

THE JEHOVAH CONTRACT

by

Victor Koman

From his Novel

LUDOVICO TECHNIQUE
6403 1/2 Primrose Avenue
Los Angeles, CA
90068
310-384-9992

www.ludovicotechnique.com

SEPTEMBER 2007 DRAFT

FADE IN:

SUPER TITLE: THE NEAR PRESENT

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE WAITING ROOM -- AFTERNOON

A dying practice in the worst part of town. Frayed magazines and peeling wallpaper. An OLD TELEVISION mounted near the ceiling is tuned to Hallelujah House, hosted by televangelist EMIL ZACHARIAS, a slender, olive-skinned smooth talker with a pencil-thin mustache. We HEAR his sermon in the background.

DELL (VO)
I've seen it all and I've done
half of it.

ZACHARIAS (BG, FILTER)
There is a godless evil in the
world today. It favors no race,
color, creed, or gender.

DELL AMMO -- mid-fifties or at least looking it -- sits in the waiting room like Philip Marlowe on the worst day of his life. Grey hair, face like an ex-cop. His cigarette smoke rises straight up in the dead air as he reads the LA Times on a Palm XXIII -- a thin, pliable sheet of plastic.

DELL (VO)
And frankly, I was ready to cash
in my chips. I was halfway through
the LA Times when Evangeline poked
her gorgeous head in.

ZACHARIAS (BG, FILTER)
It twists the souls of our
children into seething cauldrons
of hatred. That evil is Satan
himself. Now I know a lot of you
hear that name and say, 'Well,
He's just a symbol, isn't He?'

EVANGELINE -- the nurse -- ENTERS from the inner office. She's a knockout, if you like damaged goods who'll do anything for a fix. In fact, she still has a RUBBER TOURNIQUET on her bare, needle-tracked arm.

EVANGELINE
Mr. Ammo? Dr. LaVecque will see
you now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZACHARIAS (BG, FILTER)

Just a storybook character with
horns and a pointed tail? Let me
tell you, no storybook character
is responsible for the mess we're
in!

Dell slips the Palm into the breast pocket of his rumpled
blue suit. Passing by her, he UNTIES the tourniquet,
shaking his head sympathetically.

DELL

Take it easy, angel. It's not the
end of the world.

EVANGELINE

Says who?

ZACHARIAS (BG, FILTER)

Could some myth be responsible for
crime and drugs and pornography
and terrorism? No, my friends --
no fictional being causes this
tribulation. No Halloween
hobgoblin drags us to the brink of
world war. Only Satan Himself --
God's arch-enemy -- is so
powerful. Make no mistake -- He is
alive, He is real, and He is on
Earth right now!

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Every cabinet and drawer is PADLOCKED. Tiny spatters of
DRIED BLOOD on the walls and not a few nail scratches.
Dell sits on a worn, cracked table.

DR. LAVECQUE -- a whippet of an old, bald man -- ENTERS,
clasping a tattered, thick manila folder in his liver-
spotted hand. He GLARES at Dell's cigarette.

LAVECQUE

You done with that?

Dell glances at the smoke as LaVecque SNATCHES IT from
his patient's fingers. He SMOKES it himself as he speaks.

LAVECQUE (CONT'D)

Want me to ease into this, Dell?

Dell SHAKES his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVECQUE (CONT'D)

You've got maybe three to six months. Cancer in your bones. Metastatic osteogenic sarcoma.

DELL

Sounds painful.

LAVECQUE

It will be, in time. I can give you something--

DELL

Forget it, Doc. I'm no junkie. And forget any high-ticket treatments. I'll go when I go.

LAVECQUE

You? You're a religious man?

DELL

I'm a man. I believe in staying that way till I die.

He SLIDES OFF the table and NABS the cigarette back from LaVecque, crushing it out on the floor.

DELL (CONT'D)

These things'll kill you.

DELL heads out the door with LaVecque talking to his back.

LAVECQUE

It's this building, Dell!

The door CLOSES. LaVecque pulls a LEG X-RAY film from the folder and holds it up to the WINDOW. Through the window, we see a DESOLATE DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES as seen from the south Arco Tower facing north. The upper 20 floors of the north Arco Tower are COMPLETELY GONE and the lower stories consist of SHATTERED GLASS and FATIGUED METAL.

LAVECQUE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

It's still radioactive.

INT. STAIRWELL -- LATE AFTERNOON

Dell climbs the stairs, suppressing the pain in his bones.

OPENING CREDITS

As he climbs the stairs, we glimpse his Zelig-like past:

INSERT ZAPRUDER FILM (FLASHBACK)

Dallas, 1963, Zapruder 8mm film of the Kennedy limousine beginning to roll.

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

Grainy 8mm image of MAN IN BLACK handing 12-YEAR OLD DELL AMMO a string of firecrackers and a lighter. Dell crouches, setting off the noisy DIVERSION as JFK passes by on his motorcade into eternity.

DELL (VO)
I've been an assassin for over
forty years, starting out in
Dallas, doing a diversion.

INSERT ZAPRUDER FILM (FLASHBACK)

Chaos! JFK's hit! Jackie scrambles to escape!

EXT. GRASSY KNOLL -- CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK)

The Man in Black draws his pistol and turns to finish off Dell and only sees the FIRECRACKERS EXPLODING.

DELL (VO)
I learned then and there to keep
my mouth shut and disappear after
the job. From that point on, it
was strictly cash, up front.

EXT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Archival film from 1968 California presidential primary.

DELL (VO)
The closest I ever came to fame --
and getting caught -- was when
they had cameras in the Ambassador
Hotel in 'sixty-eight.

INT. STAIRWELL -- LATE AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

Dell reaches the fourth flight and PAUSES for breath.

INT. AMBASSADOR HOTEL -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

SFX: BOBBY KENNEDY is shot by a TEENAGE DELL from behind ROSIE GREER. Dell slaps the gun into a befuddled SIRHAN SIRHAN's hand and throws Bobby a rosary.

DELL (VO)
That one wasn't political. Joe DiMaggio told me what had been done to Marilyn Monroe. I performed the service pro bono.

INT. DELL AMMO'S OFFICE -- SUNSET (PRESENT)

The door reads SOLUTIONS, INC. but the office looks like a flophouse. It's obvious from the clothes, blankets, and food containers that Dell lives here, too. Plastic sheeting covering the shattered window THUMPS like a drum against the breeze outside.

INT. AMERICAN NAZI PARTY HQ -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Dell shoots George Lincoln Rockwell.

DELL (VO)
A lot of times I iced people before they could get their hands on the reins of power.

INSERT -- DESK DRAWER (PRESENT)

Dell opens the drawer and we see a foil ASEPTIC PACK. Instead of juice, this one has a JACK DANIELS LABEL.

INT. DELL AMMO'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS (PRESENT)

Dell tears the corner off the bag and POURS a STIFF ONE.

DELL (VO)
The Sixties were a fabulous time to be young and participating in the political process. And the following decades brought even

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MONTAGE (FLASHBACK)

We see ARCHIVAL NEWS FOOTAGE mixed in with REENACTMENTS of the assassinations Dell ticks off:

Mao (smothered with a pillow),

Sadat (newsreel footage with Dell as shooter),

Indira Gandhi (Dell dressed as one of her Sikh guards),

Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko (each in the same hospital room, same method of killing: lethal injection by Dr. Ammo),

Rabin (surveillance video of Dell),

Gangsta' gunfire from trench-coated Dell's Mac 10 (TWO ANGLES).

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)
Mao, Sadat, that Gandhi dame,
Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko --
it was like a revolving door at
the Kremlin -- Tupac, Biggie ... I
hit them all. And sometimes, I
didn't even have to fire a shot to
destroy someone.

NEWS VIDEO of Jimmie Swaggert, Jim Baker, Gary Hart.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)
It just took a dame.

NEWSREEL FOOTAGE of Bill Clinton's apology.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)
Or a dame and a cigar.

INT. INVESTMENT HOUSE -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dell listens to a STOCKBROKER explain something excitedly. Dell looks doubtful.

DELL (VO)
I was in a business that pays very
well if you're unobtrusive and
keep your mouth shut. I had to
hide my money, so I sank it all
into stocks. More accurately, my
broker sank it into stocks. And in
nineteen ninety-nine, he sank it
into a single, hot company.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The stockbroker points to a prospectus for a company called StratoNet.

WIPE TO:

INT. INVESTMENT HOUSE, REVERSE ANGLE -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dell stares grimly forward.

DELL (VO)

By two thousand one, the company was bankrupt and I was broke.

SFX -- CGI

We still see Dell's glowering face, but we enter a RED-GREY TUNNEL as the CAMERA TRUCKS BACKWARD. We come out the rear end of a BULLET HOLE through the BROKER'S HEAD and CRANE UPWARD to track Dell as he RISES from his seat to depart.

END FLASHBACK

INT. DELL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Empty WHISKY BAG on the desk. A FULL MOON glows beyond the PULSATING plastic window covering. Dell is out of sight.

DELL (VO)

So I moved to the cheapest digs in town. Cheap because the feds got lazy about using assassination in foreign policy. That let some really nasty characters grow big and bold enough to target our cities. LA had the bad luck to endure a briefcase nuke. It fizzled, but it still caused some instant property devaluation.

We see Dell PASSED OUT on a tattered couch. There's a KNOCK at his door.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)

Visitors rarely ventured into the hot zone, so I wasn't expecting any prospective clients.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Emil Zacharias -- the TV evangelist -- NUDGES the door open with a gold-knobbed walking stick. He's impeccably dressed.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)
But -- that night -- I received
one hell of a visitor.

The cane POKES at Dell's shoulder.

ZACHARIAS
Mr. Dell Ammo, I presume?

Dell rouses instantly from his stupor, WHIPS one hand out to snatch the cane from Emil, and THROWS him to the floor while drawing a Colt Combat Commander .45 semi-auto PISTOL from his waistband holster and JAMMING it under the Zack's jaw.

DELL
Business hours are ten to four,
weekdays.

ZACHARIAS
I have a job for you, Mr. Ammo,
that I think is worth interrupting
your beauty sleep to hear.

Dell HOLSTERS his pistol and releases Zack. He steps over to his desk and FROWNS at the empty whisky bag.

DELL
Why would a famous TV preacher
come to this hell hole in the
middle of the night?

ZACHARIAS
My reputation precedes me.

DELL
Mine must, too, or you wouldn't be
here.

ZACHARIAS
Then you can guess why I'm in this
hell hole in the middle of the
night.

Dell eases into his worn leather swivel chair, WINCING as his knees bend, and forces a GRIN. He's in control now.

DELL
It's not my business to guess.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Zack TAPS his walking stick against the worn rug.

ZACHARIAS

I understand, Mr. Ammo, that in the past you've provided solutions to rather, ah, difficult problems.

DELL

That's what the brochure says.

Zack pauses a beat, looking guilty already.

ZACHARIAS

I want someone ... killed. More or less. I want him out of the way.

DELL

You must be confusing me with someone else.

ZACHARIAS

Oh?

Zack pulls a CIGARETTE from a polished ebony case, taps it, and raises it to his lips. In a smooth motion, he RAISES cupped hands to the cigarette and a RED-YELLOW FLAME dances above it without the use of lighter.

ZACHARIAS (CONT'D)

The job will entail great difficulties, but the reward will be commensurate, I assure you.

DELL

Out of the pocketbooks of the faithful, I suppose? Sorry, Zack. I'm not taking on any clients, regardless of price.

ZACHARIAS

Payment will be more than monetary.

Zack reaches slowly across to SMACK his hand against Dell's forehead. His voice becomes pure Bible Belt brimstone.

ZACHARIAS (CONT'D)

You have a demon inside you! The demon Car-ci-noma! Cancer! I cast that demon out!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

A stunned Dell STARES at Zack after he RELEASES his grip. For a beat or two, neither says a thing. Then Zack SMILES.

ZACHARIAS (CONT'D)
Every old man wishes he could roll
back the years to some point in
his life when he was strong,
virile, handsome, confident. What
year is it for you, Mr. Ammo?
Thirty-three? Twenty-five?
Eighteen?

Dell SPASMS in pain. Sweat breaks out. He tries to stand but DOUBLES OVER to the floor, COUGHING and RETCHING.

ZACHARIAS (CONT'D)
I can do better. I can roll back
that mortal odometer to whenever
you want and lock it in.

SFX -- EXUDING CANCER

Dell looks at his hands. OOZING GASHES appear on his palms and from them drip BLACK, BUBBLING SLIME.

END SFX

ZACHARIAS
Eternal life, Mr. Ammo. Eternal
youth. And, of course, wealth.

Zack places an envelope on the desk. Dell grits his teeth.

DELL
Get the hell out.

ZACHARIAS
I've given you a lot to think
about. I'll come back tomorrow.
During business hours.

Zack EXITS as Dell struggles to RISE from the floor. Back in his chair, Dell looks at his palms. The stigmata are GONE.

Looking down at THE FLOOR, Dell sees the BLACK SLIME still bubbling. He notices the envelope. Inside, he finds a BUNDLE of 100 \$100 bills.

EXT. -- FLOWER STREET -- NIGHT

The ruins of the twin Arco towers stand silhouetted against the taller buildings that surround them. The trash-strewn street is deserted except for bums, junkies, and homeless.

DELL (VO)
Since I hadn't made any deal with
Zacharias, the money was a gift.
And I was in a mood to enjoy it.

EXT. -- BUNKER HILL -- NIGHT

The CONDOS on the hill are now slums and crack houses. At the bottom of the hill, though, LIMOUSINES and LUXURY CARS come and go from a CAVE carved in the side of the hill.

DELL (VO)
There's a place I used to go when
I had money. Vice with LA style.

INT. -- AUBERGE ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

Just past the stylized mouth of the CAVERN, the cars curve past what looks like a HOTEL MAIN ENTRANCE. Amid the limos, BMWs, and MBZs, Dell Ammo DRIVES UP in his battered geriatric CHRYSLER. A VALET gives it a disgusted look.

DELL
I don't want a scratch on it.

VALET
What are we, a body shop?

DELL (VO)
The mayor and police chief swear
it doesn't exist.

INT. -- AUBERGE ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

A GORGEOUS REDHEAD at a reception desk SMILES at the MAYOR and a FLOOZY, followed by the POLICE CHIEF and his FLOOZY.

RECEPTIONIST
Welcome back, Mayor. Chief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The receptionist SMILES at Dell.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
Welcome to Auberge, sir.

DELL
Back at ya, dollface.

INT. -- AUBERGE -- NIGHT

Dell steps through the door like Dorothy stepping into Oz. Auberge is the glitziest grand mall imaginable, but the marquees advertise stuff you'd never see at Beverly Center: DRUGS, GUNS, SEX and KINKINESS of every imaginable variety, and the most resplendent CASINOS this side of Vegas.

INT. -- CASINO OF THE ANGELS -- NIGHT

Dell wanders past TUXEDOED GUARDS into the casino.

DELL (VO)
There's nothing like a doctor's
death sentence to magnify a man's
bad judgment.

He feeds a \$100 dollar bill into a SLOT MACHINE. It swallows the C-note and indicates that he gets one pull for it.

DELL (VO)
I was in a mood to blow it all on
a good time.

DELL pulls the handle and loses. He frowns and moves on.

DELL (VO)
That's when I saw her.

At a CRAPS TABLE, surrounded by wealthy PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS, stands ANN PERRINE in a SILVER LAMÉ EVENING GOWN. A blond bombshell with intelligence and determination in her eyes, she STANDS at the head of the table, dice in one lovely hand. Dell watches as she rolls a 2 and a 3.

CROUPIER
Five! Bicycle Tricycle.

The spectators can't believe it. The CROUPIER slides the chips toward an impressive stack. She SHOOTs, she SCORES.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CROUPIER (CONT'D)

Five again.

A MOVEMENT catches Dell's attention. He shifts his eyes to see THREE MEN approaching the crap table.

DELL (VO)

Too bad she was a magnet for trouble.

Ann SENSES something is wrong, SMILES at the croupier, and SHOVELS HER CHIPS into a large matching handbag. The three goons FOLLOW her to the CASHIER'S CAGE.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)

Amateurs.

INT. CASINO CASHIER'S CAGE -- NIGHT

After she EXCHANGES her chips for cash, the three thugs DRAW REVOLVERS from shoulder holsters and RUSH her.

DELL races forward, drawing his Colt.

CEILING CAMERA TURRETS sprout laser-guided RIFLE MUZZLES. LASER BEAM DOTS dance on the thieves' torsos, aiming in.

ROBO PIT BOSS (FILTER)

Drop your weapons and surrend--

Dell moves FASTER than the eye, planting a BULLET in each crook and hiding his pistol before the pit boss can react.

The three crooks DROP to the floor as one. Dell and Ann exchange looks, then Ann TURNS and WALKS AWAY.

DELL (VO)

I never expect a thank you in my line of work.

DELL gapes in disbelief and rises (with some painful difficulty) to follow her as she heads toward the exit.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)

On the other hand, she didn't know me. Did she expect to have a gunman around every time she needed one?

He almost catches her when he SLAMS into something below his waist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Ann DISAPPEARS into the crowd, he LOOKS DOWN to see what collided with him. He hears a YOUNG VOICE bark.

ISADORA (OS)

Watch your fucking step, asshole!

Dell gazes down at ISADORA VOLANTE. She looks like a miniature Rita Hayworth in Gilda: tousled auburn hair, dark green gown with matching nails, high heels, and handbag. She's short, perfectly proportioned, small-chested: she could be anywhere between 12 and 20 years old. Whatever her age, she's TROUBLE and just plain ANGRY. Dell STARES at her for a beat, then lets out a single burst of LAUGHTER.

ISADORA (CONT'D)

Why don't you watch where you're going, you decrepit old shit?

DELL

I don't brake for babies.

ISADORA

Aw, shut the hell up.

Dell SIDESTEPS her and heads toward the exit, still trying to catch a glimpse of the mysterious lady in silver.

ISADORA (CONT'D)

Hey!

INT. AUBERGE CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Isadora follows Dell, fumbling to pull a CIGARETTE CASE from her handbag. She lights a JOINT wrapped in colored paper that matches her outfit. She catches up with him.

DELL

Aren't you on the wrong level?
Hooking is two floors down.

ISADORA

I've got a couple of the guards up here on the take. We can go down to Three if you want.

DELL

I'm not a politician, kid. I don't kiss babies.

