

The Voices

Written by
Michael R. Perry

Director
Marjane Satrapi

PRODUCTION DRAFT #1 (REV)

July 24, 2012

EXT. VEEDERSBURG - DAY

A mockingbird flies over idyllic Veedersburg, Ohio, a small town with cute little houses and neatly mowed lawns; as it flies further, the bird crosses into the bad part of town -- shuttered factories surrounded by fields of weeds. It lands in a scrawny tree growing near a boarded-up bowling alley.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- DAY

The old sign that once read "Veedersburg Bowling Lanes" has been vandalized, rendering it as "VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S". The only vehicle in the lot is a four-year-old pickup truck.

A CAT leaps from the bed of the truck, swaggers to the edge of the parking lot, then freezes in his tracks, when he sees--

THE MOCKINGBIRD singing happily in the tree.

THE CAT is electrified, every muscle alive with predatory intensity as he stalks toward his prey.

THE BIRD senses something amiss and stops singing; he looks left, then right, but sees nothing, and nervously resumes his aria. Below him, the grass rustles, ominously.

THE CAT emerges from the grass like a ninja, grabbing hold of the edge of the tree, approaching his quarry from behind as he methodically climbs toward the branch where --

THE BIRD sings, blissfully unaware that death is in the air. The cat freezes, inches away, staring at the bird with love and hate, savoring the pending kill, until the bird senses something amiss, slowly turns, and sees his executioner.

But he's too late. The cat strikes mercilessly. As he lays waste to the songbird, we move closer and closer into the cat's ferocious yellow feline eyes, aroused with the ecstasy of the kill. The name of this deadly beast: MISTER WHISKERS.

INT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURE & FAUCET -- DAY

The massive bathroom fixture factory is abuzz with productivity, a nineteenth-century structure built of rough-hewn timbers within which resides a twenty-first century computer-controlled assembly line. In a haunting SERIES OF SHOTS we see raw ingredients become a high-end bath tub:

First, red-hot molten steel poured into a sand mold transforms itself into the shell of a tub;

Next, the glowing-red tub is dusted with powdered porcelain;

Then, the tub is offered like a sacrifice to a massive, fiery kiln. Soon, it emerges, shiny, exquisite: a new bath tub.

After cooling, workers fit the tub with fixtures; then two muscular men lower it into a packing crate, which they staple shut. Next, they quickly and efficiently strap the sealed crate onto a shipping pallet loaded with other crates.

We focus on the younger of the two packers. His name is JERRY HICKFANG, early thirties, above-average intelligence, jeans, a clean Dickies work shirt, and heavy, well-worn gloves. Jerry takes pride in a job well done.

A BUZZER signals break time. Manager DENNIS KOWALSKI, 38, crosses to Jerry as he loads his final tub before break.

DENNIS

Hey, Jerry.

JERRY

Hey, Mr. Kowalski.

DENNIS

Call me Dennis, it's okay. Just wanted to say, we're very pleased. You're doing a great job.

JERRY

Thank you Mr. Kowalski.

DENNIS

That's what I told that woman from the courts, "a great job" I said. She's your lawyer?

JERRY

Court-appointed psychiatrist. Thanks, Dennis, for saying that.

Jerry beams. Dennis puts a friendly hand on his shoulder.

DENNIS

No problem. So, Jerry, the thing is, is Veedersburg every year has this company picnic.

JERRY

Okay.

DENNIS

And, we get one representative from each department to help put it on, usually the new guy. And the new guy in shipping, is you.

JERRY

You want me to help plan a picnic?

DENNIS

It's voluntary -- off the clock.
There will be others, too, someone
from Sales, a guy from Design, that
cute French woman in Accounting,
Chloe? You want to do it?

JERRY

Oh yeah, of course. Yes.

DENNIS

Cool. The first meeting is
tomorrow night at five, in the
sales conference room. The company
buys pizza and beer. It'll be fun.

Jerry nods. He's into it. Highlight of his week.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

The shuttered bowling alley is dark. A rickety outdoor
stairway leads to an attic door. A light comes on behind the
door. This is Jerry's home.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jerry's apartment in the bowling alley attic contains the
typical accoutrements of a bachelor's home -- television,
stereo, couch, coffee table, pizza boxes, etc. It isn't
dirty and it isn't clean; it isn't bright and it isn't dark,
but there's something slightly artificial about how the place
looks, something screwy. As Jerry enters, his friendly mutt,
BOSCO, greets him with a tail-wagging dance.

JERRY

Oh yeah, hey Bosco, oh yes, oh
Bosco, who's a good boy? Who's a
good boy?!!

His sneering, pissed-off cat MR. WHISKERS watches the dog-
human display of affection with disdain from a perch on the
back of the couch, where he sharpens his claws on the fabric.

Jerry heads into his bedroom. Bosco follows him.

INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A bachelor's bedroom, again with all the typical stuff -- bed, dresser, a couple rock posters, a pretty girl poster, trinkets from State Fairs and tourist attractions. The bedroom seems idealized, yet lacking in detail -- but nothing you can point to. Just -- simplified. Not quite right.

Jerry pulls several shirts out of his closet, holding them up and checking them out in the mirror one by one. His ROOMMATE yells from off-screen; his snarky tone is heavy with sarcasm.

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

What are you doing, Jerry?

JERRY

Something for work.

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

What, those assholes give you homework now?

JERRY

No, I'm picking a shirt! For tomorrow. They got a thing they want me to do.

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

Let me guess: they said jump and you said "how high."

JERRY

Shut up!

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

You act like they're doing you a favor to let you work there, like they should be able to fuck you in the ass whenever they want. Some big privilege, letting you work "for free!" on their picnic.

JERRY

How'd you know about the picnic?

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

I'm not blind, Jerry.

JERRY

I don't want to talk to you!

Jerry takes the abuse very personally; he SLAMS the door between his bedroom and the living room, startling Bosco. The closed door only spurs the roommate to shout even louder.

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

They know about you at the company,
they know you're a freak and a
weakling and a cry-baby.

Jerry wipes away a tear and shouts at the door --

JERRY

I am not a cry baby!

ROOMMATE (O.S.)

Lying sack of shit! You're crying
right now. The only reason they
keep you at that retarded job is
that you're so appallingly pathetic
you amuse them.

Jerry's eyes fill with tears of rage. Bosco, the dog, allows
Jerry to scratch his ears; it's comforting and soothing.

JERRY

I'm not pathetic, am I? I'm not.
(scratches Bosco)
I'll have fun working on the
picnic, right, Bosco? That doctor
said it was good to reach out.
And I did! Aren't you a good boy!?
Rub your tummy now?

Bosco rolls over and Jerry rubs his stomach.

INT. VEEDERSBURG SALES CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

The picnic planning meeting. Besides Jerry and Dennis, there
are eight others, among them CHLOE from accounting, a stylish
and attractive yet slightly out-of-place French woman in her
mid-thirties; trendy JOHN from Industrial Design; angry 30-
year-old stoner DAVE from Personnel; and SHERYL, a blissfully
new-agey 25-year-old lesbian from Direct Sales. Half-empty
pizza boxes are scattered along the long conference table.
Dennis leads; the meeting is ending.

DENNIS

Before we break up here, I want to
go over the assignments.

Jerry raises his hand.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

We'll just go around the table,
okay? Can your comment wait?

JERRY

I was just going to say that the picnic will be, um, a good place to reach out to form relationships with other humans. And stuff.

DENNIS

Duly noted, Jerry. We all want to get out of here, so: John you'll be setting up the tent. Dave's bringing food and drinks. Sheryl's doing decorations and Chloe's doing music. Any questions?

CHLOE

I got another idea, while we were sitting here ... maybe at some point during the picnic, we could try to do a conga line.

DENNIS

Like at a wedding?

CHLOE

Yes, it's fun, everyone can do it, kids like it. Why not?

DAVE

I'll set my head on fire before I conga.

SHERYL

Men are afraid to dance. The male ego is too fragile.

JERRY

I'm a man. I'm not afraid. I think it sounds real fun.

CHLOE

Thank you, Jerry.

JOHN

I'm not afraid either. It's not the coolest thing in the world, but it is a picnic for a toilet factory we're talking about here.

DENNIS

Settled, we'll try a conga line. Moving on. Jerry?

JERRY

I'm testing the P.A. system tomorrow, if everything works, I'm good to go. I thank you all for inviting me to be a part of this experience. My extension in shipping is 5-1865 if I can be of further service.

DAVE

Are you running for office now Jerry?

SHERYL

Dave -- go smoke a joint.

DENNIS

Sheryl! Dave! Come on. We're done here. We'll see you all at the picnic. Anyone who wants the leftover pizza, please take it.

Dennis stands; the others start to get up, some taking pizza, others not. Jerry throws a few cold slices in a box and heads for the door. Chloe intercepts him.

CHLOE

Jerry?

JERRY

Hey, Chloe. What's up?

CHLOE

Can your sound system play music from an iPod?

JERRY

I think so. I'm setting it up tomorrow, in the break area, around five. You could come by, and we can try it out.

CHLOE

That sounds great. See you tomorrow, Jerry.

Jerry watches Chloe leave, takes one more slice of pizza, and then leaves himself, as happy as he's ever been.

INT. BREAK ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

A big bland room with a couple of snack machines, OSHA posters, a few tables and a refrigerator.

Jerry, alone in the room, connects the final cable in a P.A. system that consists of a big amp, and a CD player wired to two large, industrial speakers on metal tripods. "PROPERTY OF VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES" is stenciled on everything.

Jerry hits "Play" and a speed metal song blasts out. The sound is loud and excellent, and Jerry plays some air guitar.

Chloe leans in the door; Jerry has his back to her and thus doesn't notice her enter. She checks the clock -- 5:25 -- and then scoots around until she's in Jerry's field of view.

Jerry abruptly stops playing air guitar then walks over and turns off the stereo. He laughs; Chloe holds an imaginary lighter over her head.

CHLOE

Rock on!

JERRY

Thank you! Goodnight, Veedersburg!

CHLOE

Well, it's loud.

JERRY

We are going to rrrock this picnic!

Jerry jabs a fist into the air. Jerry thinks he's cool. Chloe thinks he's an amusing dork. She holds up her iPod.

CHLOE

Can we play music from this?

JERRY

I think so. Let me see.

Jerry takes the iPod and studies it for a moment. He pulls a small plastic case from his pocket and rifles through it until he finds a connector. He puts one end into the iPod; then attaches the other end to his sound system. He hands the iPod (now tethered to the P.A. system) to Chloe.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Play a song.

CHLOE

Any song?

JERRY

Anything. Just to see if it works.

She hits "PLAY"; *Dance to the Music* blasts so loud it distorts.

Jerry mouths the words "TURN IT DOWN" and wheels his finger around. Chloe turns down the iPod and the distortion goes away. He flashes a thumbs-up to her.

She sways to the song; so does Jerry for a few moments. He turns it down and they listen, a little awkwardly.

CHLOE
Sounds pretty good, wow.

JERRY
Great song. People have to dance.

CHLOE
Oh yeah, Sly and the Family Stone, they're the coolest.

JERRY
The Family Stone is way funkier than my family ever was!

CHLOE
Can a family be "funky"?

JERRY
I bet the Family Stone was funky! The dad was probably all like, "do your funky homework, Sly, or I'll give you a funky spanking!"

Chloe laughs so hard she can't talk for a moment. Then:

CHLOE
What I thought, is that this word, "funk" means a mix of "fun" and --
(laughing at herself)
-- and "fucking." "Funky."

JERRY
(blushing)
No. It's not that at all! Not what you said, not fuh uh uh--

CHLOE
What does it mean, then?

They listen to the music for a moment as Jerry thinks.

JERRY
Funk? It's like this magic that takes over your whole body and for a second you get to feel like the coolest black guy in the world.

CHLOE

Hah hah. That's a great feeling.

They listen to *Dance to the Music* for a moment, swaying, until Chloe unplugs the iPod mid-song and prepares to leave.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Thanks for setting everything up.

JERRY

Thanks for bringing over your iPod. How many gigabytes is it?

CHLOE

I think, fifteen? I don't know. It was a gift from my mom.

JERRY

Wow. Sounds like you got a real nice mom.

CHLOE

Yes, my mother is very nice.

JERRY

Mine's dead. My mom I mean. She died.

CHLOE

I'm so sorry.

JERRY

It was a long time ago. I'm okay now. I processed all the relevant issues.

There's an awkward pause; they've finished everything they set out to do. Chloe bounces on her feet; Jerry disconnects her iPod and hands it to her.

CHLOE

Okay, then, see you at the picnic.

JERRY

Maybe I'll see you at work, too.

CHLOE

Maybe. I'm in accounting.

Chloe leaves. Jerry starts to take apart the sound system.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - EVENING

Jerry enters the door atop the outdoor staircase over the bowling alley. His mood is excellent.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jerry pauses as he enters to do a little dance of pure joy. Tail wagging, Bosco greets Jerry, who lets him lick his face.

JERRY

You can smell her, can't you,
Bosco? She's a nice girl! Her
name's Chloe! She's French I think
and she has an iPod. I like her.

ROOMATE (O.S.)

She knows you're a pathetic loser.

JERRY

Shut up!

Jerry's good mood is shattered; he freezes in place as he watches Mr. Whiskers strut out and block his path.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Get out of here cat! Shoo!

Mr. Whiskers not only holds his ground -- he talks back!

MR. WHISKERS

Blow me. Frog-lady's never gonna
like you. Just fuck her and split.

BOSCO

Ignore the cat, Jerry. Chloe
thinks you're a real good boy.

Just like in *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*, Jerry's animals speak. Mr. Whiskers -- the "roommate" -- is an abusive prick. Bosco is loyal and warm. This is all normal and familiar to Jerry.

JERRY

Thank you, Bosco. I'm not
listening to you, Mr. Whiskers.

MR. WHISKERS

So what? She still thinks you suck.

BOSCO

Go play in your shit-box, feline.

Mr. Whiskers sneers disdainfully, then walks off, pimp-cool.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

A small, linoleum-floored room with a government-issued desk and fluorescent lights, this ain't no Park Avenue shrink, this is government work. However, there is a couch, there is a comfy if threadworn chair, and the same nondescript paintings found in any psychiatric office. DR. HEATHER WEST, in her forties, is carefully dressed in tight denim and Navajo jewelry. Jerry sits on the couch.

DR. WEST

How are you doing, Jerry?

JERRY

Very well, thank you. Excellent.

