUP - NIGHT

CASSIDY
(screaming like a madman)
Yer Ma's Hooer!!!

185 EXT. ANNVILLE MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Massive impact, huge crunch as the pickup ploughs into the Saint of Killer, stops dead as it hits him, and Cassidy is flung through the windscreen and past the Saint in a spray of flying glass.

He sails through the air.

A moments silence. Tulip's gaze follows the arc of his fall.

He crashes to the ground in a horribly hard impact, ploughing up the dirt. Yells in agony, then goes silent.

Jesse turns painfully towards him.

Cassidy raises his head, turns towards Jesse with a face full of broken glass. Smiles weakly.

CASSIDY
You're rescued.

Jesse's eyes widen. Then he slowly turns back to the Saint. Tulip turns to look that way too.

The truck has rolled back a couple of feet, a wreck. Both wheels have come off at the front. The engine block and panels are bent up off the chassis. The hood is gone. The windscreen is shattered. Steam hisses from the engine. A large, foot-deep dent is dug into the fender and grille - the engine itself has bent around the impact.

The Saint stands unmoved, rock solid, staring at us with a pissed off glare. The hood of the truck is embedded in his stomach. He takes a couple of deep breaths, yanks the hood from his guts and flings it away.

- His face sets hard in a grimace of pure hatred.

SAINT
Right.

He starts to draw his pistol.

Jesse's hand whip past the Saint's coat from behind, drawing the second pistol.

The Saint turns, furious and amazed, and freezes. The battered Jesse stands glaring at him, presses the second pistol into the Saint's throat, pushes his head back.

The Saint has drawn his first gun, but it's obvious he'll never bring it up in time. He can't believe this is happening, furious at Jesse and himself.

JESSE

You drew first.

Pissed off, battered, but full of savage triumph, Jesse cocks the pistol with a loud click. The Saint's eyes widen, furious.

JESSE

I didn't say a goddamned word.

He fires and blows the Saint's brains clean out through the top of his head.

The Saint staggers back.

Jesse watches, eyes narrowed, grim.

The Saint glares back, top of his head gone. We can see through his empty eyesocket and out the back of his head. He's as grim and mean as ever.

SAINT

The hell with you.

Then he drops to his knees and falls dead at Jesse's feet.

Jesse turns away, drops the pistol, starts walking towards us.

Tulip grabs him and the two embrace, holding each other as tight as they can for a long moment. They kiss. Eventually Tulip breaks it, stare up at him in amazement. Jesse grins back.

TULIP

You're crazy. You're totally fucking crazy. He could have ripped you in half.

JESSE

Well...I gotta admit, he maybe had me a little bit worried.

TULIP

(grinning)

Come here!

They kiss again, against the blazing inferno that used to be Annville.

Cassidy is trying to get up, but is so weak he's only managed to get as far as his hands and knees. He struggles, but seems beaten. Then he realizes that someone is holding a hand out to him.

It's Jesse. He stands with his hand out, serious. Tulip stands behind him, watching Cassidy warily.

Cassidy looks at the hand, not sure what to make of it. He peers at Jesse. Then he tentatively takes the hand and Jesse pulls him to his feet.

He stands, rather unsteady. Jesse glances over Cassidy's hideous wounds. The two men face each other.

JESSE

What I said about you, back at the bar. I was wrong. I apologize.

CASSIDY

I'm the one ought to be apologizin'. I sold you out. I nearly got you killed.

JESSE

But you set thing right.

Cassidy is quietly stunned. Then he reaches out his hand. Jesse takes it and they shake.

Tulip is leaning on Jesse's shoulder.

TULIP

I still think you're a prick.

They both turn to her.

TULIP

(smiling)
But a nice prick.

They both grin.

All three turn to survey the destruction. Annville is on fire from one end to the other, and the street is littered with dead cops.

CASSIDY

Jesus. Quite a party, eh?

JESSE

Quite a party.

TULIP

As least you got that bastard.

The Saint's body lies in the street.

Jesse's eyes narrow.

JESSE

No...

Tulip is curious.

JESSE

No I didn't.

They're both curious as Jesse thinks to himself.

JESSE

It wasn't him that caused this. He was just a goddamned errand boy.

TULIP

What are you talking about?

JESSE

He said it was the ones who sent him, remember? He said if you want answers...ask the angels.

He turns and yells angrily into the night sky.

JESSE

You fucks! You bunch of assholes! You get your asses down here now! You got a lot of shit to answer for!

Tulip and Cassidy look at each other bewildered.

JESSE

You know what I can do with this goddamned power I got. You motherfuckers start talkin' to me now - or you won't believe the shit that I'll do next.

Sudden silence. The flames die away. Then the whole place is bathed in incredible otherworldly white light.

Tulip and Cassidy cover their eyes, but Jesse stares right into the light.

A huge figure forms above the town, a beautiful angel that glows with golden light, wings spread wide. It spreads out its arms, raises its face to the sky.

Tulip and Cassidy are freaked.

Jesse just looks suspicious.

ANGEL

Then behold, O mortals: the glory of the heavenly host.