Dell picks up the pace. Isadora TUGS at his sleeve.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISADORA

Hey, mister -- every man I talk to wants to make it with me. And give me things.

DELL

Consider me your first strikeout.

She pulls in front of him to face him, BLOCKING his way. Her voice DROPS half an octave lower.

ISADORA

I give really good head.

Del CROUCHES, nips the joint from her fingers and THROWS it down, looking straight in her eyes and POINTING away.

DELL

Good. Head thataway and get lost.

She glares back at him and mutters menacingly.

ISADORA

You're supposed to want me! You all want me!

Isadora's eyes NARROW in fierce concentration. Her face SCRUNCHES UP like a bulldog's.

Dell FREEZES in place and TREMBLES. His eyes STARE blankly.

Isadora SMILES wickedly as she locks him in her telepathic embrace. She closes her eyes to RELISH her power over him.

ISADORA (CONT'D)

See?

Dell FIGHTS the entrancement with all of his will. With a GRUNT/SHOUT he breaks free and focuses on her.

DELL

What the hell was that?

Isadora looks astonished and fascinated.

ISADORA

How did you break off like that?
Everyone stays 'til they finish!

Disgusted, Dell rises and stares down at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL

Someone ought to give you a
spanking.

ISADORA

(smiles)

OK! Let's talk price.

With a MUTTERED curse, Dell gives ONE LAST LOOK at where
the beautiful blonde may have gone, then TURNS and heads
for the Auberge exit. Isadora watches him go in jaw-
dropping DEFEAT.

INT. DOCTOR'S EXAMINATION ROOM -- DAY

Dell once again SITS on the table while LaVecque holds an
MRI film up to the window.

DELL (VO)

I decided I'd had enough
excitement for one night. Besides,
what business did a dying hit man
have chasing a dream?

LAVECQUE

Hmm. Have you experienced anything
unusual in the last few days?

Dell glances at his palms.

DELL

Why?

LAVECQUE

Because the lab tests and this MRI
show a dramatic decrease in cancer
cells.

Dell SLIDES off the table and PEERS at the MRI.

DELL

No kidding?

LAVECQUE

Spontaneous remission. You're
healing.

DELL

Really?

LaVecque TURNS toward Dell and looks even more stunned.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LAVECQUE

Yes, Dell, you're... (beat) Your hair! You've got black roots!

LaVecque turns him toward the dented PAPER TOWEL DISPENSER that serves as a mirror. Dell GAZES at his reflection in wonder to see BLACK ROOTS under his GREY HAIR.

DELL (VO)

It was the worst insult you could give a suicide blonde, but it was just eerie good news to me.

DELL (CONT'D)

What do you think it means, Doc?

LAVECQUE

Don't ask me, Dell. I never majored in miracles. Give me a million bucks and I might find an answer. Or just pay me the two-fifty you owe me and we'll call it square.

Dell a few bills out of the envelope and hands them over, pondering the bizarre diagnoses.

LAVECQUE (CONT'D)

Now get out before curiosity wins and I decide to vivisect you.

INT. STAIRWELL -- DAY

Dell looks at the stairs. Recklessly, he starts RUNNING up, soon taking them two at a time.

INT. CORRIDOR -- DAY

Dell reaches his floor only a little out of breath. With a little JUMP, he clicks his heels joyously.

INT. DELL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Emil Zacharias SITS in Dell's swivel chair.

DELL

Would your flock like to see their pastor arrested for breaking and entering?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZACHARIAS

Nice head of hair you're getting.
And you appear pain-free.

DELL

What of it?

ZACHARIAS

Please, Mr. Ammo. We can play
infantile head games for hours.
The truth is you don't want to
die, and I'm offering you a way
out.

Dell FLOPS onto the couch, quietly GLARING.

ZACHARIAS (CONT'D)

The operation involves a single
killing. One being.

DELL

Being?

ZACHARIAS

He goes by many aliases. Jehovah.
Allah. Brahma. The King of Kings.
The First Cause. God of Abraham.

DELL

I see.

ZACHARIAS

The All-Powerful. The Creator. The
Infinite Spirit.

DELL

I get you.

ZACHARIAS

Yahweh. The Lord. Adonai. El
Elion. The Great I Am.

DELL

All right! Kapish. Comprendo. You
want me to bump off the Big Guy.

Zacharias looks suddenly nervous.

ZACHARIAS

No. (beat) Yes!

Dell LAUGHS and shakes his head. He WALKS over to a file
cabinet and pulls out another sack of Jack Daniels.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL

Zack -- I don't believe in God.

ZACHARIAS

You don't have to. Just kill Him.

Dell hands him the drink.

DELL

You take a different approach to preaching, don't you?

Dell LEANS against the cabinet. Zacharias TURNS to see him.

DELL (CONT'D)

Okay. If I buy the premise, I buy the bit. Say He does exist. What do I get if I kill Him?

ZACHARIAS

What you have now. Youth, health, vigor. Eternal life. As long as you wish.

DELL

Why should I trust you? Don't you have an alias, too? Prince of Lies?

ZACHARIAS

Enemy propaganda. I could tell you stories about the last few Creations that would make your hair sizzle.

DELL

What happens if I don't agree to kill Him?

ZACHARIAS

You'll die very painfully within three weeks.

DELL

I'd just shoot myself.

ZACHARIAS

That would send you right to me. Think about it: eternal life means eternal deferment of Judgment Day.

Dell LEANS in closely on Zacharias.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DELL

If I agree to kill something I don't even believe exists, I'd be defrauding you.

Zacharias LEANS even closer to WHISPER.

ZACHARIAS

I don't care.

Dell tries to read Zack. He takes another DRINK.

DELL

My fee is five hundred a day, plus expenses. And I mean five hundred grams of gold. To be deposited in the Casino Grande vault. I'm not taking chances with paper again.

ZACHARIAS

Three hundred.

DELL

You want me to kill God and we're haggling about price?

ZACHARIAS

(sighs)
Oh, very well. Five hundred.

He removes his glove and EXTENDS his hand.

DELL

Give it a rest.

ZACHARIAS

I insist, Mr. Ammo. It's really for your own protection.

They SHAKE on it.

DELL

I don't have to sign in blood?

ZACHARIAS

Mr. Ammo, if it is a sin merely to contemplate a venial or mortal sin, then I assure you that agreeing to commit the one immortal sin is quite enough for my purpose.

DELL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

ZACHARIAS

An end to sibling rivalry.

Zacharias TURNS to leave. Dell CALLS OUT after him.

DELL

Wait! How do I find God?

ZACHARIAS (OS)

That is a search many have
conducted with much less reason
than you, Dell Ammo. Good luck.

His footsteps RESOUND hollowly down the corridor. The
elevator WHINES into life. Dell stands with drink in
hand, STARING at the door in disbelief.

DELL

Jesus Christ. Son of a bitch.

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Dell WALKS down a neglected street, Arco towers behind
him.

DELL (VO)

The next morning it really hit me:
I'd agreed to assassinate God. How
hard would it be to locate someone
I didn't believe existed? And how
long could I draw pay and expenses
before Zack came to his senses?

He passes a Muslim MOSQUE at morning prayer time.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)

I began to understand how séance
performers felt about their
profession. It's great work until
the chumps figure out the scam.
All right. I had a contract to
kill God, and I was going to kill
Him.

Dell walks by an Orthodox Jewish SYNAGOGUE and a RABBI
unlocking the front door.

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)

It might take years. At five
hundred a day. Plus expenses.

He passes a Catholic CHURCH as BELLS RING for morning

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL (VO) (CONT'D)
But where should I look for God,
so I could look as if I were
looking?

Dell STOPS, GAZES upward, and SMILES.

EXT. LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY -- DAY

He's STANDING at the base of the steps, GAZING up at the
GOLDEN PYRAMIDAL ROOF.

INT. LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY -- SUNSET

Dell sits at a table surrounded by STACKS OF BOOKS. He's
EXHAUSTED to the point of MUTTERING to himself as he
opens, glances at, and THROWS ASIDE volumes of obscure
theology.

DELL (VO)
I didn't get it. God was self-
surpassing, an unmoved mover, a
standard of reality, the supreme
reality, the sole reality,
temporal, eternal, infinite,
finite, one with Man, apart from
Man, part of everything, apart
from everything, everything! The
beginning, the beginningless!

He takes a book and WHACKS it against his forehead.

DELL (CONT'D)
Gaaaahh!

EXT. LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY -- SUNSET

Dell STOMPS down the steps, angry and perplexed. On the
sidewalk stands a JEHOVAH'S WITNESS with copies of The
Watchtower and Awake! in his hands. He looks bored.

DELL
Say, pal, how can I find God?

The man mechanically hands him a magazine.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS
Accept Jesus into your life. He is
the path from sin to salvation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell gives the magazine a perfunctory GLANCE, NODS, and THROWS it aside.

DELL

Salvation? Nope -- not in the cards. I want to see God. In the flesh. Or whatever He uses.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

(sighs)

Give me a break. I've had a shitty day and I don't need your sarcasm.

DELL

Yeah. Dumb idea, huh?

Dell PEELS OFF a dozen C-notes and hands them over. The eyes of the other WIDEN.

DELL (CONT'D)

Go take a load off. Rest your dogs.

INT. CASINO BAR -- NIGHT

Classy, glitzy. The BARTENDER listens patiently to Dell's slurred musings.

DELL

So even if you found God, how'd you kill Him? Put a friggin' bullet through His third eye?

BARTENDER

Crucifixion worked once.

DELL

No. No... Not the mortal manifestation of the Word made flesh. Jesus Christ, man, I'm not talking about (beat) Jesus Christ. I'm talking about his Big Daddy, The Hairy Thunderer! War God of Israel! The Thing with Three Souls!

BARTENDER

Okay... Limit!

Ann APPROACHES and slips into the chair at Dell's right.

ANN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell TURNS to gaze at her. She PAYS the barman.

BARTENDER

Lady, these are hundred dollar
chips.

She SMILES and SHRUGS. The barkeep GRINS.

BARTENDER

Thanks, lady!

She turns to Dell.

ANN

You look familiar.

DELL

We met last night. In the casino.
At the cash cage.

ANN

That's right. You slew for me.
Thrice.

DELL

Yeah. (beat) Glad I left some
impression on you.

ANN

What's your name?

DELL

Ammo. Dell Ammo.

ANN

(smiling)
Perrine. Ann Perrine.

She HOLDS OUT her hand as if expecting him to kiss it.

DELL

Nice nails.

She LOWERS her hand to her glass and takes a SIP.

ANN

With a name like Ammo, I hesitate
to ask what your profession is.

DELL

I'm a seeker after truth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANN

Really? I minored in philosophy at UCLA. What are you seeking?

BARTENDER

You'll be sorry.

The bartender MOVES ON. Dell SLUGS BACK his drink.

DELL

It's sort of nuts, but there's this guy who's offered me lots of money to find God. He's convinced that God exists somewhere and can actually be hunted down.

ANN

You're looking for god. For real. Why?

DELL

The money.

ANN

And you want me to help you defraud this man?

DELL

It's not fraud. This guy's convinced that I can find Him.

Ann takes another, longer sip from her margarita.

DELL (CONT'D)

He gave me a contract to track down God and kill Him.

Ann's fingers CLENCH, BREAKING the stem of the glass.

ANN

Which god do you want to kill? Define him.

Dell FROWNS. They speak in clipped, Dragnet-style speech.

DELL

The usual run-of-the-mill God. Miracle maker. Controller of lives. Watcher over us all.

ANN

Is this god different from Man?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DELL

Sure. More powerful. Smarter.

ANN

By degree or kind? Is god a more powerful and intelligent man, or is his power and knowledge of a different nature?

Dell STARES at her as if she's from Venus.

INT. AUBERGE MAIN FLOOR -- NIGHT

Dell's drunk, Ann's energized. They're off the Dragnet kick.

ANN

To use the term 'god' to mean anything less than a difference in kind is a misuse of the term. A more powerful man or alien may be godlike, but he wouldn't be a god. Have you read any books on this?

DELL

A lot of theology texts.

ANN

The worst! They want to convince you their own personal heresies are the truth. You've got to check out the antitheists.

DELL

Anti--?

ANN

Militant atheists. At least they'll give you an idea of what god isn't.

She leads him to an elevator and they enter.

INT. ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

The elevator moves downward from the first floor to the second and third.

ANN

You notice that I haven't asked you who wants god killed. I won't.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN (CONT'D)

And I don't think you're nuts for believing that gods can literally die. Zeus is dead, after all.

DELL

I thought he was doing time for rape.

ANN

(laughs)

His worshippers are gone. No god can survive that.

DELL

Wasn't that a Star Trek episode?

The elevator doors OPEN upon a fuming ISADORA wrapped in hot pink velvet (with matching everything).

ISADORA

This fucking elevator serves four fucking floors! What the fuck took you so long? Did you fucking stop to have sex?

She storms inside, punches the fourth floor button, recognizes Dell, and turns snide.

ISADORA

Oh. You. (beat) Don't worry about the sex thing, lady. In his case, it ain't the meat, it's the tumidity.

ANN

Friend of yours?

DELL

In no ways, shape, or form -- all of which she lacks.

The elevator STOPS. The doors open on a PAIR OF PRIESTS. FATHER BEATHAN -- tall, thin -- SMILES. He pulls a TASER from his frock, as does BROTHER O'ROURKE -- a HUGE HULK. They FIRE INSTANTLY. Dell and Ann SPASM in agony.

ISADORA

Shit!

She RACES between them. The priests ignore her, STEP INSIDE, and close the elevator doors. FALLING, Dell tries to draw his gun with one hand and YANK OUT the darts with the other.

INT. AUBERGE CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Isadora SPRINTS away from the elevator as it ascends. Suddenly, she STOPS dead in her tracks and STARES up in terror at... something.

INT. ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

Dell COLLAPSES, immobile, beside Ann. The priests SMILE.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

INT. MORGUE -- DAY

Dell lies on a gurney, an IV line running into his arm. He opens his eyes, WINCES at the light. He raises his arm to gaze perplexedly at the IV.

SFX -- DELL'S ACID TRIP

He's stoned and surrounded by eviscerated CORPSES. The floor rumples and WIGGLES beneath him. The SINGLE LIGHT BULB hanging overhead GROWS AND SHRINKS as if BREATHING, pulsating opalescent COLORS. The ceiling SQUIRMS like boiling pudding in slow motion.

DELL (VO)

I woke up with as much dope in my
veins as half the Woodstock
Nation.

Dell tries to STAND and watches his feet MELT into the floor. The whole room behaves as if it's hideously alive.

DELL (VO)

There was nothing I could do about
it. I had to ride that snake
wherever it took me.

He looks at his hand and sees the SKELETON INSIDE. He REACHES toward another gurney for support and puts his fingers into a CADAVER'S LIVER. He stares down at skin

(CONT'D) folded away in sheets of yellow-grey to reveal cold, hard organs. The cadaver SQUIRMS AROUND on the table, STARING at Dell with frosted eyes. A tongueless mouth LECTURES him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CADAVER

You'll never find God!

The OTHER CADAVERS join in on the whispering campaign,
soft yet menacing.

CADAVER VOICES

There's no life after death...

No heaven or hell...

We're the rotten truth!

Don't look for God...

There is no God...

DELL

Then why are they trying to stop
me? Why all this?

A door PULSATES like a heart. As he gets closer, Dell
sees PSYCHEDELIC LOCKS AND SPIKES covering it. He HEAVES
his body against the barricade. His skin BREAKS open and
SPLATTERS like a water balloon. Locks and spikes DISSOLVE
into pools of noisy, vomituous GREEN SLIME. The stinking,
vibrating mass FLOWS UP the walls to reveal a blinding
bright HALLWAY.

INT. MORGUE HALLWAY -- DAY. DELL'S ACID TRIP

The hallway becomes a HOLE stretching DOWNWARD into white
oblivion. His fingers gripping the door jamb CRUMBLE and
split. CRICKETS AND SILVERFISH CRAWL OUT of the joints to
jump and crawl over his arms.

He lets go and SLIDES down the hole. PANIC BARS slam him.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY. DELL'S ACID TRIP

A CLEAR, WHITE LIGHT surrounds him, BURNING his flesh.
Flakes of skin SLOUGH OFF like snow.

DELL

Too loud! The Sun's too loud!

A LION CROUCHES in the distance. With a shattering GROWL
it POUNCES toward him. His feet SINK into yielding
pavement. The lion TRANSFORMS into a WHITE MARE rushing
him, swerving to PELT him with gravel.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY. NORMAL VIEW

Ann sits at the wheel of a WHITE HEARSE. Her PUPILS are the size of dimes.

ANN

Get in!

INT. HEARSE -- DAY

Dell tries to focus on Ann. He looks panicked.

ANN

You're safe. I'm Ann Perrine, remember?

DELL'S POV

Ann's face is a mass of purple and blue VEINS. Her hair is a WRITHING tangle of slender TENTACLES.

BACK TO SCENE

Dell nods. He reacts skittishly to every sound or motion.

ANN

It's LSD or something. They wanted to give us a fear imprint, but you're safe. Just focus on pretty things and think happy thoughts.

Dell looks at Ann again.

DELL'S POV

Ann is radiantly BEAUTIFUL, lit by the sun against a bright blue sky as if they were in a convertible.

BACK TO SCENE

Ann sees him smiling and SMILES back.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- DAY

The hearse ROARS away from the monastery.

EXT. ANN'S BUNGALOW -- DAY

On a hill overlooking Silver Lake, it's a modest 1920s

INT. ANN'S BUNGALOW -- DAY

Bookshelves, books, metal and crystal sculptures. Copper, onyx, silver, and amethyst GLITTER in the sunlight. Bronze, quartz, gold, and peridot scatter COLORS. We can see her BEDROOM with its KING-SIZE BED decorated in EGYPTIAN motif. Stylized cobras. Very sexy. Dell SITS on an antique swooning couch as Ann heads into the bedroom.

ANN (OS)

They programmed fear in, and you
can program it out just as easily.
That's what psychotomimetic drugs
are for. Programming and meta-
programming. Better than hypnosis.

Dell hears the ZIP of clothing coming off. And RUSTLE of fresh clothes sliding on.

DELL

You seem to handle the drugs well.

ANN (OS)

Are you kidding? I'm sailing the
stratosphere!

DELL

Built up a tolerance?

Dell's attention wanders to the window. He watches the TREES outside SWAYING in the breeze.