DR. WEST

Do tell.

JERRY

Well...they like me at work.

DR. WEST

You're a likeable man.

JERRY

They're having a picnic. And they asked me to help out on it. And I was afraid to say yes -- but I said yes anyway and now I'm going to put up the sound system.

DR. WEST

That's wonderful news. You're becoming a part of something.

JERRY

And I'm really getting into the work, too -- it's relaxing to focus the mind on a task.

DR. WEST

Good. Any side effects from the meds?

JERRY

I don't know.

DR. WEST

Are you taking them?

JERRY

I don't know.

DR. WEST
You have to take them.

JERRY
Okay.

DR. WEST
Any thoughts of suicide?

JERRY
No. None.

DR. WEST
Do you ever hear voices?

JERRY
Voices? No. Never. Only when
someone is talking to me.

DR. WEST
You hesitated a little bit there --

JERRY
It just reminded me of my mother.
She told us the angels were talking
to her, then the social workers
took her out to that place "to help
her." She hated it there. She was
never the same after that -- well
you know what happened. By
Christmas she was gone.

DR. WEST
Angels was what she called her
voices.

JERRY
Yeah. Crazy shit, isn't it?
Angels.

DR. WEST
Her angels were a coping strategy.
The voices were real to her; angels
were a reasonable attempt to craft
a logical explanation.

JERRY
I know, we've been over all that,
"She was the best mother she knew
how to be. The things she did to
me, it was her disease, not her."
Etc.

DR. WEST

Right. Exactly. Do you have any questions for me, Jerry?

JERRY

Yes. I do. Kind of a big one.

DR. WEST

Okay.

JERRY

There's a girl. I like her. She kind of likes me. Okay? And I don't know how much to tell her, you know, about you, and this, and my mom and stuff.

DR. WEST

What do you think, Jerry?

JERRY

I don't want to scare her away but I don't want to lie to her either. I'm thinking if the subject comes up I'll say something but if it doesn't, I'll leave it be.

DR. WEST

You answered your own question, Jerry. See you next week.

Dr. West is aglow with fondness for her star patient Jerry. And Jerry likes his doctor: a mutual admiration society.

EXT. MAYWOOD PARK - DAY

A glorious day. In a series of shots we see the preparations for the Veedersburg Fixtures picnic: Sheryl lovingly places ribbons and decorations with the help of her girlfriend; John and his hippie date put up the tent; Dave and his pissed-off wife angrily put out the kegs, food and soda; and Jerry works on the sound system while Chloe watches.

CHLOE

I made a playlist. The music changes with the mood of the party.

JERRY

How's that work?

CHLOE

The first half-hour is laid back jazz while people mingle;
(MORE)

CHLOE (CONT'D)

then kids' songs about food while we eat -- and then bam! I hit them with Pink -- *Get this Party Started!* After that it's Old Skool and disco, until we blow 'em away with Sly and the Family Stone.

JERRY

Chloe, that's so cool, you put a lot of thought into this.

CHLOE

I went to a party-planning web site. You know what else they said?

JERRY

What?

CHLOE

Dance as if no one were watching, sing as if no one were listening, and live every day as if it were your last.

JERRY

Live every day as if it were your last? Wow. Right on, let's fire this up! Can I have your iPod?

She hands him her iPod, and he hooks it up and hits PLAY.

EXT. MAYWOOD PARK - DAY (MONTAGE)

The party. All-American factory workers at play. A perfect day, fluffy white clouds, a lovely park, a couple hundred people of all ages enjoying sandwiches, fried chicken, beer, soda. Grandparents, parents, kids, teens. People play Frisbee, croquet, softball.

ANGLE ON THE SOUND SYSTEM

"Hey Good Looking, What You Got Cookin?" plays. Chloe and Jerry hover around the sound system, eating fried chicken and corn on the cob. It's later in the afternoon.

JERRY

Your music is great, Chloe.

CHLOE

It's going to get even better in a minute. You're not going to chicken out on me, are you Jerry? You'll dance, right?

JERRY

"As if no one were watching."

CHLOE

Exactly! Microphone, please?

Jerry cheerfully fetches the microphone for Chloe. She takes Jerry's hand and drags him onto the large cement tennis court that today serves as a dance floor; then Chloe makes her announcement through the P.A. system.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Welcome, Veedersburg Fixtures!
Everyone having a good time?

EVERYONE

(half-hearted)

Yeah. Sure. Whoo.

CHLOE

Everybody out on the dance floor.
I'm serious, party people.

About a third of the picnickers wander onto the dance floor; the adults are mostly drunk, the children forced to participate by their parents. They watch Chloe.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

We're going to do a conga line.

EVERYONE

Oh Christ. Not that. Crap.

JERRY

Yay! Conga line! All right!

CHLOE

Thank you, Jerry.

(to crowd)

Come on -- you, you, line up -- put
your hand on the next person's
shoulder. Guys! A conga line.

(quietly)

I promise it'll be fun.

The Veedersburg revelers unenthusiastically line up.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Jerry -- music please?

Jerry hits the iPod, and *Dance to the Music* plays.

The conga line snakes through the picnic, passing the non-dancers, who watch, some with derision, others with envy.

Before the song ends, the conga line returns to the tennis court/dance floor and breaks up -- but people keep dancing.

Moms dance with little kids, old married couples laugh it up, clusters of girls and women dance together, and even a few young couples participate ironically. It's a great party.

Jerry maneuvers so he's in front of Chloe. She smiles.

DANCE SEQUENCE: Chloe and Jerry.

Chloe and Jerry face each other. What happens next is a subjective dance sequence, as the camera isolates Jerry and Chloe, funking their hearts out. All sound except the song drops out and the other dancers recede into the background.

It is a moment of beauty and happiness and flow, a man and a woman and a song. Jerry is ecstatic; Chloe is having a good time. It seems to go on forever. It is heaven.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jerry bursts in the door, giddily funking out.

JERRY

(muttering happily)

Dance to the music! Dance to the music! Dance to the music!

Bosco trots over. Jerry drops to the floor to let Bosco lick his face as he stares up at the ceiling, dizzy with joy.

BOSCO

You smell great, Jerry. Is that a girl? Ssssniff, mmmm. Smells like a good girl! Is she? A good girl?

Jerry sits up to make earnest eye contact with his dog.

JERRY

Oh, yeah, Bosco, she sure is, oh boy, what a day, what a day.

BOSCO

You are one happy guy and I like it when you are happy. *Dance to the Music* ruff ruff ruff.

Mr. Whiskers struts out, and watches for a moment, then:

MR. WHISKERS

Did you fuck the bitch?

JERRY

I don't have to answer that.

MR. WHISKERS

You'll never fuck her either, only because you disgust her.

JERRY

Shut up!

BOSCO

Yeah, shut up, cat!

MR. WHISKERS

French women love sex! They invented French kissing and the *menage-a-trois*! She'll let anyone mount her -- except you, Jerry.

JERRY

No! It's not true!

MR. WHISKERS

I bet she has a French tickler, too, but the only thing you'll ever tickle is Bosco the butt-sniffer.

BOSCO

I'm thinking, this is a real good time for a walk, Jerr, walk, walk??

JERRY

Okay, okay! We'll take a walk!

Jerry fastens the leash to Bosco. As they leave --

MR. WHISKERS

There's a place in France, where the ladies wear no pants. Too bad the thought of you makes her vomit!

BOSCO

You're a real piece of work, Mr. Whiskers!

MR. WHISKERS

Cat hater.

BOSCO

I don't hate all cats. Only all the ones I've met.

Bosco and Mr. Whiskers growl and hiss at each other until Jerry yanks Bosco out the door.

INT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES - FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

Jerry and his hungover coworker Tom load a bath tub into a carton. Jerry's on a manic high. He wears an MP3 player and hum-sings as he works, wagglng and swaying, dance-like --

JERRY

Dance to the music, dance to the music, dance to the music, dance to the music, dance to the music, dance to the music, dance to the music!

TOM

Jerry -- give me a break here.

JERRY

Okay, okay, I'll tone it down.

After a short pause he turns his back on Tom and continues, barely moving his lips. The buzzer rings.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Dan do duh moo zuk, dan do du moo zuk, dan do duh moo zuk.

TOM

Jerr - shift's over.

Jerry nods; still humming his song, he heads into the locker room, a few steps behind Tom.

INT. LOCKER ROOM / VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES - DAY

Jerry tapes snapshots from the picnic into his locker. Tom stares, amused. Jerry removes his headphones.

He studies his face in a mirror on the door of his locker, then slicks back his hair, spritzes with cologne, then pulls on a nice white shirt with a collar, the kind of thing you'd wear to church. He leaves with purpose in his stride.

INT. ACCOUNTING - END OF DAY

Chloe is dolled up and ready to leave her office with four other female coworkers when Jerry comes in. The group has a Sex-And-The-City vibe -- women getting ready to party.

CHLOE

Jerry?

JERRY

Hi, Chloe. You said I should come up to accounting some time.

CHLOE

I did?

JERRY

Yes. When we were getting ready for the picnic.

CHLOE

I don't remember saying that.

Chloe's not that into having Jerry join them but Jerry's oblivious to her slight. LISA, cute and flirty, the office bohemian, intervenes.

LISA

Jerry -- hey. Hi there. I'm Lisa. Accounts Receivable.

JERRY

Hi Lisa. I'm Jerry -- packing and shipping.

LISA

The Accounting chicks are going to have a few drinks over at Friday's, maybe you want to pack and ship out with us.

JERRY

I'd love to.

LISA

Well let's get going then.

Chloe glares at Lisa, and Lisa ignores her.

INT. VEEDERSBURG T.G.I. FRIDAY'S - EVENING

The four drunk office ladies and Jerry share a table with a couple dozen empty drink glasses, many of them decorated with straws and umbrellas. Chloe is drunk, finishing a story:

CHLOE

... after I sell everything in France to move here, that's when he says he's "not the marrying type."

(the punchline)

Six months later, he marries Jill.

(MORE)

CHLOE (CONT'D)

Today, they have three kids, and
I'm still in this "temp" job.

Chloe's friends roar with laughter. Jerry does too. There's a pause. It's that time of night, time to leave. Lisa puts a hand on Jerry's back.

LISA

Hey, Jer, thanks for coming out
with us. You want to finish the
Chimichurri Sliders?

JERRY

Yeah, sure.

Jerry eats the greasy remnants of the copyrighted food.

LISA

You think you could give me a ride
to the plant? Or maybe home?

Chloe shoots Lisa a look -- as if to say "are you crazy?"
Lisa misinterprets it to mean Chloe's interested in Jerry.

LISA (CONT'D)

Never mind, I forgot you're giving
a ride to Chloe.

CHLOE

No, no, no that's okay.

JERRY

I don't mind. I'd love to give you
a ride, Chloe. Let's go.

Chloe stares darts at Lisa. Lisa doesn't care; she's getting back at Chloe for cockblocking her.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK / VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jerry's got a nicely maintained crew-cab F-150. The engine is running. Chloe, still drunk, sits at his side.

JERRY

This weekend is the Ohio State
Fair.

CHLOE

I've heard so much about it.

JERRY

It's super fun, especially the baby
pig races.

CHLOE
Oh yeah, the pigs!

JERRY
They get an Oreo when they win.

CHLOE
That's right, they give an Oreo
cookie to the little piggy who wins
the race! It was on T.V.

JERRY
You want to go?

CHLOE
I don't know, when?

JERRY
What about Friday? K.C. and the
Sunshine Band are playing Friday.

CHLOE
Friday. It sounds interesting.

JERRY
What time should I pick you up?

CHLOE
Maybe we can just meet there.

JERRY
Okay. At the pig races?

CHLOE
Okay. K.C. and the pig races. Bye.

She opens the door and runs/staggers toward her car.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jerry walks in, giddy. Bosco races to greet him.

BOSCO
Hey, buddy, smell like smoke!
Sniff! Cigarette smoke! Mmmm.
Like your mom! Mmm. How'd it go?

JERRY
Awesome.

BOSCO
I knew you could do it. You're a
good guy. You're a great guy.

MR. WHISKERS

What happened?

JERRY

I have a date. With Chloe from France. To go to the fair.

MR. WHISKERS

Well, fuck me! I'm an asshole. I apologize, man, you were right. Cat food's in the kitchen, Jer, and I can't open the can.

Mr. Whiskers head toward the kitchen. Jerry follows.

INT. ACCOUNTING - DAY

Jerry walks through the Accounting Department holding an advertisement he's clipped out of the newspaper. He's wearing the same white shirt. The bookkeepers track him the way NORAD tracks missiles. Lisa spots him, waves him over.

LISA

Hey, Jerry.

JERRY

Hi, Lisa.

LISA

What's up?

JERRY

Do you know which desk is Chloe's?

LISA

Right there. Got something for her?

JERRY

Uh huh. Pig race schedule.

LISA

Give it to me, I'll make sure she gets it.

Jerry gives the schedule to Lisa, then glances across Chloe's work space, which has the usual knick-knacks and a few photos of her vacation. One of them shows her on a French beach in a bikini, gorgeous and radiant. Jerry stares. Lisa notices.

LISA (CONT'D)

I'll make sure she gets it.

JERRY

Okay, thanks Lisa. They happen at
15 and 45 minutes past the hour.
The pig races.

LISA

I'll make sure she gets it.

Jerry leaves Accounting. Moments later Chloe emerges from
the back of the room.

CHLOE

Is he gone?

LISA

He's gone. What's up with the pig
races?

CHLOE

He's going to the fair. I told him
I might meet him over there.

LISA

You're not going to the fair!
Tonight's karaoke.

CHLOE

I forgot.

LISA

Just call the guy and tell him you
can't make it.

CHLOE

I don't want to upset him. I'll
call him after the office closes.
Leave it on voice mail.

LISA

You're a real sweetheart, Chloe.

Lisa glares at Chloe.

EXT. OHIO STATE FAIR / PIG RACES - NIGHT

Half a dozen baby pigs race around a miniature track. The
winner snarfs down an Oreo. All around the track are couples
on dates holding hands, snuggling, feeding each other cotton
candy. Enjoying the Fair. And Jerry, all alone.

EXT. OHIO STATE FAIR / BANDSTAND - NIGHT

Jerry, still alone, is surrounded by couples waving their hands in the air to "Shake Shake Shake, Shake Your Bootie".

EXT. OHIO STATE FAIR / PARKING LOT - NIGHT

It's starting to rain. Jerry sits in his truck, all alone, in the emptying parking lot, until a parking guard walks over and directs him to leave.