Jesse is not remotely impressed. He lights a cigarette, flips the zippo shut, looks up again.

JESSE
Cut the shit.

The radiance fades. The angel disappears. Standing in front of Jesse is the first angel - the pale-skinned, tattooed being we saw in the afterlife scenes. He looks a little edgy.

ANGEL
Ah.

Tulip and Cassidy are totally freaked. Jesse sneers a bit.

JESSE
What the fuck are you supposed to be?

ANGEL
I am the angel of the Lord.

JESSE
Then you got a lot of explainin' to do. May as well get started.
(word of God)
An' don't you leave out a fuckin' word.

ANGEL
There is a war raging in the realms beyond your world. One side Heaven - on the other, Hell..

JESSE
Which ain't necessarily the same as good an' evil, right?

ANGEL
(awkward)
That war must never end. Angels and demons should never meet in anything but battle. And yet it happened anyway. We dealt with the lovers not long after the birth - but their offspring proved quite indestructable.

He keeps talking, face now melted into a shot of the rolling silver clouds of Heaven as seen in Jesse's mirror vision.

ANGEL
We shut it away in a corner of Heaven. It was neither good nor evil. It was something new, a combination of them both. We called it Genesis.

Now he's melted into a series of previous scenes - Genesis ripping through Earth atmosphere, hitting the Annville church, possessing Jesse, destroying the congregation.

ANGEL

It had no intelligence beyond a basic sentience. It escaped from Heaven, seeking a host - someone who could act on its behalf, who could use its power...someone who could speak for it.

The angel looks pointedly at Jesse.

ANGEL

It needed a home, that was all. But now listen to me. And understand. We cannot let a power as strong as this to run loose on Earth. We must return the entity to Heaven and lock it in the dark forever. Submit to us - let us sever its bond with your soul - and you may go in peace.

JESSE

The fuck I will.

ANGEL

(panicky)

You don't know what you're saying! I promise you that you'll go free! I give you my word.

JESSE

Your word ain't worth dogshit on hot afternoon. You set the Saint of Killers on me, an' now he's gone you think I'm just gonna give myself up like nothin' happened? Fuck you...I think there's more to this than you're sayin'. Like how come God allowed this to happen, a thing bein' born that never even shoulda? How come he didn't stop it himself?

ANGEL

(on his knees terrified)

Oh no! Oh please don't make me tell! I'll be destroyed for this! In Jesus' name, have mercy!

JESSE

Every. Last. Word.

ANGEL

(breaking down)

The Lord God is gone.

Jesse, Tulip and Cassidy freeze. A moment passes.

JESSE

Ain't quite the answer I expected.
What the fuck do you mean, he's gone?

ANGEL

I mean he quit. When Genesis was born
he left his throne in Heaven.

JESSE

How can God quit? How can the world
keep goin'?

CASSIDY

I dunno, I haven't noticed much
difference. Maybe we just don't need
the fucker.

Jesse thinks about that, turns back to the shaky-looking
angel, shrewdly raises an eye.

JESSE

Why would he leave just when Genesis
was born?

ANGEL

(suddenly wary)
What?

JESSE

Unless he was scared of it?

ANGEL

Ah - now -

JESSE

It's as strong as he is, ain't it? Or
maybe stronger? You said it yourself -
it was somethin' new. It gave me the
power to be obeyed. If I found the
Lord God Almighty, I could make him
face the people of the world an' own
up to runnin' out on them. Right?

ANGEL

(appalled)
No! You can't! Think about what
you're saying! You can't give orders
to God! You haven't got the right!

JESSE

I haven't got the what?

Sudden silence. Jesse glares at the angel with steadily
mounting anger.

JESSE

I haven't got the right? I gave my life to God, stuck by him an' his Holy Bible through thick an' thin, no matter how shitty a hand I got dealt - an' now you're tellin' me I ain't got the right to ask him what the fuck he thinks he's doin'?

(furious, losing it)

Seems to me, asshole, that I got all the right in the goddamned world! Seems to me that every man an' woman on this planet had the right to say - Hey, Lord! You been fuckin' with us from day one! You been playin' roulette with our fuckin' lives through ten thousand years of war, famine, death an' fucked-up shit! So maybe you'd like to tell us, when you're finished movin' in mysterious fuckin' ways:

(screaming)

What the fuck do you mean by fuckin' quittin' on us?!!

Silence for a moment. Tulip and Cassidy are very wary, waiting for whatever comes next. Jesse fumes, red faced. The angel is shitting himself.

JESSE

Then the creator shouldn't shit on his creation. You wanna know what gives me the right to make demands of God? It's 'cause I got given his power. I know how it feels. But all I ever did with it was try to find the truth.

ANGEL

But...

JESSE

I have had enough of you, ballsweat. You an' your asshole pals in heaven, you're responsible for this whole fuckin' bloodbath. Well, I been thinkin': if there's a heaven, there has to be the other place as well, right?

ANGEL

(incredibly edgy)

Y...Y...Yes...

JESSE

(word of God)

Then you can go there.