DELL'S POV

The surreal, colorful leave
SHIMMER, almost BREATHING.

BACK TO SCENE

Ann RETURNS in a skintight peacock-blue Danskin top and a ruffled turquoise dress.

ANN

Just call me a talented amateur.
In college, I was the only one who
could drive wasted.

She looks at his beaten exterior and turns GRIM.

ANN

These people mean business, Dell.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

If they meant business, babe, we'd be under the churchyard by now. I just thought I'd draw some pay for a few weeks from a flush eccentric. Next thing I know, someone's serving up my brains as a side order of scrambled eggs.

ANN

Let's see some people who can help.

EXT. THUCYDIDES BOOKSTORE -- DAY

The stolen hearse sits out at the curb in front of a TWO-STORY BUILDING on Larchmont.

INT. THUCYDIDES BOOKSTORE -- DAY

Dell and Ann enter a CRAMPED BOOKSTORE, filled with A DOZEN LISTENERS who hang on the words of THEODORE GOLDING -- lanky, dark-haired intellectual -- and his wife RAISSA -- cute, smart, with long, PREMATURELY GREY hair.

THEODORE

--an unknowable God. That's what believers arrogantly hide behind: epistemological transcendence. Claiming to know that something cannot be known, ever.

Ann and Dell exchange whispers.

ANN

Theodore Golding's the most famous atheist since Madelyn Murray O'Hair was murdered.

DELL

(off-handedly)
Assassinated.

Ann gives him a curious look.

THEODORE (BG)

Claiming to possess the omniscience to know that something will never be known.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THEODORE (BG) (CONT'D)
 Anyone who asserts that God is
 incomprehensible is merely
 confessing the specious nature of
 his own arguments.

LISTENER 1
 How do you define God?

Dell frowns impatiently and whispers to Ann.

DELL
 (whispering)
 We can't sit through a lecture.

THEODORE (BG)
 'God' is a word that's been
 bandied about until it's
 meaningless. You can't define
 'God' any more than you can define
 'love' or 'freedom'. Such words
 become floating abstractions --
 they stir up emotions rather than
 define something concrete.

ANN
 (whispers to Dell)
 You need answers, don't you?

A handsome blonde bookstore employee -- THOMAS RUSSELL --
 circulates with a COFFEE POT and CUPS. Dell and Ann each
 take one.

DELL
 Sure, sweetheart, but I'm not
 inclined to wait.

He RAISES his hand. Theodore NODS toward him.

DELL
 If God's just an idea floating
 around in people's heads, why is
 it so universal? Every culture
 throughout history has had gods.
 There are no atheist prehistoric
 people.

Theodore PEERS at Dell quizzically, then SMILES.

THEODORE
 Just because an idea is powerful
 and pervasive doesn't make it
 true. Ideas fall out of favor:
 flat Earth, phlogiston chemistry,
 Marxism. God is simply the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Dell takes a sip of his COFFEE, makes a bitter face, and LOOKS INTO the cup.

RAISSA

The idea of God persists because people are ingenious at adapting it. The Levite priests of Israel copied the gods of the Aryans, Sumerians, Romans, and Greeks to create what became the Judeo-Christian God. Jove is Je-ho-vah, Zeus is Yay-Zeus, the goddesses Ma and Rhea are Ma-ria.

Ann takes a SIP of coffee and tries to conceal her DISTASTE.

THEODORE

The Catholic Church continued the trend: Babylonians worship Ishtar? Substitute worship of the Virgin Mary. Egyptians believe that Osiris rose from the dead? Have Yay-Zeus do the same. The story of Christ recycles the Mithras and Osiris legends to add some spin control on the failed attempt of an ambitious rabbi to be crowned King of Israel.

RAISSA

No God is dead as long as one person has faith.

SEVERAL OTHER COFFEE DRINKERS look at their cups in puzzlement. A VOICE FROM THE BACK speaks up, gruff and gravelly.

CORBIN (OS)

I say we destroy God with His own contradictions!

RANDOLPH CORBIN is a stocky man wearing an anti-priest's outfit: WHITE PANTS, JACKET with an embroidered 666, and SHIRT with BLACK COLLAR.

RAISSA

Not you again.

Corbin WALKS TO THE FRONT.

CORBIN

Hi, folks. Randolph Corbin of the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CORBIN (CONT'D)
If you're bored with the Lord,
come feast with the Beast.

Dell continues to GAZE at his coffee cup.

INSERT -- COFFEE CUP

The brown coffee is turning disgustingly RED AND CLOTTED.

THEODORE (OS)
Screw your cult, Corbin. You don't
battle bad ideas with worse ones.

BACK TO SCENE

Ann looks ILL. She clutches at her waist in pain.

CORBIN
The Kingdom of God won't return
until we've had a thousand years
of Tribulation. It's in the Bible,
it's God's prophecy. Any good
Christian can see the necessity of
allowing God's prophecy to
proceed. Hence, the most blessed
Christians are the ones who put
the Antichrist on the throne of
the world and get the ball
rolling!

RAISSA
That's so much bu--

The woman serving coffee SCREAMS and drops the COFFEE
POT.

INSERT -- COFFEE POT

The pot FALLS to the floor and SHATTERS, spewing
BRILLIANT CRIMSON BLOOD everywhere.

BACK TO SCENE

People DROP their cups in horror. Dell turns to Ann.

DELL
Am I still stoned or is this--

He sees Ann DOUBLED OVER in agony.

DELL
Ann!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell LIFTS her up as PANDEMONIUM breaks out. More than half of the AUDIENCE LOOKS UP in horror at the CEILING. RED STAINS pool on the ceiling and form THICK, VISCOUS DROPLETS that FALL to the floor. People SCATTER, RETCH, STARE. Others just look SHOCKED and PUZZLED by the others' behavior.

ANN

Get me out of here! Now!

With Ann under one protective arm, Dell draws his PISTOL and uses it to shove/threaten people out of the way. On stage, BLOOD-DRENCHED Theodore and Raissa stare in mystification.

RAISSA

Where are your going?

THEODORE

What's wrong with you people?

Randolph Corbin -- his white outfit DRENCHED in gore -- looks at himself with pleasant awe. He sees DELL and ANN LEAVING. Ann does not have a drop of blood on her.

INT. THUCYDIDES STAIRWAY -- DAY

Dell shoves past everyone but gets stuck behind a FAT MAN.

DELL

C'mon! Move your ass, pal!

FAT MAN

What's the panic?

ANN

The blood! Didn't you see it?

FAT MAN

Hell no!

DELL

Then why are you running?

FAT MAN

Everybody else is!

EXT. LARCHMONT BLVD. -- DAY

Dell and Ann burst out of the stairwell into DAYLIGHT.

INT. HEARSE -- DAY

Ann is in a state of hysterical PANIC. She CURLS UP IN AGONY in the front seat and speaks weakly.

ANN

Dell, we've got to get to
Hollywood. Now!

DELL

Anything you say, angel.

Watching the sky, Dell cranks the engine to life. BLOOD OOZES out of the INSTRUMENT PANEL. Blood from the IGNITION SWITCH flows over Dell's hand. He FLOORS IT.

EXT. LARCHMONT BLVD. -- CONTINUOUS

The hearse ROARS AWAY, narrowly avoiding another CAR. Blood-soaked customers STREAM from Thucydides. Some act as if they SEE NO BLOOD, others are nearly INSANE WITH FEAR. Corbin GAZES AT THE HEARSE with extreme interest.

INT. HEARSE -- DAY

Dell watches the road and Ann with equal concern.

ANN

Get me out of here!

Her hands wildly seek the door handle.

DELL

Don't!

ANN

He's on to us!

She touches the handle and SHRIEKS. BLOOD TRICKLES down from the roof in rivulets and STREAKS across the side window. MORE BLOOD cascades from the roof and stains her skin and clothes. Ann FREAKS OUT.

DELL

No!

Dell SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

EXT. VAN NESS AVE. -- DAY

The BLOOD-STREAMING hearse SKIDS to a halt next to HOLLYWOOD MEMORIAL PARK and Dell bursts out, a SHEET OF BLOOD splashing him. He DRAGS a blood-drenched Ann from the car.

DELL

Annie! Sweet Mother of God, snap
out of it!

SFX -- REALITY WARP

Like a sheet being snapped, we see REALITY SHIFT in a WAVE that REMOVES THE BLOOD from them and the hearse.

BACK TO SCENE

Ann and Dell SPRAWL on the sidewalk, STUNNED by the sudden return to normality. He looks around, sees that ALL IS WELL. Ann's gaze darts about, SUSPICIOUS, FRIGHTENED.

DELL

It's gone.

ANN

It'll be back!

He helps her up. She GLANCES north and south, then at the hearse. She heads north, her high heels CLACKING loudly against the sidewalk. Dell TROTS up beside her.

DELL

Where are you going?

ANN

Our only chance to get out of this
alive is at Hollywood and Bronson.

Dell looks behind him and sees SHADOWS ENGULFING THE HEARSE.

DELL

OK. What's there?

ANN

It's a shop. It's been there
forever. The woman who runs it
is... sensitive to these things.

EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. -- DAY

They reach the intersection.

DELL

Great. We're down to fortune
tellers. What next? Dead movie
stars popping out of the
graveyard?

He jerks his THUMB back at the cemetery. For just a
moment, they both PAUSE, filled with an eerie sense of
ANTICIPATION. After a BEAT, Ann SHAKES OFF the feeling.

ANN

Maybe you can explain the blood?
And why some people saw it and
others didn't?

DELL

Maybe someone drugged the coffee.

CORBIN (OS)

Don't be naïve.

Ann and Dell TURN to see Randolph Corbin in his white,
unbloodied clothing.

CORBIN

You've annoyed the big cheese and
I want to know how you did it!

The light turns GREEN and they CROSS the boulevard.

DELL

I didn't do anything. And what the
hell kind of priest are you
anyway?

CORBIN

I'm an anti-priest for the Beast.
In all my years preaching that
true Christians should bring the
Antichrist to power to fulfill
Biblical prophecy, no one's ever
so much as dropped me a nasty
note.

Reaching the other side of the street, Corbin SEIZES
Dell's arm to stop him. Ann keeps WALKING.

CORBIN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell shakes him off to catch up with a determined Ann. Corbin walks apace.

CORBIN

You're up against forces that have the wealth of a dozen faiths to play with, and they ignore people who try to rock the boat. Yet you've got them worried, Ammo. Why?

DELL

Who's worried?

CORBIN

The Ecclesia, for one.

He waits for Dell or Ann to recognize the name. No reaction.

CORBIN

A cabal of high-level bishops, rabbis, imams, roshis, and others fanatically dedicated to maintaining the wealth and power of organized religion. Attack one faith and you're attacking them all. It's like NATO for holy men.

DELL

So religion has a ruling class, too. Imagine my surprise.

CORBIN

Imagine my surprise having spent ten futile years trying to offend them, then you come out of nowhere and all hell breaks loose. What's your angle, mister?

EXT. BRONSON AND SUNSET -- DAY

The SKY GROWS DARK as the three skid to a stop at the intersection. Ann frantically PRESSES the button for the WALK light. Overhead, DARK, BLOOD-RED CLOUDS swirl into existence.

ANN

It's back!

SFX -- EVIL IMAGE

On the side of a TALL BUILDING, beneath the pendulous burgundy clouds, appears a MENACING IMAGE that looks like an abstract HEAD with curling ANTLERS. Each antler CLASPS an egg-shaped oval. Blood FLOWS down the building.

BACK TO SCENE

CORBIN

What in the name of the Beast is that?

Cars SQUEAL to a halt at the intersection. Not all of them stop, though, and CRASH into the stopped cars. Dozens of DRIVERS climb out of their cars, pointing and staring. Others can't understand the panic -- which scares them.

DELL

Holograms. Mass hypnosis. I don't know!

Ann DOUBLES OVER in pain.

DELL

Ann!

A RUNNY RED FLUID GURGLES UP out of the storm drains and sewers, FILLING THE STREET with blood. Wheels SPLASH crimson sheets across pedestrians. Dozens of people STOP in midstride to SCREAM. Or VOMIT. Or FAINT. Others NOTICE NOTHING but their fellow-travelers' bizarre behavior.

DELL

It's not real! We know it! How come it's still here?

Corbin lends a hand to help Dell CARRY Ann through the river of blood, wending between the SMASHED CARS.

CORBIN

Psychic transmissions from an outside source! It'll affect us regardless of what we believe!

ANN

(weakly)

We're the focus. It's following us.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD AND BRONSON -- DAY

The trio turn right onto Hollywood and FREEZE in their tracks, looking up. A deep GASH slits the CLOUD BANK overhead. Ruby droplets FALL like rain on the sidewalk and streets. Thick SLAPPING SOUNDS like spilling porridge drown out the CAR CRASHES and SCREAMS.

CORBIN

You have so pissed off God!

The vermilion haze hangs like a curtain, drenching everyone. An OLD WOMAN holding a rosary mutters fearfully.

OLD WOMAN

Sanguinis Virgine, Sanguinis
Immaculatum.

Through the rain, Dell sees a SMALL STORE.

INSERT -- STORE SIGN

Trismegistos

Candles, Incense, Oils,

Spells, and other Tools

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Dell and Corbin carry Ann to the doorstep.

REVERSE ANGLE

Behind them, the BLOODSTORM
VANISHES. They are disheveled, but
DRY AND UNBLOODIED. Corbin and
Dell LOOK at each other, then at
Ann, then behind them.

CORBIN

What the hell?

Overhead, BLUE SKY from horizon to zenith. The street is DRY AND CLEAR. Only the PEOPLE act strangely, some COVERING THEIR HEADS, looking fearfully at the sky. Curious, Dell leaves Ann with Corbin and STEPS AWAY from the store.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ORIGINAL ANGLE

Dell leaves clear skies and dryness for buckets of BLOOD drenching the earth from heavy black CLOUDS. He JUMPS back to the doorstep.

REVERSE ANGLE

Back to normal.

ANN

Cramps are gone.

She ventures a STEP off the property line, grabs her waist, and STUMBLES backward to safety.

ANN

It's like the corpse grinders out there, but we're safe here.

CORBIN

For that alone, they could jack up the rent.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

A bell TINKLES as they STUMBLE inside. KASMIRA, a young, pretty woman, appears from the back. Peasant dress. Long black hair in one thick, intricate braid. She SMILES at Ann.

ANN

That's Kasmira. Let me handle this.

Ann smiles and WALKS over to Kasmira. They SPEAK quietly. Dell and Corbin look around. Not spooky at all. Three aisles of GLASS DISPLAY CASES sit under banks of fluorescent lights. As businesslike as a corner pharmacy. Corbin picks up a fancy DAGGER from a case marked Athamés.

CORBIN

Crazy shit people believe, huh?

Dell looks at Corbin's outfit without comment.

KASMIRA

Bridget will see you now.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS BACK ROOM -- DAY

In front of the draped wall sits a low altar like a coffee table cluttered with CANDLES and wooden carvings of DEER and crescent MOONS. CRYSTAL BALL. Incense burner shaped like a DRAGON snorting SMOKE from its nostrils.

Kasmira leads them to BRIDGET, an ancient woman in a pale blue KAFTAN roped at the waist with a white cotton CORD. She STARES at them with clear jet eyes. Her hair hangs in gentle salt and pepper waves down to the small of her back.

BRIDGET

I know you.

ANN

I've been here a few times. Ann Perrine.

BRIDGET

And these... men?

DELL

Dell Ammo. Ann thinks you can explain what's been--

BRIDGET

Why should I?

Ann whispers in Bridget's ear. Bridget's eyes widen.

BRIDGET

Others have tried and failed miserably.

ANN

This one's a professional.

Bridget APPRAISES Dell. So does a CURIOUS Corbin.

BRIDGET

Tell me what you saw. Leave nothing out.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS BACK ROOM -- DAY (MOS)

Time passes as Dell and Ann tell all, with Corbin inserting his own pointed comments. Bridget gives him a jaundiced eye.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS BACK ROOM -- DAY

Bridget is finished listening.

BRIDGET
I'll do this for you. Just sit
there and be quiet.

Dell pulls a pack of Camels from his jacket.

BRIDGET
No smoking.

He puts the pack away. A second later, she LIGHTS enough
INCENSE to fumigate a flophouse. She DEALS cards from a
Tarot deck and STARES at them for a long time.

BRIDGET
Blessed be. (beat) Kasmira! Fetch
two orange candles and a large
purple one. Mark them down as
office use in the inventory.

Kasmira NODS and whirls about to LEAVE.

BRIDGET
What do you do for a living, Mr.
Ammo?

DELL
Find missing supermodels, prevent
world wars, calculate batting
averages -- the usual.

BRIDGET
The aura of death you radiate --
the usual, too?

Dell SMILES cagily.

DELL
A living soul projects many
aspects.

BRIDGET
So it does, Mr. Ammo. So it does.
On this plane and others. I see
death in Malkuth -- the sphere of
Earth. Higher in the Tree of Life
I see... other manifestations.

Kasmira RETURNS with the candles. Bridget puts them and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIDGET

Watch the store, dear, and don't
let anyone -- or any thing --
disturb us.

KASMIRA

Yes, Grandmother.

Kasmira EXITS and Bridget LIGHTS the candles, CHANTING.

BRIDGET

Ishtar, Hecate, Circe, Shoshana
Chana, Nuit, Rhiannon, Anna
Perrenina...
(to Ann)
Join hands.

Corbin stays back in the SHADOWS. Bridget puts a gnarled
hand atop Dell's and Ann's and CRINGES as if shocked.

BRIDGET

The blood you see is the first
blood of the Virgin, the Moon's
tide. The tail of the Dark One
points the way down, running near
full circle.

She PAUSES, eyebrows WRINKLING above sealed lids.

BRIDGET

The paradoxical one is the gambit.
A thousand men, yet none. The
obsidian blade is poised, the
blood to flow greater. Beneath the
Earth roam monsters born of fire
who shun both day and night. The
time of the

(CONT'D) Number is nigh! Two great forces must join, and
two great forces must clash!

Her hand SNAPS AWAY from theirs and points at Ammo. She
SHRIEKS in pain, her eyes tightly shut.

BRIDGET

The storm is in your center!

The candles FALL OVER as if knocked by something unseen.
From outside the room come the sounds of SHATTERING
GLASS. Kasmira SCREAMS distantly.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Dell and Corbin BURST OUT of the back room to see clean-cut EVANGELICALS busting up the store. They swing BIBLES and CROSSES to SMASH bottles and glass displays.