INT. KARAOKE TAVERN - NIGHT

A country bar with sawdust on the floor. It's packed. Chloe is singing -- badly.

CHLOE

*And I-ee-I--ee-I, will always love
you-ee-ou, ou ou, will always love
YOU, oh oh.*

The Accounting Ladies are eating it up.

EXT. MAYWOOD PARK - NIGHT

Rain's coming down harder. In the same park where the company picnic was held, Jerry sits in the dark at a picnic table, his cheap MP3 player blasting *Dance to the Music*.

INT. FRIDAY'S - NIGHT

Jerry sits alone at the same table where he drank with Accounting, staring down a plate of chimichurri sliders and four empty umbrella drinks. He's working on a fifth.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK / OHIO ROADS - NIGHT

Jerry swerves down a rainy road.

EXT. KARAOKE TAVERN - NIGHT

The Accounting Ladies plus a few hangers-on hover in the doorway looking out at the rain-soaked parking lot.

CHLOE

*My car is back at the plant. I was
going to walk -- but --*

LISA
I'll give you a ride.

CHLOE
You're the best, Lisa.

Chloe gives her a drunken hug and they stagger out.

EXT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Rain. The factory is dark. The huge parking lot is almost entirely empty. Lisa's Celica pulls next to Chloe's five-year-old Mustang. The door opens. They exchange "goodbyes" and Chloe races from one car to the other, quickly opening and then closing the door of her Mustang.

INT. CHLOE'S MUSTANG / PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Pouring rain. Lisa drives away. Chloe, alone in the Mustang, puts a key in the ignition. Tries to start it. It makes a sick whirring sound but does not start.

CHLOE
Merde.

Chloe leans down to unlatch the hood. Grabs a newspaper from the back seat and uses it to cover her head as she gets out.

EXT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Pouring rain. Chloe checks the battery connection. It's connected tight. She tugs on the leads to make sure they're okay. Lightning, then thunder, startle Chloe. She closes the hood and gets back into the car.

INT. CHLOE'S MUSTANG / PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chloe tosses the wet paper on the floor. Pulls a cell phone from her purse; it's dripping wet. When she flips it open the screen is black -- destroyed by water.

Chloe bangs the steering wheel a couple of times, then puts her head in her hands and then just sits there, listening to the downpour.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Jerry navigates a back road while a sad country song plays on his radio.

He passes the gate to the Veedersburg Fixtures factory, jams on the brakes, does a U-Turn, and drives into the parking lot.

INT. CHLOE'S MUSTANG / PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chloe sees the truck pull into the parking lot. She opens her door (the electric windows won't come down) and yells.

CHLOE

Hey! Hey! I'm over here! Hello!

She gets no response.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

As he has done much of the night, Jerry sits there, staring straight ahead, listening to music. The song ends. He turns off the radio. Then, to the tune of *Dance to the Music*:

JERRY

*Chloe Chloe Chloe! Chloe Chloe
Chloe! Chloe Chloe Chloe!*

Through his drivers' window WE SEE Chloe herself crossing the parking lot, approaching his truck. He doesn't notice her until she's pounding on the glass. Startled, he jumps -- then Jerry sees who is at his glass. An answered prayer. An angel from heaven. A sign that their love was meant to be. Astonished and delighted he rolls down the window --

JERRY (CONT'D)

Chloe. It's pouring! Get in!

Chloe races around to the passenger door. Jerry reaches over and pushes it open. Chloe climbs up into the passenger seat and then slams the door.

CHLOE

Wow. Thanks.

JERRY

You're welcome.

CHLOE

What are you doing out here?

JERRY

Listening to music. I went to the fair. I didn't see you there.

CHLOE

I forgot, the piggie races, you did not hear the message?

JERRY

No.

CHLOE

I am so sorry.

JERRY

You want to go get a cup of coffee or something?

CHLOE

I suppose, why not. I'm freezing.

JERRY

Here, I have a blanket.

Jerry pulls a blanket from the back seat and hands it to Chloe. She takes off her soaking-wet jacket and starts to unbutton her soaking-wet shirt. Jerry stares.

CHLOE

Don't stare, Jerry.

Jerry is embarrassed. He hides his head in his hands.

JERRY

Oh, sorry, oh my God, sorry.

CHLOE

It's not the end of the world.

She turns her back to Jerry and slips off her shirt and then wraps herself in the blanket. Jerry tries to fight the overwhelming and conflicting emotions of lust, embarrassment and rage.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

So where should we go, Jerry?

JERRY

I don't know, Doran's Diner? They have a chili-cheeseburger pizza.

CHLOE

Chili-cheeseburger pizza? Now?
(she laughs)
Why not! It is that kind of night!
We must eat one immediately.

JERRY

Or two!

CHLOE

Or nine! To Doran's!

Jerry raises his hand to high-five; Chloe hesitates a moment, then high-fives back. Jerry drives out of the parking lot.

The road is narrow and winding. The rain continues with occasional lightning strikes and pockets of blinding fog.

CHLOE (CONT'D)

They say a lot of things about you up in Accounting.

JERRY

Like what?

CHLOE

That arty girl Lisa thinks you're hot. But everyone wonders where you come from.

JERRY

Lived in Veedersburg all my life.

A LIGHTNING STRIKE illuminates Chloe and for a moment she switches from half-drunk office worker to a terrifying Angel from Heaven, complete with wings and an otherworldly glow. Then she changes back to a drunk office worker.

CHLOE

I don't even have that excuse.

JERRY

Why'd you come here, then?

CHLOE

Why? If you find out, please tell me. Oh, that came out wrong.

Another lightning strike and she momentarily becomes the angel, then becomes herself again. Jerry's coming unwound -- but fighting to hold it together.

JERRY

You don't like Veedersburg?

CHLOE

It's fine, the people are friendly, pretty pretty town... No. Football games and bars are not enough. I'm kind of bored. Insanely bored.

JERRY

So you liked heaven better?

CHLOE

Heaven? What?

JERRY

Heaven -- where you came from?

CHLOE

I came from Lyon. I think Lyon's probably a lot closer to hell.

JERRY

Hell? Of course. Hell. That reminds me of a trivia question. A game. Want to play?

CHLOE

If I must.

They drive through a pocket of fog; Jerry waits until they clear and are back onto the dark, rainy road before asking.

JERRY

Okay. There are lots of angels in the Bible, but only four have names. Three are Gabriel, Michael and Raphael. What's the fourth?

CHLOE

Angels? Gabriel, Michael, and Raphael. And there's one more?

JERRY

Yes. What's his name?

CHLOE

I have no idea.

JERRY

The reason everyone forgets his name isn't because they don't know who he is -- but because they forget he's an angel --

- but before Jerry can finish, a deer leaps into their headlights. Jerry jams on the brakes ... and skids.

Jerry tries to make an evasive move but only succeeds in slipping and sliding into a violent 360 on the wet, winding road -- and then his truck careens straight into the deer anyway.

The five-point buck flips into the air and plunges headfirst through the windshield, sending shards of safety glass, fur and blood splattering across the truck cabin.

Jerry's truck finally comes to rest, half in the ditch. The bleeding buck thrashes and makes an uncanny, horrific dying whine; its antlers and wounded face are inches from Chloe, who SCREAMS in terror, now covered with fragments of windshield and the red spray from the deer's wound.

Jerry kills the engine. Chloe stops screaming. And for a moment all is silent except for the rain ... and then the buck begins thrashing anew, his antlers narrowing missing Chloe's face with each jerky motion. Scabby snot bubbles accumulate on his nose, and his brown eyes betray bewilderment and pain. He turns to face Jerry.

DEER

Kill me, Jerry. Take your knife
and cut my throat. I want to die.

Then the deer goes back to being an ordinary dying animal.

CHLOE

Oh, God.

JERRY

Careful! Hold still, Chloe!

Chloe fights the door; it's dented and difficult to move. Jerry turns around, opens a large tool box behind the driver's seat and pulls out a huge buck knife. The deer is thrashing even more violently now --

CHLOE

No! No! Jerry! Don't!

JERRY

I gotta do it -- hold still --

Jerry plunges the knife into the deer's throat, which only makes it accelerate its thrashing. He pulls the blade down, and across, with great effort; when he pulls the blade out a great torrent of blood drenches Chloe, who screams louder than she's ever screamed before. The deer twitches a few more times, then goes limp, its face in Chloe's lap.

Then, as if nothing happened, Jerry finishes his riddle.

JERRY (CONT'D)

The fourth angel is Lucifer.

Chloe is in shock.

CHLOE

What?

JERRY

Don't you get it? Lucifer was an
angel! A fallen angel!

CHLOE

My God.

Chloe slumps down, then summons all her strength to push open the passenger door. She jumps out and runs into the dark thick rainy woods.

JERRY

Chloe!

Jerry jumps out of his truck, into the rain.

EXT. WOODS - RAIN - NIGHT

Chloe runs through the dense forest, as fast as a woman in night club shoes who is blitzed and half in shock can run. She's scared out of her fucking mind and drenched in blood.

Jerry bolts off of the road and into the woods. He's got Vibram-soled work boots, and a rain coat, and makes good time. He's trying to be friendly and helpful. Then again, he's still got that knife in his hand.

JERRY

Chloe? Chloe! Chloe, don't run!

Chloe comes to a steep, wet, leaf-covered ravine, and stumbles, sliding face-first into a sharp bush, losing the blanket and scratching her arm to shreds. When she stands one of her shoes comes off and drops down the ravine; she leaves it behind and continues to run.

Jerry lumbers forward, unflappable.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Chloe? Come on. You'll get lost!

He pushes branches out of his way and when he gets to a clearing, there, sobbing, face to the ground, is Chloe. He walks over to her and kneels by her side.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Chloe, Chloe, come on, you're
upset, it was just an accident.
It's cold out here.

Chloe pulls herself to her knees and stares at Jerry, almost uncomprehending; her eyes are bloodshot and glazed. She tries to stand, and slips; she grabs onto Jerry's arm and stands and then hits him, out of control, just throwing punch after punch, kicking, screaming, out of her mind.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Chloe, Chloe! Stop!

He draws her close; she CRIES IN PAIN and pulls away, staring aghast at a deep new PUNCTURE WOUND which has opened up in her lung. She staggers backwards a few steps, then looks up.

Jerry holds the bloody knife. He is as surprised as Chloe.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I don't know how that happened,
Chloe, I'm sorry, I hurt you --

CHLOE

... argrgggrlgle ... urrggllle ...

Chloe's efforts to speak are impaired by the blood filling her trachea; her screams are muffled, as if underwater.

JERRY

You're in pain.
(she nods)
You're suffering. Chloe. Chloe.

He pulls her close with one arm; holds her tight. He caresses her soaking wet hair. She is helpless to resist.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I love you.

He plunges the knife deep into her heart. Her complexion grows pale from blood loss; her breathing stops; Chloe looks at Jerry with unsurpassed dread -- and then dies.

Jerry drops her onto the ground; then falls to his knees and lets out a deep, primal scream before walking off into the woods alone, disappearing into the rain.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Punishing rain, lightning and thunder transform the decrepit abandoned bowling alley into a sinister and dangerous place.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door opens, and Jerry enters.

He's soaking wet and covered in blood.

Bosco pads out.

BOSCO

Hey, Jerr!

JERRY

Not now, boy.

Bosco backs away and walks into another room. Mr. Whiskers awakens from a slumber atop the couch, and throws a withering glance Jerry's way.

MR. WHISKERS

What the hell have you been doing?

JERRY

Shut the fuck up, Mr. Whiskers!

Jerry heads for the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jerry peels off his clothing and shoes and throws them into a trash bag, then climbs in the shower and scrubs himself from head to toe with a stiff wire brush. Blood and gore wash down the drain.

A LITTLE LATER

Jerry dries off, wraps a towel around his ass and sits on the (lid down) toilet seat, deep in thought. A clawing/scratching sound alerts him to open the bathroom door. Mr. Whiskers walks in, without saying a word, and takes a shit in the litter box.

Bosco nudges his head in, to see if the coast is clear.

JERRY

It's okay, Bosco.

Bosco comes in. Then, after a long pause, he talks; Jerry has no trouble accepting it now. He finds it comforting.

BOSCO

Pretty bad situation, buddy.

JERRY

I know.

BOSCO

What are you gonna do?

JERRY

It was an accident.

BOSCO

Right. Maybe the thing to do is to go to the cops, explain everything, right away.

JERRY

Tonight?

BOSCO

You could wait until tomorrow. Just don't wait too long.

JERRY

I have no idea what to say.

BOSCO

Just tell them what happened. It might be hard but you'll get it off your chest, and if you wait -- it'll be a million times worse.

JERRY

I think you're right. I think that's what I'm going to do.

Mr. Whiskers buries his load in sand and then snorts a laugh.

MR. WHISKERS

You are both so fucking naive. You go to the cops and say, hey man, I "accidentally" stabbed that French girl? You think they're going to nod and understand the way your stupid dog does?

JERRY

I don't know.

MR. WHISKERS

Well, I do know: they're going to throw your ass in jail where tattooed meth addicts are going to buttfuck you every day for fifteen years to life.

BOSCO

You're a good man who made a mistake. If you come clean they'll be fair. If you cover it up it will look like you meant to do it.

MR. WHISKERS

But he did mean to do it.

JERRY

No!

MR. WHISKERS

Not the deer. That was an accident. I'm talking about the girl. You wanted to kill her.

JERRY

Never!

MR. WHISKERS

And you enjoyed stalking her through the woods, the entire time knowing what you wanted to do.

JERRY

No I didn't!

MR. WHISKERS

Why take the knife, then?

JERRY

Oh my God. I am evil.

MR. WHISKERS

No, you're not. I've killed things. On purpose. Just for the sake of killing. There's no shame in it. It's instinct. Fight it and you become your own jailer. Indulge in it, and be free. The only time I ever feel truly alive -- is when I'm killing.

Jerry thinks about it for a moment.

JERRY

The only time I ever felt truly alive.

MR. WHISKERS

See? It's okay. Today you are a man. Today, you killed.

Jerry is repelled by the thought and hyperventilates.

BOSCO

You're not like that, Jerry!
You're a good boy! Tell the police what you did. Be honest.

MR. WHISKERS

And join the legions of suckers who
didn't have the nerve to become
what they were meant to be.

JERRY

I don't know, I don't know, I don't
know.