The Angel's eyes bulge in unbelievable horror. He opens his mouth to scream, then bursts into bright red, blazing flame. A terrible, unearthly scream echoes around the place, so loud that our heroes have to clamp their hands to their ears - then it fades into the distance, as if the screamer has fallen down a deep, deep hole until he's out of earshot. The Angel is reduced to ash, scattered on the breeze.

Jesse looks grimly at it, then turns away.

JESSE

(quietly)

An' maybe one day I'll find the good Lord. An' then I'll send him down to join you.

Silence for a moment . Then:

CASSIDY

Nice bit've preachin'

(smiles)

Preacher.

186 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

The three of them walk towards the battered pickup Jesse and Tulip arrived in. Jesse and Cassidy move slowly, favoring their various wounds. No sign of Hugo Root.

CASSIDY

Not long 'til dawn. I'd really need to be getting' me arse undercover.

TULIP

Can't take the sun, huh?

CASSIDY

I'm a fuckin' vampire, Turnip.

TULIP

Tulip.

CASSIDY

You give us a lift down the road, aye?

JESSE

Least I can do, partner.

HUGO (O.S.)

I don't think so...

They turn. Jesse is incredibly weary, like, "what now?".

Hugo Root stands there, a wreck. Face full of broken glass. He levels his .45, barely able to stand.

HUGO
You little martian fuck.
(cocking the gun)
I got your ass.

Jesse is so tired he can barely summon the energy to look grim.

JESSE
(word of God)
*Would you please just go an' fuck
yourself?*

Hugo's eyes bulge in horror as he realizes what this means.

187 EXT. ANNVILLE - NIGHT

The pickup drives off down the road.

188 INT. STOLEN PICKUP - NIGHT

Jesse drives, tired but satisfied, all his battles won and his nightmares laid to rest.

Tulip leans against him, quietly happy.

Cassidy just looks thoughtful.

CASSIDY
That was quite a strange evenin'.

JESSE ..
Ah, I had worse.

CASSIDY
(amused)
Just as a matter of interest, Jesse -
is there anything does scare you?

JESSE
(happy)
Not no more, Cass. Not no more.

Suddenly he freezes, stares ahead, stamps on the brake.

189 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The pickup screeches to a halt, rocks back on its chassis

190 INT. STOLEN PICKUP - NIGHT

Tulip and Cassidy are flung back in their seats. Then they turn to gape at Jesse.

TULIP
What the fuck was that?!

But Jesse can only stare ahead, horrified.

191 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

Illuminated in the headlights, still astride his BMX, is Arseface. He's looking curiously back at the truck.

Our heroes peer out at him, freaked beyond belief.

Then he pedals awkwardly up to Jesse's side of the pickup and sticks his head in the window.

192 INT. STOLEN PICKUP - NIGHT

All three stare at Arseface, incredibly nervous. He's cheery as ever.

ARSEFACE

(Hullo!)

Jesse recoils at the voice.

ARSEFACE

(Sorry to trouble you folks, but I was wondering if you'd seen my Dad around here anywhere?)

The three of them look at each other, bewildered.

ARSEFACE

(His name's Hugo Root - he's the Sheriff around these parts. Tall, dignified kind of a guy. I've been looking for him all night.)

JESSE

(whisper, to Cassidy)
What the fuck is he sayin'?

CASSIDY

(starting to laugh
incredulous)
Well what the fuck are you askin' me for?

Cassidy puts a hand to his mouth to hide his laughter. That gets Tulip going. She leans back to try to hide behind Jesse, struggling not to howl with laughter. When Jesse turns back to Arseface he can barely contain himself, teeth gritted, coughing over the occasional snigger.

JESSE

Uh ...come again?

That almost puts Tulip and Cassidy over the edge. A Herculean effort to stop themselves from laughing. Arseface is oblivious.

ARSEFACE

(I'm looking for my Dad, Hugo Root. He's a member of the law enforcement community. He looks a bit like Jimmy Stewart.)

JESSE

I'm sorry, buddy. I can't understand a goddamned word you said.

Arseface pulls a photo from his pocket, hands it in.

ARSEFACE

(My Dad, see? I'm looking for my Dad. That's him there, with me.)

The photo shows Arseface and Hugo together - Arseface with an arm round his Dad, giving the thumbs up. Hugo looks impossibly bitter, fuming with hatred for the whole world.

ARSEFACE

(See?)

Jesse looks at the photo and it all becomes clear.

JESSE

Aaaaaaah...!

He hands the photo to Tulip, raises an eye. Tulip and Cassidy stare at it, eyes popping.

193 EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT ..

Jesse leans out the window, hands the photo to Arseface, smiles reassuringly.

JESSE

Got you now buddy. Yeah, I know who your Daddy is. Saw him tonight, as a matter of fact.

ARSEFACE

(You did?)

JESSE

(very friendly, jerking thumb back)

Sure I did. He's lying back there with his dick up his ass.

Jesse floors it, and the pickup races off down the road in a cloud of dust, leaving Arseface staring after it.

And we fade to black.

THE END