DELL

Hey! Show your religious tolerance somewhere else.

MOB LEADER

We know what you witches are up to! God told us you're the one. You and these devil-worshippers have made a pact to--

DELL

Look, kid, I don't care what personal revelations you get in the bathtub. Scram before I call a cop. Or a Methodist.

The kid holds up his CROSS. The others do likewise.

DELL

What am I, Dracula? Scram!

MOB LEADER

There shall come a Rapture when all true Christians will rise unto Heaven, leaving you and your scum to the Earth and its Tribulation.

Corbin draws a .40 Glock PISTOL from a shoulder holster.

CORBIN

And 'the dead in Christ shall rise first.' Wanna go to the head of the line?

They STARE at the gun for a beat, then SCRAMBLE to escape.

SECOND BIBLE THUMPER

Get thee behind me, Satan!

Bridget surveys the damage, then looks at her visitors.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIDGET

You're a bright bit of luck that's
stumbled into our lives. Beat it
before I lose my feminine grace.

Dell glances at Ann for a clue. Corbin shrugs.

DELL

Could you translate what you said
in there from its original
gibberish?

BRIDGET

I don't know what it means. I am
but a vessel. I convey a message,
garbled by transmission through
various spheres and planes of
reality, using the best metaphors
I can. You get to play
codebreaker. Now beat it.

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- TWILIGHT (MOS)

Dell, Ann, and Corbin eat and talk animatedly.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- CONTINUOUS

Ann looks at notes she's made on a napkin.

ANN

We're agreed on this much: Bridget
said the blood we saw was the
first blood of the Maiden, linked
to the cycles of the Moon: a
girl's first menstrual period. The
cramps I experienced confirm that.
Severe menstrual cramps, and I'm
nowhere near my own period.

CORBIN

Don't need that depth of detail.

ANN

Why are you here again?

CORBIN

I received my Doctorate of
Divinity at Fuller Theological
Seminary in Pasadena, with a minor
in occultism. My thesis was on the
Apocalypse! I'm your man!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ann ponders him for a moment, then TURNS back to Dell.

ANN

Now, a gambit is a move in chess
where a pawn is sacrificed as part
of a greater strategy.

DELL

Bridget said, 'The paradoxical one
is the gambit.'

ANN

'A thousand men yet none' is a
paradox.

CORBIN

It's a contradiction, actually.

Dell and Ann STARE him down.

CORBIN

Fine. What about the 'monsters
born of fire' and all that? It's
got to be a metaphor for Hell.

ANN

Well, duh.

Corbin rises in a huff.

CORBIN

All right! I'm outta here. But I'm
going to watch you. If I see any
serious anti-God action, I'm
cutting myself in on it.

They watch him leave, then look at each other.

EXT. ARCO TOWER SOUTH -- NIGHT

A BUS conducts a ROLLING STOP to disgorge Dell and Ann,
then resumes speed to race out of the hot zone. They walk
past a SIGN that points to the underground Arco Plaza
with a _ turning arrow. After as BEAT, Dell SCURRIES back
and skids to a halt in front of the sign. Ann joins him.

DELL

This is it!

ANN

'The tail of the Dark One!'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's as if someone throws a switch. Without a cloud anywhere, the night sky suddenly DARKENS. A WIND whips up behind them. Overhead, the jagged remnant of the tower transforms into a GLEAMING BLACK DAGGER poised over the earth.

DELL

The Plaza's been a ruin ever since
the bombing. It's flooded with
radioactive debris!

Ann STARES in horror at the phantasmal blade. BLOOD forms along its cutting edge. LAUGHTER echoes up from below. Ann heads into darkness, Dell reluctantly behind.

DELL

Zack better be right about the
whole eternal life thing!

They climb over CRUMBLED STEEL AND GLASS to reach the place where the tower's revolving doors should have been. A roiling pattern of BLACK AND GREY envelopes everything like the surface of some polluted sea. Dell reaches toward it. The inky blackness REACHES BACK and grabs him, pulling him in.

ANN

Hold on tight!

DELL

(worried)
Not a problem!

Ann pulls her athamé from its sheath on her thigh. She SLICES at the darkness and it RECEDES from them, releasing Dell. They enter the shattered REVOLVING DOORS.

INT. ARCO TOWER LOBBY -- NIGHT

ANN

Does the elevator work?

DELL

The stairs are less risky.

INT. ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

The doors GRIND SHUT. Ann reaches for the Plaza button, but Dell beats her by punching the button for the 20th floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

My place, first. The nice priests
snatched my roscoe.

INT. DELL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Dell grabs a Colt Lightweight Commander and a pair of
ammo magazines from a quick-entry DRAWER SAFE, then digs
up a Mag-Lite and flicks it on.

DELL

Here's where we split up, Blondie.
Head over to Auberge.

ANN

No!

DELL

Look, sister, I happen to have a
contractual immunity to radiation

-- I think. You're not so blessed.

ANN

I'll guard your back.

She raises her skirt, whips out the athamé, and shows it
to him. RAINBOW-TEMPERED STEEL narrows to a nasty point
at the tip. Smooth black HILT contoured and intricately
carved with mysterious SYMBOLS. He raises an eyebrow.

ANN

The lady can protect herself.

Dell SIGHS in defeat.

INT. ARCO PLAZA -- NIGHT

Pitch darkness until the ELEVATOR DOORS creak open. Dell
SHINES the flashlight in as he enters, Ann behind him.
The Plaza's FLOODED and near collapse.

ANN

Why'd they do it?

DELL

Shh! (beat) Who?

ANN

The terrorists. Why'd they blow up
the towers?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL
(exasperated)
To cause terror! That's what makes
them terrorists! I don't know
their other motives.

ANN
I just thought since you're part
of the whole terrorist scene--

Dell SQUISHES into ankle deep WATER.

DELL
What I do is the exact opposite of
terrorism. Terrorists kill
innocents to create fear. I kill
members of the ruling class or
their competition. I've short-
circuited the careers of hundreds
of ambitious generals, corrupt
politicians, and would-be tyrants.
I've kept the world safe for...
well, I've kept it safer. I've
stopped a dozen wars before they
reached the shooting stage. And
yes, I've killed terrorists of
every political stripe.

ANN
Is that why you took the contract
on god?

Dell MOTIONS for silence. He raises the flashlight beam
to reveal a hideous humanoid CREATURE.

ANN
Is it alive?

Dell raises his pistol and Ann waves her athamé
mystically. The creature SPLASHES into the water. The
wavy blade of a FLAME DAGGER protrudes from its spine.

DELL
Guess not. (beat) That was simple.

Dell steps over the corpse. Ann crouches to YANK the
flame dagger out. She now has a knife in each hand.

INT. ARCO PLAZA LOWER LEVEL -- NIGHT

Dell and Ann walk down a DEMOLISHED ESCALATOR into KNEE-
DEEP WATER. CONSTANT DRIPPING reverberates. SHOPS stand

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

What was that?

They listen to a distant and unintelligible INCANTATION.

ANN

Over there.

A faint SLIVER OF LIGHT illuminates a corner of a distant WALL. They head toward it as quietly as possible. The CHANTING grows louder, the voice familiar. A BUZZING SOUND begins to permeate the dank air.

ZACHARIAS (OS)

In the name of the Ruler of Earth
and the King of the World, I
command the Forces of Darkness to
heed my call!

DELL

I know that voice!

INT. ARCO PLAZA CHAPEL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Dell turns a corner to see the light coming from a CHAPEL. Ann holds her knives at the ready.

ZACHARIAS (OS)

The time of the Usurper is nigh! I
exhort the Legions of the Night to
rise up around me! Throw open the
Gates of Hell! Come forward from
the Abyss. Serve me, your brother
and ally, your Father and Master!

The buzzing sound grows LOUDER. The source becomes obvious: thousands of FLIES fill the air.

ZACHARIAS (OS)

By all the Gods of the Pit, I
command these things to come to
pass! Fire and Death! Blood and
Victory!

Dell takes a step upward out of ankle-deep water and the swarm of flies PARTS for him like a curtain. Ann follows him into the clearing and GASPS as if stabbed in the uterus.

ZACHARIAS (OS)

In the names of the Princes of
Hell: Satan, Lucifer, Belial,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ZACHARIAS (OS) (CONT'D)

I summon forth the Powers of the Night! Crush mine Enemy! Take this sacrifice, that His blood should flow as hers. Let His essence be cast to the eternal Winds as her life is thrown to the Void! As she dies, so dies He!

INT. CHAPEL -- NIGHT

A HOODED FIGURE in black robes looms over an altar draped in the same material. Atop the oblong slab lies the NAKED BODY OF A GIRL, her face turned away from view.

ANN

(hisses)
The Black Mass!

A heavy wooden cross behind the altar stands inverted. From the cross hangs a red and black stylized GOAT'S HEAD forming an INVERTED PENTAGRAM. BLACK CANDLES blaze on the pews and railing. The HOODED MAN draws a long, thin DAGGER from the folds of his outfit. He RAISES it high to the symbols above.

ZACHARIAS

In the name of Ahriman and Marduk,
of Coyote, Baphomet, and Sekhmet!
drink deeply of this virgin blood!
I command thee to rise forth to
impale my accursed Enemy on the
bifid barb of Hell!

Dell looks at Ann and both MOUTH THE WORDS "bifid barb of Hell"? Emil Zacharias WHIRLS ABOUT, raising the blade to drive it home. Dell RAISES his pistol. The girl TURNS HER HEAD from the blade, SCREAMING toward the door. Dell sees that it is ISADORA. He LAUGHS.

DELL

Drop the pigsticker, Zack!

ZACHARIAS

Get out of here! This doesn't concern you!

DELL

If you need virgin blood, you're in big trouble. She's about as pure as whiskey in a skid-row bar.

Isadora looks really scared.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISADORA

It's not true, mister! He knows
it's a trick. I am a virgin!

She stares intensely at Dell.

INT. TWILIGHT ZONE -- CONTINUOUS

The chapel FADES AWAY in a grey whirlpool. Dell stands in
FEATURELESS DARKNESS, yet he is FULLY LIT. Isadora stands
before him in a leather outfit. They speak
TELEPATHICALLY.

ISADORA (VO)

I'm a virgin and he knows it! My
johns thought they got laid, but
they never even touched me.
Honest! That's why you caught me
off guard. I couldn't grab your
mind like that. But how'd you find
me?

DELL (VO)

We got your distress call. We'd
have been here sooner if you'd
given us better directions.

She looks puzzled and terrified.

ISADORA (VO)

What distress ca--

A SCREAM shatters the darkness.

INT. CHAPEL -- NIGHT

Isadora SCREAMS on the altar. Dell AIMS with both hands
and SHOOTS the dagger. Zack GRABS at his hand and HOWLS.

ZACHARIAS

You'll pay for this, Ammo!

DELL

Deduct it from my tab.

Ann glares at Zacharias with a savage hatred, making
CUTTING MOTIONS in the air with her knife. Zack stares at
Dell, then at her.

ZACHARIAS

You! You fucking mother! I'll get

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell SEIZES Isadora from the altar.

DELL
I'm not betraying you. This has
nothing to do with our contract.

Zacharias turns his gaze from Ann to Dell.

ZACHARIAS
Oh, doesn't it?

He STORMS out the side door of the chapel. Isadora buries
her head into Dell's shoulder. He glances at Ann and NODS
toward the exit.

INT. CHAPEL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

The flies are gone, the plaza silent.

ANN
A thousand men yet none...

DELL
You put on a pretty swell act for
a virgin, kid.

ISADORA
They got their money's worth. And
it's Isadora when my clothes are
off.

DELL
Sorry, Isadora.

She quivers and hugs Dell's neck tighter.

ANN
Listen!

SOUNDS like slabs of wet leather slapping together.

DELL
You're not transmitting anything,
are you, Isadora?

ISADORA
Too tired.

ANN
Dell...

HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEKS as MUTANT BATS fly out of the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

Get down!

He THROWS Isadora into the water to get her away from the bats. One SINKS ITS FANGS into the nape of his neck. He DRAGS it off his head. Where a bat's head should be glares a CONTORTED MOCKERY OF A HUMAN FACE with huge, bloody fangs.

MAN-BAT

(high squeal)

Forgive! Forgive!

Dell BREAKS ITS NECK and THROWS it in the sludge. Ann makes CUTTING MOTIONS in the air. Isadora SUBMERGES deep into the water and DUCKS under when they swoop by. One of the bats flutters too close to Ann's blade. She manages to nick it.

MAN-BAT 2

Yessss!

It NOSEDIVES into the water and the others go CRAZY. Almost as one, they FLOCK toward Ann, DIVING TOWARD her blade. Within seconds, the rest of the bats fall SIGHING to the floor. Isadora LOOKS UP from the water.

ISADORA

Good job!

INT. ARCO PLAZA LOWER LEVEL -- NIGHT

Dell, Ann, and Isadora head toward the ELEVATOR. Dell is shirtless under his jacket. Isadora wears his shirt, which hangs down below her knees. On this level, the door is BLOCKED by debris. Dell takes them back to the ESCALATOR. Something GROWLS halfway up the escalator steps.

DELL

Oh, great.

Dell shines his light UPWARD. The thing on the steps looks like a furless WOLF covered with thick scales of BLACKENED, FLAKING SKIN. Foam DRIPS from its snarling maw.

ISADORA

Oh, shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It LEAPS. Dell FIRES at the creature as it dies and SLAMS into his chest, throwing him BACKWARD into the slime and PINNING him under its weight. A firm SHOVE from Ann's HIGH-HEEL SHOE pushes the carcass off of him.

DELL
Thanks, sweetheart.

ISADORA
What the fuck are these things?

Ann and Isadora reach down to help him up.

DELL
Mutants.

He looks down at the monster. Where there should have been paws, dirty, callused HUMAN HANDS TWITCH reflexively a few times and grow still.

ANN
Or the damned.

Ann POKES it with her athamé. The carcass HISSES slowly, like a RELIEVED SIGH.

DELL
If you're through playing coroner,
angel, we can get--

They hear the SCRAPING of tiny claws on concrete. RATS flock toward them, SHRIEKING in a thousand voices.

RATS
Forgive us! Release us! Free us!

Dell LOOKS UP the escalator steps, their only hope of escape. At the top hover DOZENS OF SMOKY WRAITHS with menacing ghostly hands. Dell has had enough.

DELL
For the love of--

He FIRES at the specters but the bullets PASS THROUGH to SPATTER against the walls behind them.

DELL
It figures!

He shines his light at the rats and see TINY HUMAN FACES.

DELL
Sure, why not?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

They CRAWL up Isadora's legs and she SCREAMS, RUNNING upstairs into the waiting arms of the wraiths.

ANN

Out of my way!

She almost SHOVES Dell over the side of the escalator to charge up the steps straight at the ghosts, who now have Isadora in their grip. Ann BELLOWS like bad opera. Her blade PASSES THROUGH the first shadow. The specter DRAWS AWAY and FOLDS IN on itself, VANISHING. She jabs at the others and they drop Isadora, IMPLODING at the touch of her knife.

ANN

Let's go!

INT. ARCO PLAZA UPPER LEVEL -- NIGHT

Dell SCRAMBLES up the escalator. Isadora stands at the elevator desperately pressing the call button. Ann pulls the flame dagger from her purse and frantically STRIKES her athamé against it, creating BLUE-WHITE SPARKS. The rats SWARM toward them.

RATS

It's not our fault! Free us!
Release us! Forgive us!

INT. ELEVATOR -- NIGHT

The elevator doors PART and the three crowd in. The doors close on the approaching rats as Ann TOSSES THE FLAME DAGGER into the swarm. A few rats make it inside as the dagger CUTS through the others, releasing their souls.

RATS

Thank you! Mercy! Blessed be!

Ann dispatches the few scurrying MAN-RATS inside the elevator. Isadora stands near the ceiling, SQUEALING.

RATS

Thanks! So long! Let's do lunch
someti--

Dell and Ann gaze up at Isadora. Regaining her composure, she jumps down.

ISADORA

All right. I've saved your asses.

INT. DR. LAVECQUE'S EXAMINATION ROOM -- NIGHT

Evangeline tends to Isadora. Ann already has Steri-Strips over cuts on her arms and shoulders. LaVecque EXAMINES Dell's scalp and picks up an electric razor.

LAVECQUE

The hair's got to go.

DELL

Hack away. I'm tired of the two-tone look. Take it all off.

The doctor gives Dell a fast and sloppy buzz cut, then sutures his scalp.

LAVECQUE

Someone came asking after you tonight.

DELL

Let me guess. Tall guy? Mustache? Walking stick? Smells like an oil refinery?

LAVECQUE

More like burnt dog.

Dell glances at Ann and Isadora.

DELL

Ann, take the kid back to Auberge and get a room at the Yorty. I'll meet you later at the café.

INT. DELL'S OUTER OFFICE -- NIGHT

Dell enters. He pulls a FRESH SHIRT from the cloak closet by the front door. He sees a cigarette GLOW in the inner office. Curl of SMOKE. Zack STANDS in the shadows, cane at his side.

INT. DELL'S OUTER OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Dell walks inside, BUTTONING his shirt.

ZACHARIAS

Cancel the contract.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

Couldn't find any more virgins
tonight, Zack?

ZACHARIAS

I've had a change of heart.

Dell POURS himself a drink, OFFERS one to Zack. No,
thanks.

DELL

Well, I've been thinking a lot
about God lately, thanks to you.
The world's gotten screwed up on
His watch, so I think, why not
whack Him and see what happens?

Zack's looking uncomfortable. Almost panicky.

ZACHARIAS

Keep all the money.

DELL

Thanks, but as I recall our
agreement, it's do ... or die.

ZACHARIAS

I promise you won't.

Ammo chugs the whiskey and smiles.

DELL

You can't break your own
contracts, can you?

Zack's face TWISTS in anger at the revelation.

ZACHARIAS

Powerful forces are arising to
stop you, Mr. Ammo. Do not add me
to their legion.

Zack PULLS SOMETHING dark from beneath his coat. Ammo
REACHES toward his waistband. Momentary STANDOFF.

ZACHARIAS

Something the lady left behind.

He FAKES a tossing motion, then THROWS it at Ammo and
DEPARTS.

SFX -- THE FLAME DAGGER

It FLIES at Ammo in SLO-MO as he fades to the side. It SAILS PAST him. As it does, the BLADE CORRODES into dried-blood-red rust FLAKES, leaving only the hilt TUMBLING...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. WEB CAFÉ -- NIGHT

A KINETIC SCULPTURE tumbling in mid-air like magic.