A MOTH flies into the bathroom and flutters around. Mr. Whiskers is instantly transfixed, forgetting Jerry, forgetting Bosco, forgetting everything except the moth.

Mr. Whiskers jumps up to the toilet tank, leaps across to the sink, and tenses for what seems like an eternity, waiting for the moth to move within his grasp. It finally does; he lashes out and bats it into the sink, where he slaps it back and forth, watching the injured creature hobble hopelessly.

Jerry gets up from the toilet and stands at the sink, staring at the dying moth. He lets the towel drop and stares at his naked reflection in the mirror, the cat on one side, the dog on the other, a moth fluttering itself to death in the sink.

He looks at the cat, then at the dog, then stares at the moth until it dies, at which point Jerry washes it down the drain. He waits for an emotional reaction; it doesn't come. Then he leaves the bathroom. His dog and cat follow him.

INT. VEEDERSBURG POLICE STATION - DAY

A small but modern police station. Jerry walks in the front door and crosses to the duty desk where a young DUTY OFFICER looks up from his paperwork.

DUTY OFFICER

May I help you?

JERRY

I need to talk to Detective
Weinbacher.

The Duty officer nods.

EXT. VEEDERSBURG POLICE STATION - DAY

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER, fifties, a kind face, finishes shaking hands with Jerry; they clearly know each other.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

What's up?

JERRY

I screwed up. I want to know what to do.

The two men walk toward the road. Detective Weinbacher sees something and his face goes pale.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

You did that?

Jerry nods. They reach Jerry's truck: the front end is smashed in, hood is accordioned, and the windshield is shattered where the deer went through. Blood and fur everywhere. The bed of the truck is covered with a tarp.

JERRY

I want to show you something.

Jerry pulls the blood-stained tarp off the truck bed. Weinbacher peers into the truck bed; so does Jerry.

INSIDE is a dead deer. And nothing else.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

That's a beaut.

JERRY

What am I supposed to do?

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

If it was me? I'd gut it, clean it, and put it in the freezer. That's good meat.

JERRY

I'm serious.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

It was an accident. I'm not going to write you up for hunting out of season. If you don't like cleaning venison I know plenty of guys who'd take it in a heartbeat. You want me to make a couple calls?

JERRY

No. I can do it. Thanks, Detective Weinbacher.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

No problem, Jerry. Get that window fixed. Okay?

JERRY

I'll do it this afternoon.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

Cool. Drive safely, Jerry.

Jerry shakes hands with the detective for a few moments too long and then they go their separate ways.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - DAY

The rain has stopped, and the sun peeks through the clouds. Jerry's truck window has been repaired. He parks beneath the broken bowling lane sign, gets out, and drags the deer carcass toward the stairway going up to his apartment.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - DAY

Severed deer parts are spread out across Jerry's tiny kitchen. He saws away low on the neck, finally separating the head from the body. He's no taxidermist and whatever prize this deer once was, it's now just a messed-up hunk of rotting meat.

Bosco keeps his distance; Mr. Whiskers walks across the kitchen counter, tracking bloody pawprints everywhere.

MR. WHISKERS

What about the girl?

JERRY

What about the girl?

MR. WHISKERS

What'd you do with her body?

JERRY

Nothing.

MR. WHISKERS

You've seen enough detective shows to know what's going to happen next: some hikers are going to stumble across her body. And then it's CSI: Veedersburg, and guess whose hair and fiber and DNA and spit and blood are everywhere -- yours, Jerry. And soon enough --

JERRY

-- soon enough what?

MR. WHISKERS

Some hairy felon is gonna be your
prom date every year. And everyone
will know that you really like
killing people.

JERRY

But I don't.

MR. WHISKERS

Oh but you do.

BOSCO

Don't listen to the cat, Jerry.

Jerry considers their opinions, then gets back to the messy
business of peeling flesh off of the bones of a dead deer.

INT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES FACTORY - DAY

The whistle blows. Jerry finishes packing one last tub then
heads for the exit. Dennis Kowalski approaches.

DENNIS

Hey, Jerry.

JERRY

Hey Mr. Kowalski.

DENNIS

I saw you on Friday.

This sends a shock through Jerry.

JERRY

You saw me?

DENNIS

Yeah I saw you. You didn't see me?

JERRY

No. I didn't see you at all.

DENNIS

Well then who was it gave you half
a bag of cotton candy?

JERRY

At the fair! Oh yeah, the pig
races, oh, that was fun, yeah,
thank you thank you very much for
the cotton candy, it was delicious.
Fantastic.

DENNIS

It was just cotton candy.

JERRY

I know, I mean, just ... Thanks.
It was good seeing you, too, with
uh, that person, the person who you
were with --

DENNIS

My wife. Janet. You okay Jerry?

JERRY

I'm fine.

DENNIS

If you say so. See you, Jerry.

(beat)

Oh -- one more thing -- have you
seen Chloe?

JERRY

Chloe?

DENNIS

French Chloe. Pretty? Dark hair?

JERRY

I haven't. What's up?

DENNIS

It's the end of the quarter and
we're trying to close out the books
and she's not answering her phone.

JERRY

That's sad -- she was nice. Maybe
she went back to her own country.
I'm going to miss her a lot.

Jerry scurries away. Dennis watches him.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jerry stands; Bosco paces; Mr. Whiskers picks at the couch.

MR. WHISKERS

He knows. Or at least suspects.

JERRY

Shit.

MR. WHISKERS

Got to get rid of the body.

Jerry is overcome with sadness.

JERRY

This is it, isn't it?

BOSCO

It's what?

JERRY

It's over for me. There's an invisible line that separates decent people from everyone else. Once you cross it, you can never go back. You're a monster forever.

BOSCO

You're not a monster, Jerry.

MR. WHISKERS

Doesn't matter what you are -- killing her -- that was horrible. Leaving her body in the woods -- that's just stupid.

BOSCO

I hate to say it but the cat is right.

Off Jerry --

EXT. WOODS - TWILIGHT

Long shadows and a light rain makes the woods look radically different from the last time Jerry was here. He carefully makes his way down the edge of the ravine, and then stumbles on something. He looks down.

Chloe's hand sticks out from under a pile of leaves. It's discolored and swollen except her manicure, which is perfect.

He brushes leaves off of her; she's been outside nearly three days and is swollen, gooey and stinky. Further, some woods animal has started eating her stomach, none too neatly. Jerry tries to lift up her body but gets slimed with bowel oozing, is repulsed, and drops her.

INT. HOME DEPOT - EVENING

At the self-serve checkout Jerry buys two giant rolls of plastic sheeting, gloves, and a painter's tarp.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

Jerry rolls the body up in plastic sheeting. His cell phone rings. His ring tone plays *Dance to the Music*. He lets it ring a couple of times, then answers.

JERRY

Hello?

DR. WEST

Jerry? It's Dr. West.

JERRY

Oh, boy. I forgot. My appointment is right now, isn't it?

DR. WEST

Yes, Jerry. Do you think you can make it for at least the last half-hour?

JERRY

I'll come right over.

DR. WEST

Okay. I'll see you when I see you.

Jerry hoists the plastic-wrapped cadaver over his shoulder and marches through the woods toward the road.

INT. DR. WEST'S PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE OFFICE - NIGHT

Jerry sits in a chair across a desk from Dr. West. She's going through a checklist; Jerry's shaking his head "no" at every symptom she enumerates.

DR. WEST

Headaches? Trouble sleeping?
Suicidal impulses? Do you hear voices?

JERRY

I hear your voice, now.

DR. WEST

Disembodied voices. Voices that come from nowhere.

JERRY

Not really.

DR. WEST

And you're still taking the medication?

JERRY

Usually.

DR. WEST

You have to take it every day without fail.

JERRY

I know. I know, but --

DR. WEST

But what?

JERRY

The drugs smooth things out, you know, that's okay I guess, but even though there were bad moments --

DR. WEST

-- very bad moments --

JERRY

(speeding up)

Very bad. But there are also moments of inspiration and beauty, when all the world makes sense and the elegant secret mechanics of man and God are revealed in their many dimensions, and the universe is laid out before mine eyes and it is a blessed place.

DR. WEST

You totally stopped taking the pills, didn't you?

JERRY

Yeah.

DR. WEST

Thank you for that honesty. Our relationship depends on the cooperation of the Ohio Department of Corrections. If you become noncompliant, I have to report that.

JERRY

And they'll put me away?

DR. WEST

Let's not find out. Let's make you compliant. Take the pills. Okay?

JERRY

Okay.

Then Jerry and Dr. West just sit there, staring at each other.

EXT. MEDICAL OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

Jerry's truck is parked in front of this typical Midwestern medical building. In the truck bed is Chloe's corpse, wrapped in plastic. Jerry walks out of the medical building, happy, then sees his truck and becomes glum. He looks into the truck bed -- the body is still there -- before getting in the truck and driving off.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jerry cuts up Chloe's body. On the counter next to the body parts is a big PILL BOTTLE, which commands Jerry's attention and awe more than the pieces of dead Chloe.

Bosco and Mr. Whiskers watch in curious silence. Jerry carefully saws off her head, looks at it, then puts it in the fridge. He continues working on the rest of her body, then he suddenly is overcome with tears.

BOSCO

What's the matter buddy?

JERRY

I really liked her.

BOSCO

I know you did, buddy. She was a good kid. I bet you miss her a lot.

Mr. Whiskers hops up on the counter and rubs his head against Jerry and, uncharacteristically, purrs. Warmly.

JERRY

I love you guys.

Then Jerry gets back to cutting up Chloe: messy, hard work. He sets down the cleaver, picks up the pill bottle, and screws off the lid. Mr. Whiskers whines, agitated, then --

MR. WHISKERS

Don't take those, unless you want
to say goodbye to your old friends.

JERRY

I'm not sure it's a good idea to be
talking to your cat, anyway.

BOSCO

Yeah!

JERRY

Or your dog, either.

Bosco sighs.

MR. WHISKERS

Take those drugs and you will enter
a bleak and lonely world, Jerry.

Jerry replaces the safety cap on the pill bottle without taking one. He opens the fridge to put the pills away. CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD, now fully alive and lovely, looks at Jerry disapprovingly.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Jerry, Jerry, Jerry.

JERRY

Hi, Chloe.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Look what you did to me.

JERRY

I'm sorry.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Imbecile! That helps me a whole
hell of a lot. On Friday I was an
accountant at a large American
manufacturer and today I'm a
severed head in a fridge. Fucking
sucks to be me, Jerry!

JERRY

But what can I do now?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Take the meds. Take them. TAKE
THEM.

Jerry pops out two pills, throws them back, then washes them down with milk straight from the carton. Chloe winks.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD (CONT'D)

See? That wasn't so hard.

Jerry slams the fridge. Mr. Whiskers and Bosco stare at him with big sad eyes, then walk away, silent.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Jerry dresses for work. The apartment is dimmer than before. He is in transition, as the drugs kick in. Mr. Whiskers tries to talk but only succeeds in saying "meow" in a human voice, then mews like a regular old cat. Same with Bosco.

MR. WHISKERS

Meow. Meow. Meow. *mew. mew. mew.*

BOSCO

Bark. Bark. *woof. woof. woof.*

Jerry spooked by what's going on and quickly leaves.

INT. FACTORY - DAY

Jerry packs tubs into boxes. As he works, the color drains out of the picture until we're in a dull, desaturated brown and yellow world; the wide screen narrows to a small square; the soundtrack diminishes in bandwidth until everything sounds tinny, as over a bad phone connection. CLOSE ON JERRY, without his spark, moving slowly and mechanically.

TOM

Jerry, let's speed it up.

JERRY

Okay. Speed it up.

Without joy or verve, Jerry packs another tub into a crate.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - REALISTIC VIEW - NIGHT

Jerry walks in to his apartment after a long day at work.

For the first time, we get an objective view of Jerry's apartment, and it is grim.

Filthy doesn't begin to describe the condition of his place, which is covered in cat hair, Styrofoam containers filled with forgotten rotting fast food, fleas and flying insects, piss-stained carpet, etc. You can smell the stench just by looking.

In objective-reality Mr. Whiskers is a scrawny, disgusting, ill-cared for cat; Bosco's mange is out of control and a string of yellowy schmutz oozes from one of his eyes.

INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - REALISTIC VIEW - NIGHT

Blood stains everywhere; two hefty bags of rotting human and deer body parts. Rancid food, cat shit, you name it -- the nightmare kitchen of all time.

Jerry opens the fridge. Chloe's severed head is gray and lifeless. Jerry pushes her out of the way to get an uncooked hot dog, which he sniffs, and then eats raw. Then he pulls out a gallon jug of Gallo Hearty Burgundy. He closes the fridge, guzzles a huge amount of wine, then catches his breath, and guzzles some more.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- DAY

A steel-gray sun rises over a nearly colorless landscape.

INT. JERRY'S BATHROOM - REALISTIC VIEW - DAY

As disgusting as the living room and kitchen are, the bathroom is ten times worse. Mildewed everything, moldy everything else, a litter box that hasn't been cleaned -- ever -- yellowy-brown porcelain that used to be white, with rusty fixtures.

Jerry, gray and lifeless himself, opens the pill bottle, takes one, sips water straight from the tap and washes it down. When he stands he catches his reflection in the mirror. For one split second we see undrugged MIRROR JERRY in the reflection, occupying a sparkling bright world on the other side of the bathroom mirror.

MIRROR JERRY
Get rid of that shit.

And then Mirror Jerry disappears and real Jerry replaces him in the reflection, seconds before puking his guts out into the sink, a super big heave, purple from last night's wine. He turns on the tap, rinses out his mouth, and then spews forth an even bigger hurl.

Mirror Jerry appears, then nods -- as if to say, "do it."

Real Jerry grabs the pill bottle and dumps all of the pills down the toilet, then flushes.

EXT. ROADS OF VEEDERSBURG - DAY

Jerry drives toward work. The square gray world with tinny mono sound brightens up a little as the drugs wear off.

INT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES FACTORY - DAY

Jerry packs tubs. As he works, the gray, oppressive factory floor begins to brighten, and the narrow screen widens, and the dissonant metal-on-metal grinding of the machinery becomes beautiful music, and the factory turns into the most amazing place in the world. Jerry smiles. Psychosis has its upside, sometimes.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Five Sierra club birders push deep into the woods. A BIRD CALL makes them freeze in their tracks, tense --

SIERRA CLUB LEADER

Shhh. The song of the Yellow
Bellied Sapsucker --

The five birders, excited over this rare-bird sighting, kneel, and heft giant binoculars to their eyes. A WOMAN BIRDER tries to stabilize herself on the steep, slick terrain, and her hand hits something odd. She looks down --

-- and finds a woman's shoe, with a hand-shaped bloodstain. And next to that, part of an intestine. The birder screams.