Dell and Ann sit in a booth, Dell trying to ignore the steady stream of banner ads on the COMPUTER SCREEN set in the table, GLOWING on their faces instead of candlelight.

ANN

Maybe he fears that if god goes,
so does his TV audience.

Dell doesn't buy it.

DELL

I've been zapped, abducted,
drugged, and manhandled in the
last few days, all in the name of
God. If He's anything like His
followers, this won't be decide,
it'll be... pesticide.

ANN

You still don't believe, do you?

Dell grows more distracted by the computer screen.

DELL

In what? A real, living being that
can bleed and die? Or an idea so
powerful it's made millions bleed
and die over a hundred centuries?

ANN

People believe in Just Wars and
honest politicians, too. They can
believe anything.

Dell points out the ads on the table screen.

DELL

Yeah...

INSERT -- COMPUTER SCREEN

A mass of BANNER ADS for Auberge stores:

GODFATHAH DXR'S GUNS 4 FUN

THE BANNED BOOKSTORE

THE REALLY BANNED BOOKSTORE

H&R BROCK TAX HAVENS

99¢ ONLY WHORES

99¢

SELENE PHARMACEUTICALS & PSYCHOACTIVES

AGENT DOUBLE-0 SOUL'S COUNTERSPY ELECTRONICS

DELL (OS)

What a minute...

END OF INSERT

He looks up at Ann, sudden INSPIRATION in his eyes.

DELL

It's everywhere. It reaches into
our computers, our cellphones, our
cars...our refrigerators and
toasters, for God's sake...

Ann raises a cautionary finger at the mention of God's
name.

DELL

-- and our TVs! An idea goes out
onto the Net and it can saturate
our consciousness. So if God is
just an idea in our heads...

ANN

Alter our heads. But how?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL
(smiling)
Zack's expense account.

INT. AMMO'S OFFICE -- DAY

Dozens of ADVERTISING PEOPLE -- from Armani suits to leather-and-lip-studs -- snake through the waiting room and into the office with portfolios and laptops. Dell and Ann appraise their efforts. An OLD AD-MAN holds up a sign:

You Won't Feel Guilty

Or Full of Sin

When God is Dead

And the Fun Begins!

DELL
Too... Burma Shave.

A PUNKISH AD GIRL holds up a notepad screen that reads:

GOD LIVES!

NOT!

A FAST-TALKING BLACK AD-MAN shows a series of flip-charts.

FAST TALKER
Thank you for this opportunity to
address the pervasiveness, the
evasiveness, and the invasiveness,
of the God State.

FLIP CHART 1

GOD FOR THE STATE

BUT NOT FOR THE PEOPLE

FAST TALKER

The God State bans prayer in school but not in Congress, it bans crosses on public land but prints In God We Trust on all the money, and speaking of money...

FLIP CHART 2

US coins with CENT on the far right.

FAST TALKER

Why all the other presidents on coins got their backs turned on Abe Lincoln? 'Cuz he freed the slaves? Why's he on the only brown coin and the rest on white coins? 'In God We Trust' didn't show up on money 'til the Civil War and didn't become the U.S. motto 'til 1954 during desegregation. Every time the white devil's in trouble with the black man, they start suckin' up to God! Wazup with that?

Dell and Ann both look NUMBED by the verbal onslaught.

SAME SCENE MUCH LATER

Long line DWINDLING, Dell and Ann worn out. The next prospect, KATHLEEN, strides in. Tall redhead, jade eyes.

KATHLEEN

Look, you've listened to a lot of pitches and you haven't found what you want or I wouldn't be standing here, right?

Ann NODS, a little wary of this striking stranger.

KATHLEEN

A slogan's fine, but you want to reach the maximum audience worldwide, right?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

Everyone. Even people who aren't
receptive to complex concepts:
illiterates, morons, politicians.

Kathleen begins sketching on a notepad computer.

KATHLEEN

You need less than a slogan. You
need a symbol.

INSERT -- THE NOTEPAD SCREEN

Art masterpieces FLASH by until MICHELANGELO'S Sistine
Chapel painting of God appears. She draws a CIRCLE with
CROSSHAIRS over the image.

BACK TO SCENE

Kathleen holds up the notepad: God in the crosshairs.
Dell and Ann look at each other and NOD with
appreciation.

DELL

Does it come with a slogan anyway?

KATHLEEN

(shrugs)
When does the ad campaign end?

Ann jumps in before Dell can speak.

ANN

Halloween.

KATHLEEN

OK... (thinks) How about: 'On
Halloween night, even God can
die.'

DELL AND ANN

Ann SMILES with satisfaction. Dell's disturbed, finally
realizing he's about to commit to a deed of COSMIC
ENORMITY.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD. -- DAY

Huge black BILLBOARD, Godkiller logo, SLOGAN in red.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL AND ANN gaze proudly as a WORKER pastes the last strip.

DELL (VO)
We kicked off the campaign in
Hollywood, where all weird ideas
begin. The reviews arrived
quickly.

A WHITE LIMO drives by the billboard. The window ROLLS DOWN. A handheld MISSILE TUBE extends and FIRES. The billboard EXPLODES into smithereens.

Dell SLAMS Ann to the sidewalk, pulls his Colt and FIRES at the receding limo as debris RAINS around them.

INT. HALLELUJAH HOUSE OFFICE -- DAY

Dell STORMS into Zacharias's office, a PUDGY SECRETARY protesting behind him. He SLAMS the door on her.

DELL
Call off your goons, Zack.

ZACHARIAS
(blasé)
I don't have goons, Mr. Ammo. I
have my flock.

DELL
Then get the flock out of my face.
I don't respond well to missile
attacks.

ZACHARIAS
(smiles)
I can't break our contract, as you
pointed out. I'm not sending
anyone to stop you. Seek out
others who have an interest in
God's perpetuation.

DELL
Yeah, about that contract. As I
recall, it was for five hundred a
day plus expenses. I'm running up
a lot of expenses.

ZACHARIAS
Forget it, Mr. Ammo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

(amused)

I don't think you can say no to me. We have a deal. We shook on it. Give me the Hallelujah House checks and I'll burn through them faster than a dot-com full of tweakers.

Zacharias battles internally, face PINCHED in frustration.

ZACHARIAS

Damn you to Hell.

He pulls the CHECK LEDGER from a drawer, THROWS it at Dell.

ZACHARIAS

No... Damn you to Heaven!

Dell SPINS the ledger on a fingertip, trying to hide a growing CONCERN that shows in his eyes.

DELL

Thanks, Zack. And make sure the bank accepts my signature.

MONTAGE

The AD appears in all media all around the world. TEASER ADS in magazines, newspapers, billboards, Web BANNER ADS just show the symbol. Then the Web ad FADES IN the slogan. We see BILLBOARDS around the world with the slogan in German, Russian, Arabic, French, Hebrew, Chinese, Spanish, Hindi.

DELL (VO)

The first part of the plan went well. The idea that God could die saturated the world's consciousness like the seductive whisper of a high-society call girl.

The Godkiller logo CHANGES from culture to culture: Jehovah for Christians and Jews, Allah for Muslims, BUDDHA for Orientals, KRISHNA for Hindus, Ahura Mazda for Zoroastrians.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL (VO)
I used every tactic the holy men
used. And then some.

A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL confiscates a STUDENT'S GodKiller

t-shirt. Suddenly, EVERYONE'S wearing them. And there are
GodKiller baseball caps, tote bags, buttons, book covers,
backpacks, headbands, armbands, and decoder rings. A CD
entitled "Nearer My God to Death" by TransUranic Metal.
Key chains, roach clips, rubber stamps, holograms, bubble
gum, mugs. Pendants, patches, postcards, posters.

DELL (VO)
The advertising created a state of
mind for the world. I just needed
to figure out what to do next...

END MONTAGE

INT. DELL'S OFFICE -- DAY

The logo MERCHANDISE has taken over the place. So have
stacks of BOOKS. Dell reads a copy of Atheism: The Case
Against God.

DELL (VO)
How in hell do I kill a ghost in
the heads of seven billion people.

Closing his eyes, he REACHES out blindly and GRABS
another book. He OPENS his eyes and starts to read
Flashbacks, the autobiography of '60s LSD guru Timothy
Leary.

Ann ENTERS, gazes at Dell for a moment, and FROWNS.

ANN
What are you doing?

DELL
Putting synchronicity to work.
Free association. Maybe a few
random ideas will jell.

He FLIPS through the pages, READING here and there.

ANN
If ideas can kill God, why isn't
he dead already?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

If ideas can't kill God, why do
people of all faiths try to
suppress them?

He snags another book: The Mushroom God. He flips it open
anywhere and as he reads, his eyes WIDEN.

ANN

Ideas threaten the God State far
more than god himsel--

DELL

That's it! That's the way!

He JUMPS UP and ushers Ann out the door.

Ann

What? Where're we going?

DELL

Shopping.

INT. SELENE PHARMACEUTICALS -- DAY

The Auberge-based store bristles with SIGNS hawking every
illicit drug imaginable. Dell stands in the checkout line
UNLOADING a shopping cart. The CASHIER'S name patch reads
TOM and he's a total stoner. Ann looks on quizzically.

TOM

DMT, Ecstasy, Fentanyl, THC,
mescaline, psilocybin... Dude!
Where's the party?

Dell smiles non-committally. Tom SLIDES a carded product
across the scanner and it makes a non-read SOUND. He
switches on the INTERCOM.

TOM (LOUDSPEAKER)

Dewey! Price check on

LSD. The ninety-hit windowpane.

DEWEY (OS SHOUTING)

Regular or sugar-free?

Tom looks apologetically at the PEOPLE IN LINE.

TOM (LOUDSPEAKER)

Dude -- they're the same price!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEWEY (OS SHOUTING)
One forty-nine ninety-five!

INT. -- AUBERGE -- DAY

Dell and Ann leave the store, Dell CARRYING a large Selene Pharmaceuticals bag.

ANN
Are you single-handedly trying to
revive the Sixties?

DELL
Acidheads say they see God on
their trips. If I can see Him,
maybe I can kill Him.

Dell SEES someone on the far end of Auberge's central hall. He starts WALKING faster. Ann speeds up.

ANN
What good would that do? You're
already an atheist!

Dell's ELBOWING people aside to reach his goal.

DELL
Only intellectually. I have to
confront the emotional, primitive,
race-memory of God that's wrapped
around my subconscious like a
snake around an egg. And the whole
world has to go through it with
me!

ANN
How?

Dell SLOWS and GESTURES to Isadora Volante, who sits amid a DOZEN MEN absolutely entranced with her. She TURNS to Dell.

ISADORA
And here's one I left breathless.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY -- DAY

Dell drives, Ann has the shotgun seat. Isadora, bored, sits behind them in her own private Idaho.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

Religion started when a caveman
woke up from a dream thinking he
saw a dead relative in the
campfire shadows. Aborigines call
the ancient past Dreamtime. If I
can get at God inside my
unconscious, if I can root out
every metaphor, every image I have
of Him -- and Isadora can
broadcast it -- I can rip God out
of the world's mind.

ANN

She can cover some of LA, we've
seen that. But how can she get a
brainlock on the whole world?

DELL

We wire me up to her and wire her
to the Web. I get stoned, kill
God, she sends it out over wires,
optical cables, cellular towers,
geosynchronous satellites! God
dies inside everyone at once. I'm
down from my high in time for
cocktails. Earth cleansed. Problem
solved.

Isadora LEANS over the back seat.

ISADORA

Excuse me, but could you repeat
that? I don't understand moronic.

ANN

How do you webcast a dream?

EXT. STRIP MALL -- DAY -- ESTABLISHING SHOT

Dell's car sits in front of the BIOFEEDBACK FOR LESS!
store. A WHITE LIMO passes slowly by.

INT. DELL'S CAR BACK SEAT -- DAY

A VCR-sized BOX lands on the seat next to Isadora's
thigh. We can read the colorful GRAPHICS. A product
CELEBRITY-ENDORSED by someone with a reputation for
airiness, such as

BRAIN-WAVE DIGITIZER

AS SEEN ON TV!

INT. DELL'S CAR -- DAY

Isadora sits in back reading the GAUDY PRODUCT FLYER. Ann looks incredulous.

DELL

She reads my mind. We digitize her brain waves and send 'em out. The kid transmits the carrier wave and I send the data.

ANN

(doubtful)
Just send it out.

Dell's not as confident now that he's thought about it.

DELL

Out. Like they send out closed captioning with the TV signal. Riding along...

Isadora SNORTS and TOSSES the pamphlet aside, closing her eyes to snooze. Ann GAZES at Dell with deadly seriousness.

ANN

You need something more. Remember what Bridget said: 'two great forces must clash and two great forces must merge.' The forces that must clash are good and evil.

DELL

So which side am I on? Look who hired me.

A WHITE LIMO slowly passes by Dell's window as he glances at Ann, then falls back.

ANN

Good is sometimes an unintended consequence of evil. And that's where the other two forces come in. The two great forces that must unite are science and magick.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN (CONT'D)

The roots of god reach deep into
magick and myth. Without magick,
no amount of science can affect
him.

DELL

I'm only trying to kill a belief.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Out of the moon roof rises a ROBED MAN with a full-auto
rifle. He FIRES at Dell's car.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- DAY

Dell SWERVES. Isadora SLIDES to the floorboards dodging
flying glass. Ann STARES back at the attacker.

ANN

And that belief's trying to kill
us!

Dell pulls his PISTOL and tries to fire behind him.

ISADORA

Shit! Watch where you point that!

More SHOTS pepper Dell's car. SPARKS and GLASS and
shredded tuck-and-roll. Ann SEIZES Dell's pistol and
FIRES back.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The ROBED MAN takes a bullet in the clavicle, DROPS the
rifle from the car, and FALLS back inside. The car
ACCELERATES to ramming speed.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ann SEES what's about to happen.

ANN

Hang on!

The limo SLAMS into them. Dell fights to STEER.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The limo PROPELS both cars over the Four-Level interchange. Other cars SWERVE out of the way, some CRASHING.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ann FIRES at the driver's side of the limo.

EXT. WHITE LIMO -- CONTINUOUS

The bullets SPATTER impotently against bulletproof glass.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

Ann glances down at the back seat. Isadora COWERS on the floorboard, all bravado sucked out of her.

Ann withdraws a small LEATHER CASE from her purse and opens it. Inside are a dozen CARTRIDGES of different calibers. Each has a SILVER BULLET engraved with mystical SYMBOLS.

ANN picks the .45 ACP round, chambers it, and AIMS again at the driver.

DELL sees the knife-edge of an approaching EXIT DIVIDER. He SLAMS on the brakes with no effect.

DELL
Say your prayers!

ANN
Like that'll do us any good!

ISADORA rolls her eyes and gazes at the gun over her head.

ANN squeezes off a deliberate shot.

SFX -- BULLET TIME

The bullet EXPLODES from the muzzle and ROARS toward the limo's windshield. The windshield DEFORMS as the bullet HITS, then CRAZES as it PENETRATES. For a beat, NOTHING happens, then the WINDSHIELD IMPLODES as if hit by a supernatural fist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE LIMO turns sharply to the side, DISENGAGING from Ammo's car. Its driver DEAD, the white car FLIES OFF the freeway and CRASHES into the LA River.

AMMO'S CAR SWERVES away from the divider and FISHTAILS a bit. Trailing smoke, it CONTINUES up the freeway.

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Dell's wreck of a car PARKED out front. Plywood BOARDS cover the shop's broken windows. A sign reads 'We Didn't Expect the Spanish Inquisition' Sale! Up to 50% off!

DELL (VO)

I didn't believe in magic and witches and spells, but I didn't believe in God, either, and you can see where that got me. So I agreed to check in on Bridget again.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Masking tape and gray chipboard cover holes in the counter glass. The other mess has been cleaned up. Kasmira WATCHES SILENTLY from behind the cash register. Bridget THREATENS Dell with a wicker broom.

BRIDGET

Out, out, out of my store!

DELL

Easy, dollface.

ANN

We need a spell. You have the knowledge and the power.

ISADORA grows bored and begins to look around, peering into counters and cabinets, viewing with interest or WRINKLING HER NOSE with disgust.

BRIDGET

It's useless to fight. He has the whole world in His grip. Those few of us who held on for so long have seen the light grow dimmer year by year, age by age.

ANN grasps Bridget's arm firmly, gazing deeply into her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN

It's time to strike back with all
the force we can raise. Six
thousand years we've spent hiding
in the night. Do you want him
enthroned twenty centuries more,
until the next Equinox of the
Gods?

ISADORA sees a FAINT GLOW from behind the beaded curtain
to the back room. She moves toward it.

BRIDGET

I'm too old...

ANN

Your age gives you wisdom and
strength!

Dell is trying to be polite, but is growing IMPATIENT.

DELL

Can't you see the lady is asking
you to help us?

Bridget peers at him, assessing his sincerity.

BRIDGET

That a man should even think to
reject the patriarchal God...

(beat) I won't refuse a request when it comes from such a
source. By Isis, I'll do it!

ANN

(smiling)
All-Mighty Isis?

BRIDGET

Yes! By All-Mighty Isis we'll rid
mother Earth of the Usurper! All
right, just tell me when, where,
how... and what restaurant we'll
go to afterward.

DELL

Halloween's when, the Internet's
where, and How is right here. Kid?

Ann is the first to look concerned. She sees the BEAD
CURTAIN swaying.

DELL

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Ann draws her athamé and CHARGES toward the back room.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS BACK ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Ann BURSTS IN to see the back door wide OPEN. Dell RUSHES PAST and outside, pistol at the ready.

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Dell and Ann STARTLE Isadora enjoying a smoke. She instantly regains her demeanor.

ISADORA
I've seen sacrificial virgins less
tense than you two.

Bridget joins them and looks disdainfully at Isadora.

BRIDGET
This is your secret weapon?

DELL
She's our only hope.

Bridget takes a closer look, peering into the kid's soul.

BRIDGET
(fascinated)
I can see why he wanted her blood.

ISADORA
Love you, too.

Ann leans over and WHISPERS to Dell.

ANN
I still don't understand how
you're going to connect her to the
Web. Through the office computer?

Dell's not too sure either.

DELL
Someplace secure. Where no one
could cut off our access. Like a
major entry port.

Isadora pipes up, mentally eavesdropping.