EXT. WOODS - THREE HOURS LATER - DAY

Yellow crime-scene tape blocks off a portion of the woods. A dozen red numbered flags indicate where evidence has been found. A few crime scene techs take photographs, samples, and measurements. Eight beat cops talk to the birders. Beneath a pop-up shelter command post, Detective Weinbacher talks to a young, pretty, cop, OFFICER DONNA APPLETON.

OFFICER APPLETON

Hunting accident?

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

No. That's not the shoe you wear
to hike deep into the woods.
That's not the purse you take
hunting.

OFFICER APPLETON

A murder?

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

My guess is a murder, hastily
committed, haphazardly covered up.
An impulsive act.

Appleton and Weinbacher exchange a glance -- this is a
gruesome tragedy, and a cool puzzle at the same time. Action
News reporter SARAH HAMMER, standing nearby with a cameraman,
crosses to Detective Weinbacher.

SARAH HAMMER

Sarah Hammer, Action Seven News.
Detective Weinbacher, I overheard --
you think this is a murder?

He nods.

SARAH HAMMER (CONT'D)

And the murderer is still at large?

He nods again.

SARAH HAMMER (CONT'D)

Could this person kill again?

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

That's what I'm afraid of.

Hammer, Weinbacher and Appleton consider the grave
implications of what may have occurred.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jerry, Mr. Whiskers and Bosco watch television. The show is
Animal Planet, as Jerry sees it: nothing but random shots of
animals having sex -- lions mounting lionesses, dogs screwing
in the street, turtles the size of small cars awkwardly
mating, zebras fucking, even a bonobo orgy. They stare.

MR. WHISKERS

This show is making me frisky
frisky frisky.

BOSCO
Control yourself, cat!

MR. WHISKERS
It's easy for you to say -- your
balls are in some doctor's jar!
(in heat)
This is not a good feeling, like
radioactive decay in my gut inside
me is taking over my whole body!

JERRY
(aroused, freaked out)
I know, I hate it, but like it, too
like my insides are all tingly!

MR. WHISKERS
Change the channel change the
channel change the fucking channel
before I explode!

Jerry grabs the remote and the scene on TV changes --

Now it's all kill shots. Tigers kill zebras, polar bears
kill seals, sharks kill whales, crocodiles kill horses, one
after the other with no context or narration.

The cat is transfixed. All three stare at the gruesomeness of
nature. Bosco is repulsed, often looking away from the gore.

MR. WHISKERS (CONT'D)
Oh yeah, that's more like it.

JERRY
I feel better now.

MR. WHISKERS
Animal snuff films are the perfect
antidote to animal porn.

JERRY
This is why we have a TV.

They watch for a minute, enthralled, then --

MR. WHISKERS
Jerry is BACK! Yeah! Fuck those
pills, man! That headshrinker
doesn't care if you're happy. She
just wants you to be obedient.

JERRY
She's not a bad person.

MR. WHISKERS

Not if you want to be slave to
drugs. Just say "no"!!
(re: television)
Check it out! Crocodile killed a
motherfucking zebra!

JERRY

God damn!

MR. WHISKERS

Are you gonna kill someone else?

JERRY

Me? No. Of course not.

BOSCO

Of course he isn't. Sick fucking
cat.

MR. WHISKERS

Why not, Jerr? The connection you
share with someone you kill is
profound. You create a sacred
moment. You become a God in their
life, the last thing they will ever
know, and they become part of your
soul. Plus: you want to.

JERRY

No!

MR. WHISKERS

You killed by accident and you
liked it. It felt good. Now do it
on purpose, Jerry. Just once.
Just to see what is inside you.

JERRY

Shut up! I don't have to listen to
you. You're just a cat.

MR. WHISKERS

A cat that can talk and reason is a
miracle for the ages --

JERRY

Yeah? So?

MR. WHISKERS

-- but a guy who talks to his cat
is just pathetic. Stop being a
loser, loser. Find another woman,
a pretty one, and then kill her.

(MORE)

MR. WHISKERS (CONT'D)

And you will discover what it feels
like to be truly alive.

JERRY

By killing?

Jerry listens intently; what Mr. Whiskers is about to say is forbidden knowledge from deep in Jerry's tortured soul:

MR. WHISKERS

Yes. Yes. Yes! Today I squeezed the life out of a mockingbird. He was singing a gorgeous song, this lovely creature with his carefree melodic voice ... I slipped right behind him, I could feel the fluttering of his tailfeathers, I could see him twitch with every heartbeat. And then, BAM! I had him in my claws. A beautiful thing, and I killed it. Me. Mr. Whiskers. I looked in his eyes as the life drained away. Shook him until he was motionless, until he was a messy ball of feathers and gore. It's better than sex. I am Shiva-Kitty, God of Death.

Jerry is distraught, yet attracted; Mr. Whiskers alluring description pushes all of Jerry's buttons.

BOSCO

You are out of your mind, cat.

MR. WHISKERS

Watch out, here comes the Nutless Dog Lecturer.

BOSCO

Eat shit cat. I'm willing to kill if necessary to defend myself or my human, but to go out and kill a bird, just to watch it die? That is fucked up.

MR. WHISKERS

Without hunting, I have no purpose, no reason to exist.

BOSCO

That is exactly the problem with cats my friend.

MR. WHISKERS

Cats rule. Dogs suck.

BOSCO

Cats suck, dogs rule. My bond with Jerry is profound, me and him, him and me, buddies forever. That bond is what separates dogs from wolves. And from you, cat.

Bosco says "cat" like profanity. Jerry scratches Bosco's ears.

JERRY

That's a good boy.

BOSCO

Did you hear that? I earned the right to be called a good boy. I came up from the pound, see? I saw dogs there who wanted to kill, ugly, scarred mongrels. Nobody adopted them. Those evil dogs get hauled away, and word on the street is it does not end well. That's what happens to pets who kill.

MR. WHISKERS

Asshole dog. Hissssss.

Mr. Whiskers hisses angrily at Bosco, ears pinned, back raised, fur up; Bosco growls at him through snarled teeth; and Jerry pulls them apart. They go back to watching Animal Planet, a particularly gnarly sequence involving a great white shark and a seal. Jerry stares, enchanted, thinking, thinking, thinking...

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - DAY

A bright day, as surreally sunny as a raisin commercial.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - MORNING

His kitchen is shiny and happy and bright and so is Jerry. Mr. Whiskers and Bosco cheerfully chow down at their respective bowls. Jerry pours cereal into a bowl and sets it down on the kitchen table and then opens the fridge.

Inside, next to the carton of milk, Chloe's head is awake, mellow, happy, nice makeup, good hair. She smiles a warm smile, the smile you save for your very very favorite people.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Bon jour, Jerry!

JERRY
(cheerily flirtatious)
Hi, Chloe! *Bon voyage faux pas?*

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
(very sexy)
Pâté de foie gras.

JERRY
Touché blasé macramé?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Négligee mêlée, protégé.
(beat)
Boy oh boy, those pills sure suck!

JERRY
Tell me about it! I only took 'em
because you told me to!

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Stupidest pills ever. They made me
look like a rotten Jack-O-Lantern.

JERRY
You were stinky, too. But now --
(takes a whiff of her)
-- you smell like spring flowers.
And you're *grand prix* pretty!

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
A la mode, you're so sweet, Jerry.
What a beautiful day to come back!

JERRY
A perfect day! And I'm making
cereal. Honey Bunches of Oats with
Almonds. And two percent milk.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Yay!

He hefts her head out and puts it on the dining table, facing himself, then sits down and pours milk on his cereal.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD (CONT'D)
How's the cereal, Jerry?

JERRY
Super delicious.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Avant-garde! Yummy yummy yummy.

Jerry eats in silence for a moment. Then:

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD (CONT'D)
Hey Jerry?

JERRY
Umm hmm?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Hey, Jerry, can you get me a
friend?

JERRY
A friend?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
It gets lonely in the fridge.

JERRY
Kill someone? On purpose?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Yes!

JERRY
I don't know.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Please, Jerry? *Si'l vous plait?*
Pleeeeeeeeeeeeeeease?

Jerry locks eyes with her, and in his best "daddy's got a secret" face, he smiles and nods his consent.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD (CONT'D)
Oh thank you thank you thank you
thank you *merci* I love you Jerry.

Jerry winks at Chloe's severed head, then goes back to eating his cereal. On the floor Bosco and Mr. Whiskers exchange a glance: the Old Jerry is back! After a couple bites, he asks a question with his mouth full:

JERRY
You're not just a hallucination? A
product of my mental illness?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Does it matter, if you're happy?

Jerry shrugs. He's got his suspicions about his sanity; but more than that he's happy to be happy. And he's got a plan.

INT. ACCOUNTING - DAY

Lisa, the sexy bohemian of Veedersburg Accounts Receivable, is in her cubicle, working intensely on a spreadsheet, when she sees the reflection of a man in the computer screen. First, she primps a little -- her manicured hands checking her hair, a quick check of the quality of her breath in her hand, and then she turns around and pretends to be startled when she sees Jerry.

LISA

Hi, Jerry.

JERRY

Hi, Lisa.

Jerry is trying to look sharp, the best he knows how, hair slicked back, T-shirt tucked in, and the way he leans on the cubicle is a studied James Dean slouch.

LISA

What's up big guy?

JERRY

I just happened to be over here, I thought I'd see what you're up to.

LISA

Same as always, figuring out how I can get out of here early tonight.

JERRY

Early? It's past five.

LISA

Oh! Want to grab a drink?

JERRY

Yeah. Want to go to Friday's?

LISA

Friday's kind of sucks on Tuesday. You ever been to Grover's Tavern?

JERRY

No.

LISA

You're going to love it.

INT. GROVER'S TAVERN - NIGHT

A dark tavern with one pool table and a few booths; other than a couple drinkers at the bar and one table of telephone linemen, Jerry and Lisa are the only customers. They sit at a booth in the back, separated by baskets half-full with fried things, and a few empty beer bottles and shot glasses.

LISA

-- and the divorce was final. He got the house and the car and I got the cat, and it was the best deal I ever made in my life.

JERRY

What kind of cat?

LISA

Part Siamese, part Tabby. From a rescue. Are you good with cats?

JERRY

The real question is: are cats good with me? Because they pretty much own us and not the other way around.

LISA

Oh, my God you've got that right. My cat -- if I don't do everything he wants me to do -- watch out! I tried dry cat food on him -- and he tore up my couch! Serves me right.

JERRY

They're very demanding.

LISA

Oh, yeah! What's your cat's name?

JERRY

Mr. Whiskers. And he is a son of a bitch. How about you?

Lisa laughs! Jerry's a funny guy -- and he likes cats!

LISA

My cat's a son of a bitch, too! Pig Head is his name, and Pig Head is what he is, hah hah!

JERRY

Pig Head!

LISA

Yeah. Oh yeah. You want to meet him? He's probably tearing up my apartment right now ... He's such a pig head.

JERRY

Okay.

LISA

Will you drive?

Jerry nods. He looks worried. Afraid.

INT. JERRY'S CAR - NIGHT

Winding rural Ohio roads. Jerry drives. Lisa babbles.

LISA

I don't really have any food in the apartment --

JERRY

Cat food.

LISA

Cat food, I got, but for you, if you're hungry -- I mean, I don't usually, I'm not in the habit of going home after one date, but, every so often you have to say, what the hell, right?

JERRY

Yeah. You have to cut loose.

LISA

Hey, that's my road. We should have turned.

JERRY

Oh. I want to go somewhere else.

LISA

Where?

JERRY

It's a surprise.

Lisa scoots over next to Jerry and puts a hand on his leg.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Jerry stops his truck next to an abandoned rural farmhouse, in a field overgrown with weeds. In the moonlight the farmhouse is equal parts romantic and terrifying.

Jerry and Lisa get out of the truck. It's cold enough to see their breath. As they move closer together, we see that he holds in his hand a massive hunting knife, the same one he used to gut Chloe. He sticks it into the pocket of his jacket on the opposite side from Lisa. She suspects nothing.

LISA

Where are we?

JERRY

This is where I grew up.

LISA

It's beautiful.

JERRY

You think so?

LISA

So romantic. What did you guys grow?

JERRY

My grandfather used to grow corn but after he died we didn't grow anything. Mom just got disability checks.

They take a few hesitant steps, then Lisa stops, afraid.

LISA

What are we doing here?

JERRY

I just wanted to show you.
(sees her)
You're afraid.

LISA

A little.

Jerry takes Lisa's hand, partly to console her and partly to reassure himself. He points to an upper window.

JERRY

That was my window. I used to stare out at the night sky and make believe the stars were my friends.

LISA
That's so sweet. Can you show me?

JERRY
You really want to go inside?

LISA
Oh yeah.

Lisa wraps her arm around Jerry's waist and they walk together toward the front door, each comforting the other.

INT. JERRY'S CHILDHOOD HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door creaks open and Jerry and Lisa go inside. It's a dusty home that's been abandoned for years. Jerry turns on a flashlight; its beam flits past a giant spider web and illuminates the living room, which still has a ratty old couch, and cast-iron coffee table, covered with dust and yellowed newspapers.

LISA
Ooohhhhhhhh. This was your home?

JERRY
Yep.

Jerry stares into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FIFTEEN YEARS EARLIER - DAY

The same room, in good repair and daylight. WWF Wrestling plays on the television. JERRY'S MOTHER DENISE, 40's, prematurely gray, rail-thin, intense, stands in the doorway to the kitchen, arms folded. She winces at a CRACKING sound.

Across from her, TEENAGE JERRY'S wrists are lashed to the CAST-IRON COFFEE TABLE, and he is bent over at the waist, pants down. The CRACK comes from a wire hanger smashing into his bare bruised ass.

The wielder of the hanger is JERRY'S STEPFATHER, MACK, thirties, buff, an aluminum siding salesman and a man of great moral certainty and violence.

MACK
Bunny Monkey is not real.

TEENAGE JERRY
Bunny Monkey is my friend!

Mack lays into Teenage Jerry's ass with the hanger once again, drawing blood.

MACK

You got to learn reality from
fantasy, Jerry, you got to! It's
just a sock.

Teenage Jerry grits his teeth and stares straight ahead: a sock monkey with rabbit ears gives him encouragement.