ISADORA
Gateway node.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ann looks at her, SURPRISED, then amused; Dell is more than a little ANNOYED. The kid drops her cigarette and GRINDS it out with her foot. She walks over to them and LEANS in conspiratorially.

ISADORA

The world's biggest gateway node
sits forty miles east of here.

Dell starts to speak, but she knows his question.

ISADORA

One of my customers. His company
went bankrupt building it. But
it's there, it's running, and it's
built to withstand a nuclear
blast, but the owner can walk in
and lock the door behind him.

DELL

I don't think even Zacharias has
enough money to buy that.

ISADORA

You won't need money...

(gazes at Ann)

Ian Sandefur plays poker at Casino
of the Angels. And he draws to
inside straights.

Ann SMILES. Dell STARES in dull shock at Isadora as the
last two sentences sink in.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD FREEWAY -- DAY

Dell's car SCREAMS ALONG trailing smoke.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- DAY

Dell's face is a mask of holy VENGEANCE. Ann sits white-
knuckled next to him.

ANN

We're trying to kill god, not
ourselves!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

I had all my money in StratoNet!
That bastard Sandefur ran it into
the ground with that damned
gateway and now I find out he's
blowing what's left on gambling
and whores?

ISADORA

(almost to herself)
Whore. I'm all he needs.

DELL

Bleed him dry, Ann. Rip out his
heart. Gut him like a trout.

EXT. HILL STREET -- DAY

Dell's car disappears into the tunnel leading to Auberge.

ISADORA (VO)

Anyone up for sushi?

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. CASINO OF THE ANGELS -- NIGHT

Emerald evening gown ADHERES to Ann's skin, slit up the
left thigh to where it has no business being. A slender
royal-blue GARTER peeks out with every step. Dell dressed
to kill (with pleasure) in a tux. Isadora in a sleek
black outfit like Tura Satana in *Faster Pussycat, Kill
Kill*. They enter the roped-off high-stakes area.

DELL (VO)

I like money too much to risk it
gambling. But the way Ann played
poker, it wasn't gambling.

INT. NO-LIMIT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

DELL (VO)

Beneath that angel exterior, Ann
had the instincts of panther.

Isadora NODS toward a poker table, then backs out of
view.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FOUR MEN sit at the table: brooding RUSSIAN black marketeer, fat, boisterous TEXAN, opulent black CELEBRITY, and IAN SANDEFUR -- a geek in billionaire's clothing. Ann EYES him.

DELL (VO)

She'd need them.

A FIFTH PLAYER -- thin and edgy -- THROWS DOWN his cards and leaves. In anguish, he whips out a PISTOL and POINTS it at the Texan. The room lights GO RED.

FEMALE COMPUTER (LOUDSPEAKER)

The no-limit room does not permit
the initiation of violence.

An automated, laser-guided MACHINE GUN drops from the ceiling and FIRES nearly straight down, ventilating the man. LIGHTS return to normal.

FEMALE COMPUTER (LOUDSPEAKER)

Seat available at table five.

Ann SMILES and steps past the CORPSE to take the seat.

INT. NO-LIMIT ROOM -- NIGHT

The chips on the table reveal that they've been at it for hours. None show any sign of cracking. Dell's looking on, bored. Isadora saunters up beside him, an OLDER MAN in tow.

ISADORA

How's tricks?

DELL

You tell me. Where've you been?

ISADORA

Making a withdrawal from my IRA,
whaddya think? Is she winning?

DELL

The chips don't have dollar values
-- they have corporate logos.

Isadora turns to go.

ISADORA

We're going topside for...

She NODS toward the old guy and makes a face. Dell looks disappointed. She WHISTLES to the old guy anyway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ISADORA

C'mon, Ira.

They leave just as a GASP arises from the onlookers. Dell moves in closer. Ann RAKES the chips over.

ANN

(mock southern belle)
I never thought I could win so
much with three queens!

Ian FROWNS, cuts the cards, the five ante up, and he DEALS.

IAN

Five card stud.

Ann scans the first round of face cards. Ian shows a king, she a jack.

ANN

Fold.

TEXAN

Now, little lady, how'd you expect
us to win anything back if you
don't gamble a little?

ANN

I didn't know we were gambling --
I thought I was playing poker.

INT. NO-LIMIT ROOM -- LATER

The tipsy Texan has FOUR DIAMONDS showing -- possible flush. Ian shows a pair of BLACK JACKS. They're the only two players left in the hand.

SANDEFUR

Call.

The Texan reveals his hole card: KING OF CLUBS. He laughs.

TEXAN

Guess there's no bluffing you,
son!

Ian turns his hole card over.

SANDEFUR

Three jacks!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He REACHES eagerly for the pot. Ann's hand DARTS out.

ANN

Wait!

SANDEFUR

What for? He's got a busted flush!

Ann TAKES the drink out of the Texan's hand and leans over him to SPREAD OUT his cards.

ANN

King, ace, jack, ten, and...
queen. You were so intent on
bluffing that you missed an ace-
high straight.

Sandefur looks likely to explode.

SANDEFUR

He didn't call his cards!

Dell puts a strong hand on the man's shoulder,

DELL

The cards speak for themselves.

Ian reaches into his jacket. Dell is instantly alert.

DELL

Think about the last guy that
pulled heat here. Just deal.

Ian SHUFFLES and deals another hand of stud. Ann's ACE-HIGH.

ANN

(smiling)
The pair of aces opens.

She watches the round of bets. The celebrity RAISES.

CELEBRITY

Ten million.

RUSSIAN

Chyort vosmeet!

The Russian FOLDS and leaves the table. The Texan scratches his nose with his hole card and throws in some chips.

TEXAN

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANN

Call.

Ann gazes, SMILING, at the shocked faces.

ANN

Okay, so I lied.

Dell watches, curious. A third round produces no pairs.

ANN

Check.

CELEBRITY

Bitch is bad luck!

He FOLDS and leaves the table. Ian PEERS at the cards as if trying to see through them. The Texan thinks a bit.

TEXAN

Check.

Ian grits his teeth and SLIDES over a stack of chips.

SANDEFUR

One hundred million.

GASPS. Ann SMILES and leans back to whisper to Dell.

ANN

Is there enough in Zack's account?

DELL

Praise the lord...

(snaps fingers)

And pass the ammunition.

A CASINO CASHIER -- surrounded by ARMED GUARDS in tuxedos and Uzis -- brings 5 trays of 100 chips each. Ann takes a tray and slides it on the table.

ANN

I see your hundred.

She slides over two more.

ANN

And raise you two. Maybe I don't have aces, gentlemen, but I've got something just as nice.

Ian's SPEECHLESS. The Texan ponders his hole card.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

TEXAN

Prudence forces me to fold. You
may have your way with him, my
dear.

Dell LEANS next to the hyperventilating Ian's ear.

DELL

I'd suggest folding. It'll fool
her into thinking you know what
you're doing.

SANDEFUR

I can't -- I don't ha--

He shoves 400 more chips forward.

SANDEFUR

Raise you by two hundred million.

Ann nonchalantly slides over the LAST TWO TRAYS.

ANN

Call.

Ian DEALS the last two cards: 2 to Ann's A, 5, and 4. He
deals himself a Q next to his K, 10, and 9. Ann makes a
POUTY FACE and speaks listlessly.

ANN

Check.

The crowd MUTTERS as Ian, sensing victory, SHOVES all his
chips into the pot. Ann suddenly SMILES.

ANN

And I raise you!

Ian reacts as if SLAPPED.

SANDEFUR

I can write you a--

DELL

You know the rules. No checks, no
IOUs, no lending.

INT. NO-LIMIT ROOM -- NIGHT -- SLO MO

Ian REACHES inside his jacket. Dell's hand DARTS toward
his own waistband. Before he can draw, though, Ian pulls
out SIX PIECES OF PAPER and holds them up.

INT. NO-LIMIT ROOM -- NIGHT -- NORMAL

SANDEFUR

I have controlling interest in
StratoNet.

Dell GAZES at the waving stock with anger and longing.

DELL

Forget it, Sandefur -- StratoNet's
bankrupt.

SANDEFUR

Under bankruptcy protection. The
assets have a value in the
billions. I think a third of that
should more than cover the wager?

Dell looks doubtful. Ann WAVES him off.

ANN

Oh, all right.
(audibly to herself)
Probably have them back in a
minute anyway.

Emboldened, Ian places TWO STOCK CERTIFICATES on the
table.

SANDEFUR

I call.

Ann Nods dispiritedly. The crowd holds its breath. Off-
screen, we hear SQUEAKING WHEELS.

AN ARMORED ROBOT bristling with WEAPONS slowly makes its
way on TANK TREADS toward the table. It reaches Ann and
PAUSES a moment before its domed top slides open to
reveal a single glittering DIAMOND set into a solid gold
POKER CHIP.

WOMAN IN CROWD (OS)

A billion dollars!

Ann picks it up, admires it, then TOSSES it on the felt.

ANN

See you... and raise.

Ian STARES numbly at the stunning wager, then at the FOUR
CERTIFICATES in his hand. He TOSSES them in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN

(softly)
I can't accept them unless you
include your access card to the
gateway node.

His eyes WIDEN at the extent of his undoing. He takes a plastic card from his wallet to place atop the stock.

ANN

And the passwords.

Ian withdraws a Palm XXIII from his jacket. Ann takes hers from her handbag and sets it to receive. She LEANS close to him, placing the two devices nearly nose-to-nose. He BEAMS her the codes and WHISPERS in her ear.

SANDEFUR

What's your game, lady?

ANN

(tauntingly coy)
I'm dissatisfied with my current
DSL provider.

She sits down and rolls up the Palm.

ANN

Call.

Ian turns over his hole card. He has a PAIR OF KINGS. Ann turns hers. PAIR OF ACES. Dell SMILES as she whisks up the stock and the access card. Then he FREEZES, gazing into space. Ann, speaking to a GUARD, doesn't notice.

ANN

Put all this in my account.

She picks up the diamond chip and TURNS toward Dell.

ANN

Except this one. I think it'll
make a lovel--Dell? What's wrong?

SFX POV

We FLY toward Dell's panic-
stricken FACE and INTO HIS EYE. We
instantly come to rest inside a
FEATURELESS WHITE ROOM.

INT. DREAMTIME ROOM -- DELL'S POV -- CONTINUOUS

First we see NOTHING, then focus on the figure of ISADORA, wearing a corset and fishnet stockings, fists on hips.

ISADORA

Is everyone you know a kidnapper?

DELL

Why do you keep doing that!?

ISADORA

I couldn't get to a phone, okay?
That old priest grabbed me -- the
one who zapped you in the
elevator.

INT. CASINO OF THE ANGELS -- NIGHT

Ann reaches out to TOUCH a motionless Dell.

ANN

Are you all right?

He SHUDDERS, comes to.

DELL

Isadora. The priests have her.

BEATHAN (OS)

Good news travels fast.

The eerie priest SMILES, holding a Bible.

BEATHAN

Come unto me, saith the Lord.

He opens the Bible to flash a view of the REVOLVER
nestled in its hollowed-out pages.

INT. AUBERGE SUITE -- NIGHT

Father Beathan hustles Dell and Ann into a luxury room.
Inside are gathered THE ECCLESIA: Catholic CARDINAL,
Jewish RABBI, Islamic IMAM, Buddhist ROSHI, Hindu
MAHATMA. Isadora sits in the corner wearing a 'kidnapped
again' expression, watching TV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARDINAL

Which God do you intend to kill,
Mr. Ammo?

DELL

What?

RABBI

One of our number -- the Reverend
Emil Zacharias -- informs us that
you are behind this GodKiller ad
campaign.

(spits 3 times)

We thought they were ads for an
extremely tasteless movie! That we
could tolerate... My colleague
asked you a question: Which God do
you intend to kill?

DELL

All of Him.

IMAM

(angered)

Allah?

The Cardinal takes command and MOTIONS the imam to sit.

CARDINAL

Mr. Ammo, your effort to kill God
will fail because God does not
exist.

DELL

But it would cut into your cash
flow if there were no true
believers, right?

RABBI

It's not about the money, Mr.
Ammo. It's about power. Your
friend Golding is fundamentally
correct.

CARDINAL

Kill God and you remove the means
by which we instill unearned guilt
in Man -- our only means to
channel humanity toward noble
ends.

Ammo's had enough. He shakes his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL

And all my life I thought I should
fight tyranny by killing
politicians.

CARDINAL

We are prepared, Mr. Ammo, to be
generous or brutal. Please
consider wisely, since -- in the
event of a negative answer -- we
cannot permit you to leave this
room ali-

DELL

Isadora!

All heads turn toward the kid. She looks back blankly.

DELL

Fuck 'em!

She GRINS wickedly and lowers her head, raises it and
BLASTS. The Ecclesia PANIC for only an instant, then FALL
to the floor WRITHING and MOANING in perverse pleasure.

ANN

An impressive talent.

Dell pulls the Bible from Beathan's lust-weakened grasp
and PLUCKS out the revolver. Isadora's face is ashen.

DELL

Wait till she's finished.

ANN

That could take hours.

DELL

Time goes faster in her little
world. See?

The holy men's pelvic motions INCREASE in urgency. At the
moment of their release, Isadora SHRIEKS in terror, TEARS
flowing. She THROWS her hands around Dell's neck.

ISADORA

(weakly)

Get me out. Please.

He picks her up and heads for the door. Ann RUSHES toward
the fallen shamans.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ISADORA

It was awful. They hated me for
being a girl and told me I was
unclean and wasn't a virgin in my
heart so they -- they c-cut me up--

DELL

Ann! Let's go!

Ann's concentrating on the Cardinal. She takes her knife
and CARVES a pentagram on his forehead.

ANN

In this sign, be thou conquered.

DELL

Could you just shoot them in the
balls and go?

She reaches under The Rabbi's curls to NICK his ear.

ANN

For your Abodah Zarah.

She CARVES swirling Arabic script on the Imam's
cheekbone.

ANN

(hissing)
Vengeance for the goddess Al Lat!

DELL

Let's go!

As if in a trance, Ann WIPES her blade on Beathan's white
collar and returns it to her bag. She REACHES OUT to
touch Isadora's head, then FOLLOWS Dell without a word.

INT. AUBERGE GARAGE -- DAWN

Dell's car RACES down the concrete tunnel.

EXT. HILL STREET -- DAWN

The car EXITS AUBERGE into a beautiful morning.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- DAWN

Dell drives, Ann sits shotgun, Isadora's in back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

Does Bridget live at her store?

Ann NODS wearily. From OS rises a sound of HELICOPTERS.

DELL

Then we'll get her and head out to
StratoNet.

ISADORA

(frightened)
I don't think we'll make it.

ANN

Why not?

ISADORA

'Cuz the Ecclesia's attacking.

A HELICOPTER ROARS over to land near Auberge. The
ECCLESIA CLIMB OUT of an access hatch and into the
copter. The Cardinal looks at the pilot and draws his
thumb across his throat. The pilot nods, firing ROCKETS
at the hill.

EXT. AUBERGE -- CONTINUOUS

Flame and smoke EXPLODE from the hill. Panicked, injured
GUESTS escape the inferno, but HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS strafe
them. A copter DISINTEGRATES in midair. The guard who
fired the killing shot jumps up triumphantly, only to be
BLOWN from his perch by a Stinger missile from another
chopper.

INT. DELL'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

ANN

Look out!

EXT. FLOWER STREET -- CONTINUOUS

A shell EXPLODES in front of the car and it SWERVES to
CRASH into a wall. The three CLIMB OUT of the smoldering
wreck to look upon a city gone mad. Cobra COPTERS and
Harrier JETS battle it out amid FIREBALLS from EXPLODING
CARS. Dell draws his pistol and points at a helicopter
perched atop the Bonaventure Hotel.

DELL

This way!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN

The stuff!

Dell yanks the BRAIN WAVE DIGITIZER and the DRUGS out of the smoldering trunk. As they race from the FLAMING car, two masked ECCLESIA TROOPERS run toward them, rifles pointed. Dell immediately DROPS his cargo and KNEELS in a two-handed firing stance.

DELL

Don't! One of you will die before
I hit the ground.

Ann crouches behind Dell and reaches for her athamé.

TROOPER

One more soul for Yahveh!

TROOPER

Yahveh?

The 2nd trooper PULLS OFF his mask: he's ARABIAN.

TROOPER

(gently correcting)

One more soul for Allah!

The 1st trooper PULLS OFF his mask: FAIR SKIN, RED HAIR.

TROOPER

Yahveh!

TROOPER

Allah!

Ann RAISES her athamé.

DELL

Allah or Yahveh, boys. Which God
will get your soul? Which God is
supreme?

TROOPER

Allah!

TROOPER

Yahveh!

CORBIN (OS)

Kali!!

Rapid BLASTS from an M-16. Both kids DROP DEAD. Randolph Corbin races into frame, BELLOWING gleefully.

CORBIN

Tough guy, Ammo. Can't even plug a couple of punk kids.

Dell removes a MILITARY GEAR BAG from one of them and STUFFS the drugs and digitizer into it.

DELL

I was going to let them kill each other.

CORBIN

This is no time to wait for irony to take its course. We need to get out of here.

Dell throws the gear bag over his shoulders and nods toward the helicopter atop the BONAVENTURE HOTEL.

CORBIN

Let's go!

EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL -- DAWN

They race through a run-down entrance littered with BUMS.

BUM

Gang wars is gettin' rougher.

BUM

I'll drink to that.

INT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL -- DAWN

Morning sunlight lances into the vast atrium, illuminating the decay. Dell rushes to the GREASY NIGHT CLERK.

NIGHT CLERK

No trouble, man!

DELL

Which elevator goes to the roof?

The clerk POINTS toward one and the four PILE into it.

INT. GLASS ELEVATOR -- DAY

The elevator rises. Through cracked, dirty glass we see the BATTLE on the streets. Auberge is a SMOLDERING CRATER.

ISADORA

Oh, well. I hear San Francisco has a lot of horny men with money.

Corbin almost speaks but Ann mutes him with a weary glance.

DELL

We're not going to Frisco, kid.
We're going to Palmdale.

Isadora makes a sour face and mouths the word "Palmdale." The elevator STOPS. Corbin and Dell prepare to burst out.

EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL ROOF -- DAY

The police helicopter sits on the roof. TWO COPS stand at the edge of the building, looking below.

COP

Shouldn't we be doing something?

COP

Are you kidding? Let them shoot it out.