BUNNY MONKEY

Be brave, Jerry!

TEENAGE JERRY

I love you bunny monkey!

Mack lashes out again and again, bloodying Teenage Jerry's ass. Then Mack grabs the sock monkey and rips it apart.

MACK

It's a sock, Jerry. A fucking
sock!

But Jerry sees it differently: as Bunny Monkey is torn asunder by Mack, the brave little sock monkey whistles a defiant tune until he is only a pile of rags. Teen Jerry weeps as his fantasy friend is destroyed by his stepfather.

INT. JERRY'S CHILDHOOD HOME / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lisa holds tight to Jerry.

LISA

A lot of memories, huh Jerry?

JERRY

Yeah, a lot of memories.

LISA

Not all good?

JERRY

Nope.

She puts her hand around his waist.

LISA

Can we look upstairs?

JERRY

Okay.

They go up the stairs.

INT. JERRY'S CHILDHOOD HOME / UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The floor is rickety and someone has graffitied the walls. Beer cans and cigarette butts litter the floor. Holding each other tight, Jerry and Lisa creep down the hall.

They come to a door that has been kicked in; Jerry freezes in place and looks through the door.

INT. JERRY'S MOTHER'S ROOM - FIFTEEN YEARS EARLIER - DAY

Teenage Jerry sits on the side of the bed where his mother rests.

JERRY'S MOTHER

They're coming for me Jerry.

TEENAGE JERRY

I'll stop them.

JERRY'S MOTHER

It's too late. They already know.
I told them.

TEENAGE JERRY

What'd you tell them?

JERRY'S MOTHER

I told them that sometimes I can hear the secret conversations of the world, things no one else hears, the animals and the angels talking to me.

TEENAGE JERRY

Sometimes I hear them too, mom.

JERRY'S MOTHER

I know you do, Jerry. Never tell anyone. I told them and they won't let me alone. Promise me you'll never tell. Promise!

TEENAGE JERRY

I promise.

JERRY'S MOTHER

Never! They don't understand. They can't understand. What's that sound?

She hears something, and points toward the window. Teenage Jerry walks to the window. Three cars slowly work their way up the gravel driveway through the weedy yard: a sheriff's black and white; a white sedan marked with a County logo; and an ambulance.

TEENAGE JERRY

It's them.

JERRY'S MOTHER

I can't go back. I can't go back.
I can't go back. I can't go back.

She puts out her arms; Teenage Jerry leans over the bed and hugs her. Jerry's mother pulls away. She pushes Jerry back. Then she grabs a drinking glass from her bedside table, smashes it, and jabs the glass into the side of her neck. However, she doesn't quite hit the artery. Her neck slowly oozes blood as she writhes in incredible pain.

JERRY'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Finish it, Jerry. Free me. Free me. Before they get here. Do it.

TEENAGE JERRY

I love you, mommy!

Teenage Jerry takes the water glass and jabs it again and again into his mother's neck; blood gushes from her artery and her face turns ashen gray and her lips try to form words but she makes no sound, and then she crumples to the side and is still.

The door is kicked in. Two sheriff's deputies rush into the room, followed by a social worker and two EMT's. Teenage Jerry stands by his mother's bed, covered in blood, broken glass in hand, seemingly guilty as sin. The cops taser him and he twitches violently before falling to the ground.

INT. JERRY'S CHILDHOOD HOME / UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jerry and Lisa stare into the empty room.

LISA

Oh, Jerry, what is it?

JERRY

My momma died in that room.

Lisa turns quite tender, running her hands through Jerry's hair. Tears form in her eyes.

LISA

I never told anyone what I'm going to tell you. I had an abusive father with all that entails.

(quiet)

Every kind of abuse. My mother was addicted to methadone and I was passed from family to family like an unwanted pet. Things happened.

JERRY

I'm sorry, Lisa.

LISA

Bad things.

JERRY

Oh, oh, oh no. That's so sad.

LISA

Yes. But I also think that sometimes the worst circumstances make the best people. You come back from the brink, and the whole world is beautiful.

A long, pregnant pause. And then they kiss. Tentative at first, and then a real kiss, filled with tenderness and desire and the bond that only survivors share.

LISA (CONT'D)

Take me home.

Lisa takes Jerry by the hand and leads him toward the stairs. BEHIND HIM, unseen by Lisa, Jerry drops his hunting knife, and the two walk down the rickety stairs, entwined.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM AREA / STUDIO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jerry and Lisa make love. He's inexperienced. She's okay with that and is gentle and patient. It's awkward but heartfelt.

INT. LISA'S BEDROOM AREA / STUDIO APARTMENT - DAWN

Pighead the cat awakens Lisa, who slips out of bed. The apartment is one giant room, with some room dividers. Jerry cracks open his eyes and watches her, naked in the morning sun, messy hair, self-assured, as she hugs her cat to herself; then walks to the kitchen area and puts cat food into a bowl. She feeds Pighead, then returns to the bed, climbing onto Jerry.

LISA
That was a wonderful night, Jerry.

JERRY
I think so too.

LISA
I'm glad you asked me out.

Jerry hugs her.

LISA (CONT'D)
You're so mysterious. The first
time you came up to accounting I
could tell there was something deep
about you.

JERRY
Hmmm.

LISA
You seem a million miles away.
What's on your mind?

JERRY
Our night turned out a lot
different than I had expected.

LISA
Different, good?

JERRY
Definitely. I don't feel alone.

LISA
Me neither.

She kisses him.

LISA (CONT'D)
We have to get going.

JERRY
Work!

LISA
I know it seems like the last thing
on earth I want to think about.

JERRY
I have to feed my cat and my dog.
They're going to be furious.

LISA
You have to take me to my car.

JERRY
Okay.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Lisa walks with Jerry toward his truck. She sees the dent in his bumper.

LISA
What happened there?

JERRY
Deer. You should have seen it. It broke the windshield too. I got that fixed first.

LISA
I didn't notice last night.

JERRY
It was dark.

They get into his truck.

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT / GROVER'S TAVERN - DAY

Jerry and Lisa kiss goodbye.

LISA
Come up to accounting, maybe this afternoon, okay?

JERRY
I'll try.

LISA
Do it. Pretend like you're delivering something. We can make out in the copy room.

JERRY
I'll try.

She walks to her car. Jerry drives away.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jerry enters. Bosco races over and leaps on Jerry, tail wagging, giving him a big slobbery kiss.

BOSCO

You're home, you're home, the man
is back, the man is back and he got
laid! Bring her home, I want to
smell her crotch. Smells
deeeelicious.

Mr. Whiskers is more stand-offish, staring at Jerry from a perch atop the couch. He's hungry and angry.

MR. WHISKERS

Where the fuck's my fucking food,
fuck face?

Jerry ignores Mr. Whiskers, and scratches Bosco's ears.

JERRY

That's a good boy, good boy, good
boy.

Mr. Whiskers plops down off the couch and stands stock-still on the ground, staring at the disgusting human-canine public display of affection, until Jerry catches his eye.

MR. WHISKERS

Food!

JERRY

Hey Mr. Whiskers.

MR. WHISKERS

Food! Now!

Jerry starts walking toward the kitchen.

MR. WHISKERS (CONT'D)

I left you a gift on the sofa, a
little reminder of why you can't
leave us alone without FOOD God
damn it.

Right in the middle of the couch in a big hairy cat turd.

INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - DAY

Jerry happily hums to himself, no particular tune, just love coming through, he feeds Mr. Whiskers, he feeds Bosco, it's a beautiful morning. And then he opens the fridge: inside is Chloe's severed head.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Bon jour, Jerry.

He slams the fridge door. Stops humming.

BOSCO
What's the matter buddy?

JERRY
What am I supposed to do?

BOSCO
I don't know.

MR. WHISKERS
Same as always: pretend like everything's fine.

JERRY
Really?

MR. WHISKERS
It got you this far, didn't it?

Jerry nods slowly, the weight of the world on his shoulders.

INT. VEEDERSBURG FIXTURES - FACTORY FLOOR - DAY

Lost in thought, Jerry loads tubs. Dennis Kowalski walks over.

DENNIS
Hey, Jerry?

JERRY
What?

DENNIS
They need you up in accounting.
Some problem with payroll or something.

Jerry skulks off the factory floor.

INT. ACCOUNTING - DAY

Jerry walks over to Lisa's cubicle. She's fluffed her hair, and her silk camisole peeks out from her unbuttoned blouse.

LISA
(superhot come on)
I found some irregularities in your records and we need to do an audit.

JERRY
You did?

LISA
Come with me.

INT. COPY ROOM - DAY

Jerry and Lisa make out like bandits in the cluttered copy room, not much bigger than a closet. She takes his hand and sticks it under her skirt and grinds against him. There's a knock at the door. They both straighten out the best they can.

LISA
Come in!

It's her coworker, ALISON, 33. It's perfectly clear what's going on but no one wants to acknowledge it.

LISA (CONT'D)
Thank you Jerry for uh for foxing the kippier, I mean fuxing the clappier --

ALISON
I can make a copy later.

LISA
No that's okay.

Lisa and Jerry laugh, then --

JERRY
I gotta go.

And with that Jerry leaves. Alison pulls the door shut.

ALISON
He is so cute! Lisa! You dog!

LISA

Woof, woof. Are you still doing payroll?

ALISON

Yeah, I'm a payroll lifer, why?

LISA

I want Jerry's address. I'm going to take him a little gift. A whoopee cake or something.

ALISON

You could just ask him.

LISA

I want it to be a surprise.

ALISON

Okay. But if he has a brother I get first dibs.

LISA

Deal.

They leave the photocopy room just as a male supervisor is passing by, who shoots them a dirty look.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Jerry's eating a Budget Gourmet TV dinner while watching television news with Bosco and Mr. Whiskers.

ON THE TELEVISION:

INT. NEWS SET - DAY

Two preternaturally polished Action News Reporters -- NED and TINA -- chuckle about a cutesy story.

NED

That's a lot of cheese sandwiches to eat in one sitting! Forty-one!

TINA

That tiny Sonya Thomas always wins!
(long dramatic pause)
And now a grimmer story. A woman murdered -- her partial remains dumped in the woods!

NED

So sad!

TINA

So terrible! Reporter Sarah Hammer has an Action News Exclusive -- the woman may have been the victim of a serial killer!

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS - EVENING

Jerry puts down his food and watches the television intently. Mr. Whiskers and Bosco lean forward, too.

SARAH HAMMER (O.S.)

The grisly discovery Tuesday, near Veedersburg, of an unidentified female stabbing victim, have local police on the hunt for a serial killer.

MR. WHISKERS

Holy fucking shit! Jerry, you're a serial killer!

BOSCO

No he isn't.

JERRY

Shhhh!

ON THE TELEVISION:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY / INTERCUT

A news interview in Detective Weinbacher's manly office.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

With the aid of the FBI we have developed a profile of the unknown killer. Male, late twenties or early thirties, white, lower or middle class. Trouble fitting in.

MR. WHISKERS

That's you, Jerry!

SARAH HAMMER

Will he kill again?

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER
If he's not stopped soon there's
every indication he will kill
again.

ANGLE ON JERRY, MR. WHISKERS AND BOSCO

JERRY
No! No! Oh my God.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE TELEVISION

We're now in Jerry's point of view, and Detective Weinbacher
directly addresses him, staring straight out of the T.V.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER
You hear that, punk? You're a
killer. A serial killer.

JERRY
I don't want to be a killer.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER
Too late shitbag. No turning
back. You're a stone-cold
murdering maniac.

Jerry turns off the television.

MR. WHISKERS
Told you so.

JERRY
Told me so what?

MR. WHISKERS
I told you you like killing. And
now the cops say the same thing.

Jerry hangs his head in shame.

CHLOE (O.S.)
Jerry! Jerry! Jerry! Jerry!

He stands, walks to the kitchen, and opens the fridge. Chloe
winks at him.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
What're they saying about you baby?

JERRY
I'm a killer.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Take me out. Let's talk about it.

He grabs her head and carries it to the coffee table in front of the couch; Bosco and Mr. Whiskers sit on the floor on either side of her. Jerry sinks into the couch.

JERRY

What if I am?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

A serial killer?

JERRY

Yes.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Is it something you are -- like having brown eyes, or being right-handed -- or is it something you choose, like being an accountant?

JERRY

I wish I knew.

BOSCO

You can still make the choice, Jerry, you're still a good man.

JERRY

I try to be a good man. I want to be a good man. But then there's the cat --

MR. WHISKERS

Fuck you, blaming it on me.

JERRY

No! Hear me out. I know what is good. I want to lead a righteous and just life and be an upstanding member of the community. But then Mr. Whiskers makes me do bad things.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

The cat was nowhere near when you killed me.

MR. WHISKERS

See? See?? Thank you, lady-head.

JERRY

I know right from wrong. I try to be good. But when I do certain horrible things, I am filled with terror and dread, standing outside myself. Even though I know what I've done I also feel like -- it wasn't me.

BOSCO

Wow, Buddy. Pretty complicated inside the human mind, huh?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

You killed me. You.

JERRY

I know, but I want to be good! In some sense it wasn't me at all! It was --

MR. WHISKERS

You going to say it was me?

JERRY

I don't know!

MR. WHISKERS

Let's say it was me, just for purposes of argument. But you know that I'm not a talking cat. There's no such thing. Everything I say -- is really you.

JERRY

What?

MR. WHISKERS

Come on. You know that.

BOSCO

Me too. Dogs can't talk.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Me too. Ever since you killed me, everything I say -- is you. A severed head can't talk, silly man!

JERRY

I kind of suspected. But if there's me, regular me, me who is talking now, and I want to be good...

(MORE)

JERRY (CONT'D)

and then there's you and you and
you, trying to make me do something
else, am I good?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

No. You're bad.

BOSCO

She's wrong. You're a good boy.

MR. WHISKERS

They're both wrong: you are what
you are.

Jerry takes Mr. Whiskers onto his lap.

JERRY

I remember now why I keep you, Mr.
Whiskers. That's it. I am what I
am.

The DOORBELL rings. Bosco barks. Mr. Whiskers jumps on the
couch.

BOSCO

Intruder! Someone's here!
Intruder! Intruder! I got your
back Jerry!

JERRY

Quiet! Quiet Bosco!

BOSCO

Doing my job, protecting the
homefront. Intruder! Intruder!
Arf! Intruder!

JERRY

Shhh! Quiet!

Jerry checks the peephole.

JERRY'S P.O.V.

Through the fisheye lens he sees Lisa, on the landing of the
outdoor stairs, holding a cake box.

INSIDE

Jerry whispers "shit!" And grabs Bosco by the collar.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Just a minute -- just a minute -- I
have to put my dog away --

BOSCO

That's her! I can smell her! I have
to smell her butt, Jerrrrry,
please!

JERRY

No! Bad Bosco! Go. Go!

Jerry shoves Bosco and Mr. Whiskers into the bedroom and
slams the door. He runs his fingers through his hair,
approaches the door, and then at the last second his eye
catches Chloe's severed head --

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

Bon jour, Jerry!

JERRY

Damn it!

He tosses a windbreaker over Chloe's head, then opens the
front door a crack, and sees Lisa standing outside. She's
dressed provocatively, and holds a cake.

LISA

Hey, Jerry.

JERRY

Hey, Lisa.

Jerry steps out onto the landing.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

The door closes behind Jerry. His landing is atop a set of
stairs above the bowling alley; Jerry and Lisa are framed by
the decrepit sign and a graffiti-covered, nonfunctional neon
bowling ball and pin. Lisa kisses Jerry hello. His hair is
a mess; she runs her fingers through it.

LISA

I didn't mean to surprise you --

JERRY

I'm glad you stopped by.

LISA

I'm imposing. I can tell.

JERRY

You look beautiful.

LISA

Thank you. You look -- delicious.

JERRY

I am so happy I met you.

LISA

Oh, Jerry.

JERRY

I'm serious. I feel like the luckiest guy in Veedersburg.

He means it. Lisa can tell. She blushes.

LISA

I brought you a cake.

JERRY

You are so amazing, Lisa.

LISA

Do you have company? Am I interrupting?

JERRY

No, it's just ... what you heard is, I talk to my pets sometimes. A lot of the time. All the time.

LISA

Me too.

JERRY

And they talk to me.

LISA

I totally know what you mean.

JERRY

Thank you for the cake.

He tries the doorknob. It's locked.

LISA

Are you locked out?

JERRY

It's okay. I'll get in somehow. You don't have to wait for me.

LISA

Okay. I thought --

JERRY

I should invite you in. I want to, but it's a disaster in there.

LISA

Okay.

JERRY

Plus I'm locked out.

LISA

Do you want me to wait while you try to get back in?

JERRY

No, that's okay.

LISA

I don't mind. Really. It's not like I have a life -- ha ha. How are you planning to get in?

JERRY

There's a skylight. I can just climb up there.

LISA

I'm pretty good at getting into places because I always forget my keys.

JERRY

No! I'll go through the skylight.

Jerry stands on the railing to the stairs; then he pulls himself up to the roof.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY ROOF - NIGHT

A big industrial roof, covered with tar paper; a few vents stick out, and there's some trash and bottles around, the random crap that accumulates on a roof. Jerry crosses to an ancient skylight, that's corroded right into the frame in which it sits. He sees down into his bedroom; Mr. Whiskers and Bosco look back up at him. He plunks down next to the skylight and tries to pry it open. It doesn't budge.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Lisa hears Jerry lumbering around on the roof.

LISA

Jerry? You okay?

JERRY (O.S.)

Yes! Fine. Fine!

She reaches into her purse and pulls out a credit card. She slips it between the door and the jamb and slips it around, up and down, back and forth. It opens the latch.

LISA
Jerry? Hey, Jerry!

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY ROOF - NIGHT

Jerry pounds on the skylight, growing angrier and more frustrated by the second. He doesn't hear Lisa.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Lisa pushes the door open an inch.

LISA
Jerry! I got it open!!

She peers in.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LISA'S P.O.V.

Just a messy apartment. Nothing horrific on first glance. And then -- the bedroom door pops open -- and Bosco bolts straight at the door.

BACK TO SCENE / EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Bosco jumps on the door with both paws -- forces it open -- runs onto the porch and charges straight at Lisa's crotch, jamming his nose right in to her pudendum for a long, deep whiff. He's not talking -- he's just a dog now. Lisa drops her purse and grabs Bosco's collar.

LISA
Jerry!

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY ROOF - NIGHT

Jerry's intensely focused on trying to pry open the skylight and still doesn't hear Lisa calling him.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Bosco tries to escape. Lisa hangs on tight to his collar.

LISA

Come on boy, don't run away, come
on, let's put you back in.

Lisa, focused on handling the dog and not on her surroundings, drags Bosco into the apartment.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lisa drags the rambunctious Bosco through the apartment toward the bedroom. The apartment, now seen objectively, is a bleak, horrific mess. Blood is smeared in the least-expected places. Clothes and rotting food are everywhere. Lisa notices none of this -- she's staring at Bosco --

LISA

Come on. Let's go. Boy -- come on
-- going to put you back where you
were -- let's go --

With her foot she pushes open the bedroom door, and then enters.

INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa pulls Bosco into the bedroom. She gags on the foul odor. Then she looks up. Jerry is staring straight back at her from the skylight. He looks ... different. Scarier.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY ROOF - NIGHT

Jerry sees Lisa in his bedroom and immediately stops trying to open the skylight, and instead bolts for the edge of the roof.

INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa finally pauses long enough to see Jerry's bedroom as it objectively is, a filthy, freaky mess, Forty Year Old Virgin meets Texas Chainsaw Massacre. She is appalled. It takes her breath away. She lets go of Bosco, who immediately jams his nose back into her crotch.

LISA

Get away! Get away!

Lisa backs out of the bedroom into --

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

And now, she sees. The blood. The mess. The stains. The cat shit. The dog shit. The rotting food. The filth. The windbreaker covering Chloe's severed head -- Lisa's eyes go wide with fear -- in spite of the size, the shape, the darkening oily bloodstain, Lisa does not let herself believe what she sees.

And then, behind her, Jerry enters. She slowly turns to face him. Jerry is pained that she saw him at his worst.

JERRY

Lisa, I can explain.

LISA

Jerry, Jerry, no. I'm going to leave. I shouldn't have come in --

JERRY

This is not me. I mean this is not what I'm really like.

LISA

I apologize.

She starts for the door. Jerry, embarrassed and overwhelmed, cuts off her progress.

JERRY

No. No. Lisa -- I -- I -- give me a chance to explain --

Lisa backs into the apartment, as Jerry walks toward her.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I'm basically a good person. I try to do the right thing. I'm not a bad guy. And, Lisa, I think I love you.

LISA

Oh, Jerry --

And then Lisa backs right into the coffee table, and knocks Chloe's severed head over backwards, and the windbreaker falls off. Chloe's not talking, she's not even a "she", it's a thing, a nine-day-old severed human head, as gray as a beef roast past its fresh date, eyes caved in, cheeks sunk, mouth flapping open to reveal blackening gums and molars.

Lisa SCREAMS.

JERRY

Noooooo!

Jerry's eyes are filled with the shock of seeing one's secrets splattered open for all the world to see, a deep and epic humiliation beyond anything he's yet experienced, as in one instant the woman who moments ago believed he was a big sweet guy now knows for certain he's a psychotic killer.

Lisa SCREAMS again.

Jerry hyperventilates. Mr. Whiskers jumps up on the couch and begins yelling at him --

MR. WHISKERS

Kill her! Kill her Jerry! Fucking bitch never liked you anyway!

JERRY

No, I can't, I can't!

Lisa runs out the door.

MR. WHISKERS

Don't wuss out now! If she gets away the whole world will know, the whole world, Jerry! Everyone will know you're a crazy perv killer!

Jerry runs out the door.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Lisa runs down the stairs. Jerry chases her.

Lisa gets to her car -- no purse, no keys. She looks up -- her purse is on the landing. There is no traffic. No people. She is all alone with Jerry, and he's coming after her like a freight train. Lisa races into the field next to the parking lot, running for her life.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Lisa runs at top speed. Jerry pursues. She gets to the end of the field. Looks both ways. To her right is a ravine. To her left, a thicket of trees. She races for the ravine.

EXT. RAVINE - NIGHT

Lisa skillfully darts down the ravine. Jerry's right behind her.

Low-hanging branches scrape across her face and scratch up her skin but she's tough and keeps at it. Jerry is right behind her. He stumbles. Jerry crashes down the steep ravine, falling onto Lisa.

It's a hard landing.

JERRY

Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God.

Jerry pulls himself up. He's a fucked-up mess. He looks at Lisa. She's got a compound fracture to her left femur, bone sticking out, blood everywhere, and is going into shock.

LISA

Jerry. Help me. Please.

He stares at her for a long, uncomfortable time. Tears stream down Jerry's face as he leans over Lisa's broken body. He kisses her on each cheek. She's terrified.

JERRY

Lisa -- I love you.

And then, Jerry strangles Lisa. It takes a long time. And after she's dead, he lies down next to her body and weeps.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Jerry drags Lisa's body across the field back to his apartment.

EXT. VFBED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

Jerry drags Lisa's body up the external staircase, leaving a huge blood smear behind him.

INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jerry listlessly cuts up Lisa's body. Puts her head in the fridge. Puts Chloe's head in the fridge next to it. They don't talk to him. Then Jerry gets back to the joyless work of cutting her up and putting the parts into a trash bag. He's almost overcome with a sobbing fit but keeps it together and continues his macabre work.

INT. JERRY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jerry, covered in blood and torn up from his death race through the woods, swigs generic vodka straight from a 1.5 liter bottle. Mr. Whiskers and Bosco hop up on the bed next to him, and they are drunk off their asses, too.

MR. WHISKERS

Shit, did whatcha hadda do man,
figure it out in the morning, meow
meow it's all come out in the wash,
purrrrr, purrrrr.

BOSCO

Errryone's still gonna love you
Jerry anybody woulda done uh same
thing, yurra same guy you wurr
afore, itsonna be okay.

Jerry passes out.

INT. ACCOUNTING - AFTERNOON

Alison from payroll peers into Lisa's cubicle. No one is there. She leans into Dave from Personnel's cubicle.

ALISON

Hey Dave --

DAVE

Yeah?

ALISON

You seen Lisa today?

DAVE

Nope.

ALISON

She's not answering her phone,
either.

DAVE

She went out with that weird guy
Jerry from shipping.

ALISON

I know.

DAVE

How much do you know?

ALISON
They were seeing each other.

DAVE
About him I mean.

ALISON
What's there to know?

DAVE
Go to the Veedersburg News web
site. July 9th, 1997. Front page.

He hands her a Post-it.

INT. ALISON'S CUBICLE - DAY

Alison's computer screen shows the *Veedersburg News* headline, "Local Man Charged in Murder of Mother", next to a picture of young Jerry. She's appalled.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S PARKING LOT - TWILIGHT

Alison drives into the bowling alley parking lot and parks her Subaru next to Lisa's car. She gets out. Walks to Lisa's car. It's locked. She peers inside. She heads toward the outdoor stairway that leads to Jerry's apartment.

INT. JERRY'S KITCHEN - TWILIGHT

Jerry is hung over, hair askew, shirt stained, ten-o'clock shadow. He dumps some dry dog food into the dog bowl, then dumps out a can of cat food into the cat bowl. As his pets eat he opens the fridge and pulls out a carton of milk, stopping briefly to stare at the two severed heads on his top shelf before swigging milk straight from the carton.

He closes the fridge, opens a can of tuna, and starts eating right from the can. Bosco abruptly stops eating --

BOSCO
Danger! Danger! Danger!

Bosco races into the living room. Jerry puts down his tuna and follows Bosco; Mr. Whiskers pretends to be indifferent, but then can't help himself and races after them.

INT. JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - TWILIGHT

Bosco's freaking out; even Mr. Whiskers is a little excited.

BOSCO

Intruder! Intruder! Human in the parking lot!

MR. WHISKERS

Have some dignity, dog breath, don't pee yourself.

(to Jerry)

What is it, Jerr?

JERRY

I don't know.

Jerry peers through the peephole in the door.

JERRY'S P.O.V. THROUGH PEEPHOLE - TWILIGHT

A fish-eye view of the parking lot. Alison walks around Lisa's car, staring in the windows, concerned.

BACK TO SCENE - JERRY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - TWILIGHT

Jerry pulls away from the door and walks in worried circles in his living room.

JERRY (CONT'D)

A woman from work.

BOSCO

This could be it, buddy.

JERRY

You think?

BOSCO

She knows. She'll tell. And that'll be that.

JERRY

Oh, crap.

BOSCO

You could turn yourself in.

MR. WHISKERS

What the fuck?

BOSCO

Sure. Cops are people, too. They'll be reasonable.

MR. WHISKERS

Okay, now it's official: the dog is retarded.

JERRY

What do you think I should do?

MR. WHISKERS

Talk to her. Make her go away.

BOSCO

He can't talk his way out of this.

MR. WHISKERS

Muzzle yourself, Dog-Tard.

JERRY

Seriously, what if she doesn't believe me?

MR. WHISKERS

You'll think of something.

Mr. Whiskers has an evil gleam in his eye. Off Jerry --

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - TWO MINUTES LATER - TWILIGHT

Alison stares in the rear window of Lisa's car when she hears a door SLAM. She looks up: walking down the outside stairway is Jerry, trying his best to act casual. Tucked in his rear pocket is a big, bloody knife, with a chunk of dried scalp on it. (Alison doesn't see it, yet.) Alison is nervous, vexed - - verging on scared.

JERRY

Hi.

ALISON

Oh, hi.

JERRY

Bowling alley's closed.

ALISON

I know. Uh, my name's Alison? I work with Lisa? At Veedersburg Fixtures? In accounting.

JERRY

I know. I work there too. Jerry. Packing and Shipping.

ALISON

Um, Jerry? Lisa didn't come to work -- I saw her car and I wondered if maybe you knew where she was?

JERRY

Sure I do. She's upstairs. In my apartment.

Alison is relieved.

ALISON

Really?

JERRY

Yes. We had a date.

ALISON

Lisa had a date -- with you?

JERRY

Yes.

ALISON

And she's really just upstairs in your apartment?

JERRY

Yes. Right up those stairs.

Alison sighs.

ALISON

Can I talk to her?

JERRY

She's kind of indisposed. It might be -- embarrassing.

ALISON

I'm such a dork. You and Lisa are --

JERRY

Yes, we are. Exactly.

ALISON

My bad. I'm very happy for both of you. I apologize for prying.

Even as Alison apologizes, she harbors some doubt.

JERRY

No problem. We're okay?

ALISON

Sure. We're okay.