COP

So we just...

COP

We're assessing the situation, OK?

Two RIFLE BARRELS come into frame.

CORBIN

Assess this.

INT. HELICOPTER -- DAY

We see the two cops TIED UP on the roof outside as Corbin starts up the engine.

ISADORA

You can fly this thing?

CORBIN

I was a mercenary back in the eighties, fighting the commie menace in Afghanistan.

ISADORA

What's a commie?

EXT. BONAVENTURE HOTEL ROOF -- DAY

The helicopter roars up and away.

INT. HELICOPTER -- DAY

ANN

Will this carry one more passenger?

Corbin NODS.

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

MOS -- The helicopter stands in the parking lot. Corbin SMOKES a cigar, nodding nonchalantly to a curious PASSERBY.

INT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

MOS -- Dell STANDS at the entrance TALKING to Bridget while Kasmira watches, conflicted. Bridget gazes through the store window at the copter, sees Ann and Isadora, then NODS. Kasmira hands her a RED CARPET BAG.

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY (MOS)

The helicopter rotor SPINS up to speed like as Dell SLAMS the hatch shut. Bridget GAZES out.

REVERSE ANGLE -- CONTINUOUS (MOS)

Kasmira waves bravely.

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY (MOS)

Bridget BLOWS her a kiss and makes a magickal sign as the helicopter JUMPS into the sky.

EXT. ANTELOPE VALLEY -- DAY

The chopper ROARS toward a LARGE, FEATURELESS BUILDING.

EXT. STRATONET -- DAY

The helicopter LANDS on the helipad in the parking lot.

EXT. HELIPAD -- DAY

Dell -- gear bag on his shoulders -- helps Bridget and Ann out. Isadora LEAPS out on her own power.

DELL

This is not an assault. We're the new owners, so act the part. That means stash the rifle, Corbin.

CORBIN

I'm outta here. This flygirl could fetch enough to keep the Church of St. Judas riding high for years. Months, if I really enjoy myself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He WAVES at them with his second and third fingers folded down to form the Horns of Androcles -- an ancient witches' good luck sign -- and GUNS the engine.

CORBIN

Don't let God do a J_b on you!

The chopper LEAPS into the sky.

INT. STRATONET -- DAY

The outside's nothing, but the inside atrium is lovely. The three women and Dell walk up to the GUARD desk. He looks up at them with awakening interest.

GUARD

May I help you?

DELL

Yes, we're the new owners of StratoNet and we're here to check out our property.

Dell flashes the access card. The guard RAISES his arm.

GUARD

(friendly but firm)

Now hold on just a sec. If you'd just walked past me waving that card, I'd have likely let you through, maybe with a check of that bag of yours. But you felt a necessity to tell me you're the new owner, and that makes me want to ask you more.

Dell pulls out the stock certificates. Ann shakes her head in embarrassment.

DELL

There -- look at that. That's a majority interest in StratoNet.

GUARD

I'm impressed. But under the corporate system that made this country great, ownership and control are separated. You may own a mess of stock, but are you on the board of directors? Are you StratoNet employees?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A BOISTEROUS LAUGH resounds through the lobby. Ian Sandefur ENTERS, smiling, to snatch the card from Dell.

SANDEFUR

I may have screwed up in other ways, but I never scrimped on the lifelong-learning program.

ANN

Ian!

INT. STRATONET CORRIDOR -- DAY

Ian uses the card and code to walk them through a series of access doors.

SANDEFUR

I was intrigued! I had to find out why you were so intent on getting this card. If you're terrorists, you're certainly the most innovative I've ever seen.

DELL

What do you care? You lost it to us fair and square.

SANDEFUR

Yes... That's a debatable point, isn't it? I don't think the Securities and Exchange commission approves of stock transfers aided and abetted by witchcraft.

INT. ENTRANCE TO THE NODE -- DAY

Ann is instantly SUSPICIOUS. Bridget picks up on it and peers at Ian. Isadora's eyes WIDEN when she attempts to get into Ian's mind. He whips out a PISTOL and FIRES at the overhead camera, then covers the other four.

DELL

(unimpressed)

You can't get the stock back like this, Ian.

ANN

He's not Ian!

Dell TURNS to stare at Ian. In the BG, we see Bridget opening her bag to reach inside.

SFX -- IAN SANDEFUR TRANSFORMS INTO EMIL ZACHARIAS.

He grins maliciously.

ZACHARIAS

I finally have all four of you
together and under my power.
Ordinary physical power.

Zacharias points the pistol at Isadora. Bridget palms a piece of WRINKLED PARCHMENT.

ZACHARIAS

I have plans for you, so you'll
get to watch the other three die
fir--

Bridget POUNCES at Zack and SMACKS her hand onto his face. He FREEZES in mid-word.

BRIDGET

By the Magician's oath with Fate I
bind thee!

Zacharias lets out a pathetic, squeaky HICCUP.

ISADORA

Sweet!

Ann SHUSHES her. Dell takes the opportunity to nab the GUN AND CARD from Zack's fingers.

BRIDGET

By powers older than your own,

From spark of Life by Woman grown,

I bind your soul inside your hate

And curse you to your chosen Fate!

She RELEASES her hand. The parchment -- covered with magickal symbols in purple ink -- ADHERES to Zack's face like a layer of skin. He SLUMPS to the floor.

ISADORA

(flabbergasted)
That was fucking easy!

CONTINUED:

BRIDGET

(haughty)
Parchment and ink for the spell --
fifty cents. Knowing how to use it
-- priceless.

DELL

Here we go!

Dell STROKES the card through the reader and PUNCHES IN the access code. The vault-like door SWINGS inward.

INT. THE NODE -- DAY

Twenty-first century Internet tech at its finest. No fantasy electronics, but a step beyond current technology. Heavy, glowing OPTICAL FIBERS, rapidly flashing LEDS on thousands of SERVER STACKS. SOUNDS of digital data FLOWING.

BRIDGET (OS)

What the fuck is this?

Out of habit, both Dell and Ann LOOK at Isadora. Isadora POINTS a thumb toward Bridget, who STARES at the room in bafflement. Dell removes his GEAR BAG.

DELL

You said it yourself, sweetheart.
'Two great forces must join.' No
one's had the opportunity to
assassinate God until the
Information Age gave us the means.
Science and magick are what it
takes. Matter and spirit. Logic
and mystery.

BRIDGET

I have to think about this.
Exactly how would I bless
Cyberspace?

EXT. STRATONET -- TWILIGHT

Desert SUNSET. Red and orange CLOUDS. A FULL MOON sits blood-red on the eastern horizon.

INT. THE NODE -- NIGHT

Isadora sits on the floor against a server cabinet, SMOKING. Dell sits beside her, reading the illustrated PAMPHLET for Pamela Anderson's Brain Wave Digitizer.

ISADORA
Not my usual Halloween activity.

Dell starts to speak. Isadora shakes her head.

ISADORA
Treats for tricks.

Dell's gaze reveals his sympathy for her lost childhood.

ANN (OS)
It's ready!

REVERSE ANGLE
Between TWO LONG ROWS of server towers, Bridget and Ann have woven a complex pair of WITCH'S CRADLES -
- one red string, one purple --
over a PENTAGRAM chalked onto the linoleum.

BRIDGET
Follow my steps precisely and you can walk into the center.

She leads Isadora first into the PURPLE WEB. After a couple of MISSTEPS that almost ENTANGLE her, she reaches the center and lets Bridget position her UPRIGHT and SPREAD-EAGLED.

ISADORA
I take it back. I've spent several Halloweens like this.

BRIDGET
We're here to work magick, not to give your libido a workout. Get ready for the ultimate mindfuck, girlie -- an entire planet, seven billion people, all at once. Think you can handle it?

ISADORA
Peel me a grape, Beulah, and bring `em on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Bridget leads Dell into the RED WEB. She STEPS OUT and sets up CANDLES at the points of the pentagram.

BRIDGET

Wisecracks stop now. Now begins
the greatest spell any Wiccen
could cast. The final battle with
the Usurper.

Ann straps the brain wave HEADSET -- soft, thin helmet,
lots of wires and receptors -- on Isadora. She pulls an
IV STAND over to Dell and puts a NEEDLE in the vein of
his left hand.

ANN

Nice veins. You'd have made a
great junkie.

DELL

Imagine my regret.

BRIDGET

Hush!

ANN

(whispers)

The LSD will break down your
stimulus blocks, the fentanyl will
let you dream, the THC will help
you find god wherever he's hiding,
and the coke will release your
true spirit, good or ill.

Bridget begins CHANTING, SLICING the air with her athamé.

BRIDGET

Hail to Thee, powers of the East!
Hail to the corner of beginnings!
Iris, Aurora, Astarte, Goddess of
all Beginnings! Come witness our
rite which we perform according to
the ancient ways!

ISADORA

(to Ann)

Drugs for me now?

DELL

Sorry, kid. They're all for me.
You'll feel the effects, though,
when you get into my head.

ISADORA

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Bridget moves COUNTERCLOCKWISE. Ann WATCHES her in peaceful bliss from her station at the brain wave digitizer.

BRIDGET

Hail to Thee, powers of the South!
Corner of all passionate Fire.
Vesta, Esmeralda, Heartha-come and
be witness at our rite which we
perform in the ancient ways!

She picks a red and purple twisted STRAND and CUTS it with her athamé. It UNWINDS under tension; the entire witch's cradle SHIFTS, JERKING both Dell and Isadora into supine positions several feet above the floor. They seem to FLOAT in the web. Bridget turns west.

BRIDGET

Hail to Thee, powers of the living
Waters! Venus, Aphrodite, Themis
of the Law and Moon. Come guard
our circle and bear witness to the
rite we perform according to the
ancient ways!

DELL'S POV -- DRUG SFX

Bridget's words grow distant, DISTORTED. He can hear his own HEARTBEAT. Everything has a faint AURA and QUIVERS with energy. Ann looks more RADIANT than ever.

BRIDGET (OS)

Hail to Thee, corner of all
Powers! Arianrhod of the Silver
Wheel, Great Demeter,
Persephone...

Bridget's voice RESONATES. Her robe: SWIRLING, PULSATING light and color. Her hair: a riot of black, grey, and white. Her face: fearsome, lovely -- an avenging witch-goddess.

BRIDGET

... Earth Mothers and Fates!
Protectress! Guard our circle and
witness our rite performed
according to the ancient ways!

THE VAULT DOOR -- DELL'S POV

Something outside HOWLS in rage and agony. The door GLOWS

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIDGET (OS)

The greatest of all Your crafts --
Science, ever in conflict with the
Usurper -- shall set us free. Have
not the servants of this newest of
Crafts been denounced as witches
and burned alongside us?

CLOSE ON DELL

He's a total space case: he gazes upward with a weird
frightened/fascinated GRIN and WILD EYES.

DELL (VO)

Nietzsche said if you stare long
enough into the abyss, pretty soon
the abyss stares back.

THE CEILING -- DELL'S POV

It twists and CONTORTS, beginning to OPEN like a
wormhole.

BRIDGET (OS)

Now united, we are mightier than
the Usurper, as Love is mightier
than hate, as She who gives life
is mightier than he who gives
death. The two halves are whole
again. The Battle is begun. So
mote it be!

ISADORA -- DELL'S POV

She's BEAUTIFUL AND PURE, bathed in a WHITE LIGHT. But
she's frightened, REACHING OUT to him. THEIR HANDS try to
TWIST through the strings to touch.

DELL'S POV

His hand -- fluid, mottled,
constantly SQUIRMING FLESH --
snakes through the witch's cradle.

BRIDGET (OS)

(faintly)
This is a spell of Uncrossing.

His hand TOUCHES Isadora's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANN connects the digitizer cable to a USB port. All the RED, GREEN, and YELLOW LEDs on all the servers in the Node turn PURPLE, bathing the Node in an EERIE GLOW.

THE INTERNET -- AROUND THE WORLD

In OFFICE COMPLEXES all over the planet, computer screens snap to GLOWING PURPLE in unison. Internet appliances emit purple rays. Cell phones, cell towers, TVs, radios, orbiting satellites all BATHE the Earth in a PURPLE HAZE.

INT. THE NODE -- NIGHT

DELL SCREAMS a ROLLER-COASTER SCREAM of pure adrenaline.

THE VAULT DOOR MELTS and EXPLODES inward. We catch just a glimpse of a HELLISH MONSTROSITY beyond it.

Dell's hand RELEASES Isadora's.

THE NODE EXPANDS like the universe after the Big Bang and we FLY INSIDE DELL'S THIRD EYE.

INFINITE PLAIN -- HIGH NOON

An unreal place: WHITE LAND, cloudless CRIMSON SKY, conical mountain ranges, and BLACK LINES that converge at the horizon. Dell stands there, dressed in white acolyte's robes. He looks healthier than he's ever looked.

DELL

Hello?

Time passes. Nothing happens. He begins to WALK.

DELL

You can't hide forever.

After a beat, the ground begins to SLOPE. Not just part of the ground. The whole infinite plain. Dell starts to SLIDE. The plain TILTS until it slants vertically. He FALLS straight down its side, fingers scrabbling for a handhold. A tilt BEYOND VERTICAL sends him into the featureless red sky.

EXT. GOD -- DAY

He's IMPALED on black spikes sprouting from a tan surface. One spike PIERCES his head and dangles BRAIN over him.

GOD (OS)

Get my point?

Dell RISES from the spikes and gathers up his GUTS in his bloodied robe. He looks around, then up. God TOWERS over Dell. He looks like a BUZZ-CUT cop. Dell's on His WRIST. God's other hand darts out to PINCH Dell between thumb and finger, ROLLING his body around like a ball of snot.

GOD

I love you. I love all of you, and
you've all turned your backs on
Me.

Dell STRUGGLES out -- a bloody mess. Now he's ANGRY.

DELL

You made it easy, with famine and
war and flood and fire when you
could have made it a paradise.

GOD

You broke the rules, and I had to
throw you out!

God pulls Dell up close, PEERING at him with an eye as big as the sky.

GOD

I wanted you to choose Me freely,
out of love for Me.

DELL

Freely? Under threat of endless
suffering! Out of love? For a God
that obliterates civilizations,
slaughters infants, punishes with
brimstone and damnation! On Earth
we have a term for that -- the
protection racket. 'Hello, nice
soul you've got there. Be a pity
if it burned in Hell for
eternity.'

GOD

You must obey your God!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell SMILES wickedly.

DELL

Why?

GOD

Because I created you.

DELL

Why?

GOD

Because I wanted to recreate My
own image.

DELL

Why?

GOD

(exasperated)
So you would serve me, love me,
and obey Me!

DELL

Why?

God's had it. He BELLOWS like galaxies exploding.

GOD

Because I'm bigger than you!

His breath BLOWS Dell off His finger. Dell FALLS into a
brilliant red light.

INT. SALOON -- NIGHT

Dell -- dressed like RIVERBOAT GAMBLER -- sits at a small
table while other GAMBLERS play at larger poker tables.
God sits opposite him, looking like a SLICK CON MAN in
white. He pulls three cards from His vest pocket and
plays Monte. Dell is still pushing PIECES of himself back
into place.

GOD

Don't you trust Me?

Dell tries to FOLLOW the motions of His hands.

DELL

Why should I? You've never shown
Yourself before.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOD

Then you don't have cause to
mistrust Me, either.
He FLIPS over a card. King of
CLUBS.

GOD

I've played this game for a long
time.

King of DIAMONDS.

GOD

I win, I lose. Mostly I win.

You look good enough to beat Me. But you've got to trust
Me or you don't stand a chance of winning.

DELL

Why should it matter whether I
trust You or not?

GOD

If you don't trust Me, you lose.

DELL

And if I trust You, I win?

GOD

I didn't say that. I only said
that you can't win if you don't.

DELL

And if I refuse to play the game?

God flips over another card. The Ace of SPADES.

GOD

I'm afraid you still lose.

DELL

Sounds like a sweet racket.

GOD

It keeps Me and My boys in chips.

He nods toward the grinning MEN at the bar. They wear
gamblers' clothes, but they are THE ECCLESIA.

GOD

Don't try to follow the cards.
Just trust Me. Trust is the basis
of the most sublime relationships.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The ACE pops up again, gets moved around, becomes the King of DIAMONDS. Dell tries to concentrate.

GOD

Just pick a card and trust Me.
There is no other game.

A pair of delicate HANDS rest upon Dell's shoulders. It's ANN, but we see only her LIPS as she WHISPERS in his ear. One hand REACHES DOWN to steal the COLT PEACEMAKER revolver from his holster.

GOD

Take a hike, sister.

ANN (OS)

(whispers to Dell)
Demand proof of his honesty.

Dell REACHES OUT to take the cards.

GOD

No one can see all my cards at once! You've got to trust Me!
Those are the rules!

DELL

Then I don't play.

GOD

Then you lose.

God LEANS across the table, one FIST clutching the cards, the other CLENCHING up.

ANN (OS)

You can't win or lose if you don't play the game.

Dell seizes God's hand and SHAKES the cards out. Three KINGS and a palmed ACE.

GOD

(to Ann)
You might have won if you'd trusted Me.

ANN (OS)

I've always won, precisely because I've never trusted you!

Like a stuck movie frame, all motion FREEZES. FLAMES vaporize everything except DELL, the TABLE, and the

EXT. PLAIN OF THE DEAD -- HIGH NOON

An unending field of lifelessness. FLESHLESS SKELETONS. Fresh CORPSES. ANIMALS and BEASTS mixed in with PEOPLE. Even COCKROACHES and MAGGOTS lie dead. Nothing moves, except for a hunchbacked CARETAKER in rags, DRAGGING a corpse around.

CARETAKER

You're not supposed to be here.
You're not rotting!

DELL

Is this hell?

CARETAKER

Of course not, bonebag. You don't go anywhere when you die. Except maybe underground.

He PLUCKS a hand from the corpse and WAGS it at Dell.

CARETAKER

And don't start in about souls, worm bait. Your soul dies with you!

Dell FROWNS. Not the conversation he expected to get into.

DELL

Energy can't be created or destroyed. My mind and memories are electrochemical energy that have to go somewhere when I die.

The Caretaker SIGHS and sits on a dead man's CHEST. Its ribs CAVE IN with a crunch. He JUMPS UP cursing.

CARETAKER

All right, you eventual half-pint of crude oil, where does the memory of a pocket calculator go when you switch it off?

Dell PONDERs this.

DELL

Into the flash memory chip?

CARETAKER

Great, another brilliant analogy

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARETAKER (CONT'D)

OK, then, smash the chip. What now? The electrons that form the memory pattern aren't destroyed. So where does the memory go? Silicon Heaven?

The Caretaker SLAPS him with the corpse's hand.

CARETAKER

It goes nowhere! The electrons remain, but the pattern is destroyed. Like your brain when it rots. The pattern randomizes, and your soul dies with you!

A VOICE shatters across the endless, carcass-strewn plain.

GOD (OS)

Who disturbs the perfect serenity of My eternal peace?

The Caretaker POINTS the corpse-hand at Dell.

This time, God strides up in a DOCTOR'S OUTFIT, entirely in BLACK. Even the MIRROR strapped to His forehead reflects darkness. Glossy black GLOVES drip BLOOD. He's a mile tall.

GOD

All come here at the end. All that walked and ran and crawled and breathed. Everything stops here. Nothing moves. This is Eternity.

Dell begins to understand what he needs to fight God.

DELL

But things that die return to the Earth. They're consumed to become part of new life.

GOD

Forget the Earth. It too shall someday die.

DELL

To become part of a new world.

GOD

Worlds end. The universe shall die.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL

I'm taking a cosmological shot in the dark here, but if the universe dies, it will give birth to a new one. It's a never-ending--

GOD

Don't say it!

DELL

Circle?

God SCREAMS and THROWS His hands up defensively.

GOD

No!

DELL

Like a wheel.

God SHRIEKS with such horror that the BLOOD on His gloves CURDLES. The sky turns PURPLE. A breeze whips up. The corpses start to drift with it.

GOD

Stop! They're Mine! I keep them from the Wheel. I guard them from rebirth. Here, in My Land of Never-Change!

He tries to prevent the bodies from being drawn into the WIND. Dell begins to GROW to match his size.

DELL

Even You are part of the Wheel. Gods are born and die and new gods arise. Their influence waxes and wanes. You've reached Your end.

GOD

No! Not the Winds of Change!

Skeletons and carcasses FLY by in a blur up into the violet sky, where they DISINTEGRATE beautifully. The blood on His hands FLAKES away. The infinite plain is SWEPT CLEAN of Death to the gentle SOUND of pentatonic CHIMES. His black gloves PEEL off to reveal smooth, cadaverously WHITE skin.

ANN (OS)

Take him.

A HAND with long purple fingernails SLAPS a GOLDEN SICKLE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

It SAILS upward to PENETRATE God's chest. Out of the gash fly A THOUSAND BUTTERFLIES of every color imaginable.

GOD

I wanted peace, not life-within-death.

He COLLAPSES and is whisked away in a spiraling VORTEX. His eyes WIDEN with surprise and he SHOUTS to be heard.

GOD

It only looks like a circle from above! It's a helix! An ascending helix!

Dell watches God depart.

DELL

This is getting easier. Maybe he--

He TURNS AROUND to find that he is ALONE on the Plain.

DELL

Ann?

A MISSILE hits and BLASTS the world to bits.

EXT. ETERNAL BATTLEFIELD -- NIGHT

Bullets CRACK overhead. Arrows FLY back and forth. A particle beam IONIZES the air far above the battle.

EXT. FOXHOLE -- NIGHT

Dell -- in SOLDIER'S GARB -- DIVES into a foxhole. God TUMBLES IN beside him, mud-covered from head to foot, one hand clutching a rifle. He GRINS.

GOD

We almost got the sons of the Bitch now, eh, boy?

DELL

Who?

GOD

The enemy, boy. We've nearly conquered the enemy!

A boulder WHIZZES overhead to THUMP nearby. Crossbow bolts THUNK off-screen. A buzz bomb COLLIDES with a Stealth fighter. Eerie SCREAMS reverberate in the

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOD

Glorious destruction! The sudden transformation of a pound of explosives into fire and force. The house that's a home one moment and rubble the next. The man who changes from a walking, thinking being to a mass of bloody meat in the blink of an eye. Magnificent!

DELL

Whose side are you on in this one?

GOD

Both sides. All sides!

He raises His hands and NAPALM EXPLODES all around them.

GOD

The winners send me prayers of gratitude. The loser's think themselves unworthy and pray even harder to me!

DELL

A God of Love who lets men slaughter in Your name. A Just God, who promises to torture souls eternally for mistakes made in one short lifetime.

GOD

Lies! My Word twisted for evil ends.

DELL

Which You allow! A good God is a metaphor for conscience. How does it feel to have one of Your own?

GOD

All these things you believe about me are all lies. Lies of the Deceiver!

DELL

A Deceiver You permitted to exist! Without Satan to fear, humanity wouldn't need to give You the sacrifices You demand. You keep him on to justify your existence!

God drops His rifle and falls back WEeping.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GOD

Why? Why?

DELL

You lusted for a contradiction.
You wanted us to love and accept
You of our own free wills, yet You
threatened us with ceaseless
torment if we didn't. You allow
redemption of the most depraved
life at the last possible moment
yet You make atonement impossible
after death.

God begins to SHRINK. Six feet, five, four.

DELL

You confused us. You let others
confuse us in Your name. You
offered not even the merest shred
of proof that You're something
other than a demented prankster or
cruel torturer.

GOD

Can I change?

He's about a foot high. TEARS run down his face,
streaking the mud. Dell SHAKES his head.

DELL

That I'm here at all, willing and
able to assassinate You, proves
that Man is through with you.

GOD

(whispers)

She... If only She--

Before He can finish, an H-BOMB FLASH consumes them.

INT. THE DOORWAY -- NIGHT

Dell stands before a door of ornately carved OAK. He's
twenty pounds SLIMMER, wearing a well-cut double-breasted
suit. He SNAPS the brim of his hat and KNOCKS.

GOD (OS)

Don't bother, Mr. Ammo. You have
the key. You've always had it.

Dell PUSHES the door. It OPENS easily and silently.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL

There's no lock.

GOD (OS)

Now you know the final secret.

INT. GOD'S STUDY -- NIGHT

All four walls are lined with BOOKSHELVES filled with thick, leather-bound volumes. Warm and golden LIGHT fills the room. The SOUND OF CRASHING WAVES drifts in from outside. Dell SHUTS the door slowly behind him. In the center of the room sits a WING CHAIR and TABLE on a fading rug, FACING AWAY.

GOD (OS)

Tell me, Mr. Ammo, why is an assassin such a seeker after truth?

Dell LEANS against the chair, LOOKING AROUND the room.

DELL

An assassin doesn't accept myths, especially the myth of power. I see through the eyes of a hunter equal to my prey, yet I'm outside the game. I alter history, but I remain an objective observer.

He STEPS around the chair to face a WEARY OLD MAN. Neither lean nor fat, tall nor short, dark nor light. Just average. Except for His EYES: the dark, infinite pools of regret draw Dell DOWNWARD, sinking, falling. He SHAKES it off.

DELL

I see clearly how power corrupts. And I see now what absolute power does.

GOD

You're trying to kill me by talking me to death.

DELL

I'm thinking You to death. I've crawled into my mind and the mind of every man and woman on Earth to root You out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GOD

Why do you want to kill Me? Did you hate your father? Leaders are father figures. So are gods.

DELL

Good fathers don't rule their children with threats of eternal torment. My father gave me reasons to love him, not fear him. He never made me feel guilty simply for being born. You've given us no good reason to have faith in You. Every time a child dies, a parent's faith dies.

GOD

Doesn't it even things out that I let men kill My only Son? He died as Osiris and Tammuz and Jesus and a thousand others. My Son died for My sins again and again! Won't you ever forgive Me?

He gazes at Dell with eyes of unbearable REMORSE. Tears roll down His cheeks unnoticed. Dell continues without mercy.

DELL

Not as long as you try to convince us that all we have to do is believe in You to be freed from the turning of the Wheel.

God raises a weak hand in protest.

GOD

Don't, I beg of you.

Dell's convinced he's on the right track.

DELL

You're terrified of the cycle of Birth, Life, Sex, and Death. You deny the reality all around us. The witch and the scientist -- they seek nature's truths. They discovered the Wheel, so you made them the enemy and broke them with racks and spikes. And wheels.

God pounds on the chair with both fists.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GOD

At least I stopped Her for a while!

DELL

You only slowed Her down. You couldn't kill Her.

GOD

No, I couldn't. She had the one power I could neither destroy nor duplicate. I was a slave in a futile uprising. His left hand SLIDES between the cushion and the chair.

GOD

You know, Mr. Ammo, I've tried many times to break the Wheel. But it just can't be done. Watch...

His hand withdraws a COLT PEACEMAKER PISTOL from the table drawer. It looks exactly like the pistol Ann stole from Dell in the saloon. SUBLIMINALLY VISIBLE on the table, Ann's AMMO POUCH lies open with another round missing. God confidently RAISES THE GUN to His head and PULLS THE TRIGGER. To His SHOCK, it FIRES and his godhead EXPLODES.

The shot REVERBERATES for a long time. Dell stares downward. Half of the godhead lays on the floor looking like BROKEN PORCELAIN. Inside the shell is neither brains nor blood. Only a COLD, WHITE MIST that settles to the rug.

The door CREAKS open.

ZACHARIAS

So little storm god Jehovah finally blows Himself away. Emil Zacharias SAUNTERS in to peer over the chair.

DELL

Enjoy it while you can, Zack. You're next.

ZACHARIAS

Now, why should that be? This dried prune here was my younger brother. He took Earth away from me and had the nerve to call me the Prince of Lies. Well, where

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Dell STOOPS to pick up the suicide weapon. Zack POKES at the corpse with his cane. The body crumbles to TINKLING SHARDS.

ZACHARIAS

You know, I was never a war god.
No one ever flew the banner of
Satan into battle. I don't think I
even have a banner...

Dell SIGHTS down the barrel at Zack's head.

DELL

Don't flatter yourself, Zack.
You're not much better.

ZACHARIAS

Sure, I may have asked for a few
blood sacrifices here and there --
what god hasn't? And while I may
be no better than He, I was
certainly no worse than Sh--

Another SHOT RINGS OUT. Emil Zacharias COLLAPSES to the floor.

SFX -- CGI

Emil Zacharias's lifeless body TRANSMOGRIFIES from MAN to DEVIL to an ANGEL WITH A BLINDING SWORD.

Dell LOOKS at his own unfired pistol, then around the room. Ann Perrine -- in a diaphanous, glowing gown and looking more beautiful than humanly possible -- STANDS in the doorway holding a small, feminine pistol. She SMILES.

ANN

So mote it be.

Dell gingerly DISARMS her.

DELL

Thanks, angel. You just solved a
little mystery for me.

ANN

What mystery? Zacharias hired you
to kill god and there he is. Dead.

DELL

Nice and neat, only I didn't do
it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ann SHRUGS nonchalantly and steps over to the chair. She DUSTS OFF the shards and SITS as if on a throne. As an afterthought, she PICKS UP HER AMMO CASE, closes it, and slips it into her CLUTCH PURSE.

DELL

I figured something wasn't kosher with you so eager to help me rub out God. When Zack wanted out of the contract, it all began to make sense.

ANN

Don't try to make sense of the actions of gods.

DELL

Or goddesses. Right, sweetheart? But it does make sense. You finessed Zack into coming to me to bump off his brother.

He STEPS over to her, returning her self-confident gaze with a look of stony DETERMINATION.

ANN

Emil was a trifle drunk at the time. His Dionysian side, you know.

DELL

Yeah, a sweet setup for you. And he realized only too late that they were more than brothers.

ANN

Every year they battled for my favors. They were my Kings and my Lovers. My Brothers...

Dell GRASPS the chair arms, keeping her seated.

DELL

And your Sons.

Ann gives him a DEPRAVED SMILE and nods.

ANN

So why would I want them out of the way? That would disturb the Wheel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DELL

You don't need them now that
Science has reunited with Magick.

Ann condescendingly PATS Dell on the cheek.

ANN

They had let themselves be used by
good and evil men alike. They only
demanded faith. People crowded
churches, praying pain and
suffering upon others. God granted
it. They performed black masses to
blast enemies, and Satan
responded. Surrender to their
authority and they'd do anything
you asked. Thus the masters became
slaves to their flock. May I have
my gun back?

He HANDS it to her. She slips it into her purse while
Dell LIGHTS UP another cigarette.

DELL

Right now I'm wondering what would
happen to the Universe if I
plugged you, too.

ANN

Oh, you couldn't. They were
metaphors for death. I am your
metaphor for life.

DELL

And what sort of sacrifices will
you demand?

ANN

Gods evolve. They live and die and
learn. All I require is
tenderness. Every act of love is
an offering in my name.

She glides past him toward the door, which GLOWS with an
ethereal light.

ANN

I have to go now. You did well.

DELL

I didn't do anything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ANN

You were the catalyst. Be grateful
you weren't consumed in the
reaction.

The room begins to SHAKE like a California quake. She
ENTERS the light and VANISHES. The door SLAMS as books
fly from the shelves to orbit the chair. Dell FLICKS away
his cigarette, then DODGES the tempest of books to YANK
open the door.

DELL

Ann!

He falls into DARKNESS.

INT. THE NODE -- DAWN

He AWAKENS in near darkness, BOUND in the witch's cradle.
A candle FLICKERS, nearly consumed. His voice is raspy.

DELL

Ann...

The witch's cradle is intact, yet Isadora is GONE -- only
the brain wave amplifier cap remains nestled in the
tangle. Ann's athamé is ENSNARED in the web just beyond
his reach. He struggles to GRASP it and CUT his way out.

INT. STRATONET LOBBY -- DAWN

Dell walks past the sleeping guard. Soft golden SUNLIGHT
fills the lobby. All seems peaceful.

EXT. GOLDEN STATE FREEWAY -- DAWN

Dell DRIVES Ian Sandefur's BMW back into the city. The
road is eerily EMPTY.

INSERT -- ROAD SIGN

WELCOME

To The City of Our Lady,

Queen of the Angels

EXT. GOLDEN STATE FREEWAY -- DAWN

EXT. TRISMEGISTOS -- DAY

Dell stands beside the BMW, SMOKING a cigarette and pondering what he sees. The windows and doors to the shop are BOARDED UP and look as if they have been for years.

INT. DELL'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Moody RAIN falls outside. He pours a lot of Jack Daniels into a highball glass and DOWNS half of it in one gulp.

DELL (VO)

I searched for months. No sign of Ann Perrine or Isadora Volante or Bridget or her daughter. I could almost convince myself that none of it had ever happened.

He PICKS UP Ann's athamé and STARES at the YOUNGER, HEALTHIER SELF he sees REFLECTED in the polished blade.

DELL (VO)

Except for the proof I saw everywhere.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Dell -- in trench coat and fedora -- walks along the sidewalk in the rain. He passes a CHURCH.

EXT. CHURCH -- CONTINUOUS

It's dark. A padlocked chain seals the door. A LIGHTNING FLASH reveals a SIGN in front.

INSERT -- SIGN

CLOSED FOR REMODELING

Office of the High Priestess
of the Greater Los Angeles Coven

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Dell walks past a SYNAGOGUE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DELL (VO)
People adapted to the new presence
of the Old Ways.

INSERT -- MENU-BOARD SIGN

Is It Good For Witches?

Using Solomon's Seal

In Your Spells. Monday, 7:30 PM

DELL (VO)
Maybe Isadora and I had managed to
excise God from seven billion
minds.

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Dell walks past a MOSQUE.

DELL (VO)
Or maybe -- after five thousand
years of holy wars -- everyone
just wanted a break.

Draped between TWO MINARETS flutters a big BANNER which
we can read as he passes:

COMING SOON
The Ishtar -- 13 Screen Cineplex

EXT. BOOKSTORE -- NIGHT

Dell enters a rundown bookstore. A cart under the awning
holds religious tomes such as the Bible, the Koran, the
Book of Mormon, and Dianetics, DEEP-DISCOUNTED for quick
sale.

INT. BOOKSTORE -- NIGHT

The new era's bestsellers are on display, with prominent
authors adjusting to an altered market: Seven Habits of
Highly Successful Sorcerers, The One-Minute Necromancer,
Dr. Ruth's Sex for Crones, Who Hexed My Cheese?, Hermione
Granger & the Temple of Hecate, etc.

CORBIN (OS)
Well, Ammo, how does it feel to

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Dell turns slowly to see Randolph Corbin. He's holding a copy of Atheism -- The Case Against Goddess.

DELL

I didn't change anything. People still endure shattered hopes and wasted lives and lost loves. People still kill and people still die.

CORBIN

Statistics indicate they're killing less and dying later. And it's hard to stir up a war when neither side can claim God's approval.

DELL

What're you, propaganda minister for Big Mother?

CORBIN

Blessed be, by our Lady, good Goddess, no! But what about you? No talk show circuit? No tell-all book?

DELL

I got in, I did the job, I got out.

CORBIN

What about your ladies? I thought they'd rise to the top in the new pecking order.

DELL

I think they did. The very top.

A book on ASTRAL TRAVEL catches Dell's eye. He LEAFS through it, intrigued. He grabs a book on CANDLE MAGIC, one on INCANTATIONS, plus The White Goddess and The Golden Bough.

DELL (CONT'D)

But I think I can find them!

Dell THROWS some money at the clerk and heads for the door.

CORBIN

(frowning)
Where?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The door SLAMS on Dell's muffled response.

DELL (OS)
If I get there, you'll know!

INT. DELL'S OLD OFFICE -- NIGHT

All the furniture and clutter has been SHOVED to the edges of the room. The WIND outside pounds rhythmically on the window covering like a subtle HEARTBEAT. Dell LIGHTS the last of five candles at the points of a PENTAGRAM painted on the carpeting and stands back to check it out. He almost STEPS inside the pentagram when he LOOKS at his desk.

THE ATHAMÉ
He hefts it in his hand, thinking.

THE PENTAGRAM
It's starting to glow, MYSTIC
LIGHTS dancing inside.

Dell realizes he'd better decide fast. He PUTS DOWN the magical knife to PICK UP his Colt Combat Commander.

The pentagram contains a RIOT OF COLOR AND LIGHT. Dell STRIDES purposefully into it, FOLDS his arms over his chest, gripping the PISTOL in his right hand. After mouthing a MYSTIC INCANTATION and GAZING into infinity, Dell Ammo, assassin, GRINS savagely.

DELL
I'm comin' to you, Sweetheart!

CUT TO BLACK

ROLL CREDITS

fin