Alison walks toward her own car. Jerry starts toward the stairs. Alison looks over her shoulder one last time --

-- and sees the knife in Jerry's back pocket. Alison SCREAMS. She suspected -- she feared -- now she knows.

Jerry turns, locks eyes with Alison, and in that instant realizes Alison now views him with contempt and hatred.

Jerry charges toward Alison; she runs into the field. Jerry follows. He pulls the knife out of his pocket and flicks off a bit of scalp, then lumbers into the field after Alison. He's not angry; he's just a man with a job to do.

CUT TO:

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / KITCHEN - DAY

Jerry saws off Alison's head. While he's hacking away, Mr. Whiskers and Bosco stand and watch. He finally cuts all the way through her neck; then lifts her head by the hair and carries it toward the refrigerator.

Bosco stands between Jerry and the fridge.

BOSCO

Hey, Jerry.

JERRY

What?

BOSCO

Remember last week, you were having kind of a tough day, after killing that first girl? You said there's an invisible line that separates good from evil, and you thought you'd crossed it. And I said, "no! you're a good boy!" Remember?

JERRY

Yes, I remember. So what?

BOSCO

I've changed my opinion.

JERRY

Now you think I'm evil, Bosco?

BOSCO

I'm certain of it.

Bosco walks away, leaving Jerry to consider this judgment against him from his dog. He is, after all, still holding Alison's severed head. Mr. Whiskers pads across to Jerry--

MR. WHISKERS

Welcome to my world, Jerry!

JERRY

I'm not sure I want to go there.

MR. WHISKERS

You're already there. Fuck the dog.
Become what you're meant to become.

Jerry thinks about this, then puts Alison's head into his refrigerator, on the shelf below Chloe's and Lisa's heads. Jerry stands back admires the heads. For a long time they are perfectly immobile, old gray meat on the refrigerator shelf. Then, Chloe opens her eyes, followed by Lisa, then Alison; color returns to their cheeks; they wake up.

Chloe's severed head winks at Jerry.

JERRY

What do you think I should do,
Chloe?

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD

You can't go back to work, but you
can't stay here, either. Maybe
now's a good time to see if the cat
knows what he's talking about.

MR. WHISKERS

Me-ow to that!

JERRY

You think I should just go kill
people for no reason?

MR. WHISKERS

For the pleasure it brings.

Jerry thinks about it. Closes the fridge. Looks at Bosco's big sad eyes. Then at the cat, who is happier than ever.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S PARKING LOT - DAY

Jerry chains Alison's car to the bumper of his F-150.
Lisa's car is parked next to it.

EXT. RIVER BANK - A FEW HOURS LATER - DAY

Jerry's F-150 is parked at the river. He unchains Lisa's car from the bumper. Nearby, Alison's car is parked on the muddy river bank.

Jerry walks to the rear of Alison's car and tries to push it into the river. It rolls forward a few feet then sinks.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK / RIVER BANK - FIVE MINUTES LATER - DAY

Jerry revs his truck's engine, then engages the transmission, shoving Lisa's car into the river. He watches it sink.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- DAY

Pouring rain. A rusty Chrysler pulls into the parking lot and stops. Dave from Personnel gets out; he's wearing full rain gear and carries an umbrella. He's terrified. Slowly Dave walks up the stairway toward Jerry's door. He knocks and is answered with FURIOUS BARKING and SHRILL MEWING.

DAVE

Alison?

No answer, except for animal noises. He tries the door. It's unlocked. He opens the door part way; Bosco immediately RACES OUT, growling. Dave backs against the porch railing and drops his umbrella. Dave's getting soaked.

Mangy Bosco is too weak to attack. He humps it down the stairs, then into the field. Bosco's followed shortly by sickly Mr. Whiskers, who runs right past Dave.

Dave leans in the door; the stench is overpowering. He gets one glance inside and sees enough. He staggers back down the stairway, and throws up.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY - RAIN

Jerry sits on top of the cab of his truck as he is pelted with hail, staring toward Lisa's apartment. When he's had enough, he slides down to the hood, jumps down and gets back into the cab.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK / PARKING LOT - DAY

Jerry sits inside his truck, staring at Lisa's apartment building and dripping. His phone RINGS and he jumps, startled by the *Dance to the Music* ring tone. He answers.

JERRY

Hello?

DR. WEST
(telephone)
Jerry? It's Dr. West. Are you
coming in today?

JERRY
Yeah yeah yeah, I forgot, I'm
sorry, I hate to miss our session,
I'm coming right over.

Jerry straightens his hair in the truck's rear-view mirror --
as if neat hair will somehow make up for the bloodshot eyes
and the soaked-to-the-bone clothes. Then he drives away.

INT. DR. WEST'S PSYCHIATRIC PRACTICE OFFICE - DAY

Dr. West sits at her desk filing government paperwork when
the BUZZER sounds. She looks out the window and sees Jerry
standing in the rain by the door. She hits a button.

DR. WEST
Jerry -- I'm buzzing you in!

Some CLUNKING and then the door opens and Jerry enters. His
boots are muddy and his jacket sopping wet and his eyes are
wild -- but his hair is neat.

JERRY
Hi.

DR. WEST
You're soaking wet. Is this a good
time for our session?

JERRY
Yes. I have a lot of stuff I have
to deal with right now.

DR. WEST
What's going on, Jerry?

JERRY
I stopped taking the drugs.

DR. WEST
What? Why?

JERRY
My cat made me.

DR. WEST
Your cat made you.

JERRY

Urrrr, no. Kind of. Mr. Whiskers did the talking -- but it was really me. See? I'm making progress. It's not the cat! I know that now.

DR. WEST

Jerry. We had an agreement.

JERRY

I'm sorry Dr. West! Forgive me! I'm bad. I'm an asshole.

DR. WEST

Don't be so hard on yourself. I appreciate the honesty. I'm disappointed -- but it's not like you killed someone --

JERRY

Uh --

DR. WEST

Jerry?

JERRY

Uh, it is. Kind of like that. Kind of like that, times three.

DR. WEST

What are you saying, Jerry?

JERRY

Three people, um, who aren't alive any more. Because of me.

DR. WEST

Oh my God.

On sensing the danger, Dr. West becomes very calm; aware she's with a killer, she doesn't want to set him off. But underneath, she's terrified and looking for escape.

JERRY

But I feel terrible about it. I need to tell someone.

DR. WEST

Tell me. Jerry? I'm listening.

JERRY

I have to start at the beginning. Do you know what a conga line is?

DR. WEST

Sure. They do them on cruise ships
and at weddings. Please continue.

As she listens, Dr. West reaches below her desk and -- out of sight of Jerry -- pulls a cell phone out of her purse.

JERRY

So at a picnic everyone was conga-
ing and then I Danced-to-the-Music
with this French girl, Chloe,
right? And then we were supposed
to go to the pig races? And then --
what are you doing? Dr. West!

Jerry stands, and sees that Dr. West has her cell phone in her hands. Jerry pulls it away from her --

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)

Nine one one what is the nature of
your emergency?

JERRY

Sorry. Wrong number.

DR. WEST

Help me! I'm being held
hostage.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

What's the matter ma'am?

Jerry takes her phone and smashes it under his boot. Then he yanks the land line out of the wall. He puts Dr. West in a headlock and lifts her up to her feet.

JERRY

It was an accident! I liked all of
them and wish they were all alive.
Do you have any packing tape?

DR. WEST

What? Why?

Jerry keeps Dr. West in a tight grip as he rummages through her desk, pulling out drawer after drawer until he finds some wide packing tape.

JERRY

I can't let you go. But I still
need a lot of therapy.

CUT TO:

EXT. JERRY'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY - STORM

Jerry parks his truck at the edge of the fallow cornfield with a view of the farmhouse where he was raised. In the storm, the weeds, the decrepit home and Jerry's truck take on an ethereal beauty.

INT. JERRY'S TRUCK / CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY - STORM

Jerry sits in the driver's seat, talking to Dr. West, who is bound and gagged with packing tape in the passenger seat.

JERRY

We don't have much time so we have to get into the big issues.

Dr. West nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Do you believe in God?

Dr. West nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)

So do I. But I think He has it out for me. He cuts everyone else slack and then He shit all over me. And I want to know why.

Dr. West shakes her head, like she disagrees.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Why would God put a little boy in a home with a father like that? And make my mother lose herself so completely she wanted to die?

Dr. West shrugs.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I don't know either. But if He is all-powerful, God must be okay with me killing people.

Dr. West shakes her head in violent disagreement.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Ha! A shrink who wants to talk.

She smiles weakly and nods.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I'll untape you but only if we get
the fast-track to mental health.

She nods. Jerry reaches into the back of the truck. Pulls out a Swiss Army Knife. Opens the scissor tool and carefully cuts through the tape binding Dr. West's mouth.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Start doing the silent shrink thing
and I can't predict what I'll do.

She nods her consent. He gently pulls off the tape.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Let's get into it. Question one:
God. And why he made me, me.

It is the psychotherapeutic command performance of all time,
and West gives it her all:

DR. WEST

Okay. God. I think, the world and
everything in it and the way things
turn out -- is God's will. A God
so large we can only understand him
indirectly. We can comprehend his
intentions only in hindsight.

JERRY

The fatalistic hopeless God.

DR. WEST

No, not really. See, God realized
that people needed someone to lead
by example, to walk the walk.

JERRY

You're talking about Jesus?

DR. WEST

Yes. Jesus is God-like perfection,
but on a scale humans can
understand.

JERRY

Like -- bowling a perfect game?

DR. WEST

Possibly. Sure. Like that.

JERRY

That kind of works for me. God -- perfection. Jesus -- same thing, but on a scale we can understand.

DR. WEST

Yes.

JERRY

We did God in forty-five seconds. Now: why do I hear voices?

DR. WEST

A lot of people hear voices. Or thoughts they can't stop.

JERRY

A lot of people?

DR. WEST

Yes. It might be a voice telling them that they're worthless or stupid. It could tell them to indulge every desire -- drink that drink, take that drug, follow every sexual impulse. Or it might be a cynical voice that says nothing matters, telling them that their efforts are insignificant.

JERRY

Do you hear things like that?

DR. WEST

I have thoughts. Not exactly the same as you, but close enough. When I'm afraid or insecure, I have thoughts telling me I'm fat, that psychotherapy isn't a worthwhile endeavor, that it's not "real". These voices tell me I should have aimed higher than a government job, that my potential was squandered ... and that I'm unworthy of love.

JERRY

But none of that is true. What do you do about it?

DR. WEST

I can't shut it off entirely -- nor would I want to -- but I can argue against it.

(MORE)

DR. WEST (CONT'D)

Just because you have thoughts,
doesn't mean you have to act on
them.

JERRY

I don't have to act on them ...
That's it. This is like ten years
of therapy in ten minutes.

Jerry starts up the truck.

DR. WEST

Where are we going?

JERRY

Home. Feed my pets. I think I can
handle them now. As long as I
don't obey then.

DR. WEST

What are you going to do with me?

JERRY

I don't know.

A tear rolls down Dr. West's cheek.

INT. VEEDERSBURG TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Dave BUZZES a buzzer at the bullet-proof window. A rookie
DESK CLERK crosses to the window.

DAVE

I'd like to report an emergency.

CLERK

What kind of emergency?

DAVE

A murder. Maybe more than one.

The Clerk stares at Dave as if he's kidding. He's not.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

Jerry carries Dr. West, fireman style, over his shoulder up
the stairs to his apartment. The door is flapping open.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jerry puts Dr. West -- hands and feet bound -- on the couch.
She SCREAMS.

DR. WEST

Jerry oh my God what have you done--

JERRY

Shut up --

DR. WEST

Let me go for God's sake -- what
are you going to do -- what are you
going to do?

JERRY

I told you I don't know what I'm
going to do.

(yelling)

Mr. Whiskers! Bosco! Bosco! Mr.
Whiskers!

(panicked)

Wait here. My pets need me.

Jerry grabs a roll of electrical tape and seals up Dr. West's
mouth once again; then leaves.

EXT. WOODS - RAIN - NIGHT

Jerry wanders the woods, yelling:

JERRY

Mr. Whiskers! Bosco! Mr.
Whiskers! Bosco! Mr. Whiskers!
Bosco! Bosco! Mr. Whiskers!
Bosco! Bosco! Boscooooo! Mr.
Whiskers! Bosco! Boscooooo!

As Jerry clears a tree, he's nearly knocked down by Bosco,
bounding happily toward him.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Bosco! Thatta boy!

Jerry kneels down in the mud and lets Bosco lick the rain off
of his face.

BOSCO

I love you I love you I love you I
love you Jerry I love you.

JERRY

I love you too Bosco. Come on boy.

Jerry grabs Bosco's collar and tows him out of the woods.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

Jerry hauls Bosco across the parking lot.

JERRY

Mr. Whiskers! Mr. Whiskers! Mr.
Whiskers! Mr. Whiskers!

No response.

BOSCO

I'm cold I'm wet I'm hungry.

JERRY

I know you are boy.

Jerry hauls Bosco up the stairs and into the apartment.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mr. Whiskers is standing on top of the fully restrained Dr. West, staring into her terrified eyes, when Bosco and Jerry walk in the door. Mr. Whiskers looks at them --

MR. WHISKERS

Hey losers.

Bosco walks to Dr. West and jabs his nose right in her crotch, backs up and shakes himself dry on her, and then licks her face.

MR. WHISKERS (CONT'D)

Is this the bitch you've been
fucking?

JERRY

No! No! No! Mr. Whiskers! That
is my psychotherapist!

MR. WHISKERS

A great job she's doing, too.
Short list for Shrink of the Year
seeing as you're Mr. Mental Health.

JERRY

Don't insult her!

MR. WHISKERS

What's the difference? Knowing
your track record, I give it,
maybe, an hour until you kill her.

JERRY

I'm not going to kill her.

MR. WHISKERS

Why'd you tape her up? Why'd you
bring her home?

CLOSE ON DR. WEST'S FACE staring up --

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - REALISTIC VIEW - NIGHT

We enter Dr. West's realistic point-of-view, where the
apartment is filthy and the animals can't talk (and are
disgusting). But Jerry's still speaking in English.

JERRY

You're the sickest cat in the
world, saying shit like that.

The cat just MEWS; it's a real cat.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I am not going to cut her throat.
I will not kill Dr. West.

The cat MEWS again.

JERRY (CONT'D)

I hear you. And I'm going to
ignore you, Mister Whiskers.

Dr. West is straining to say something. Jerry walks into the
kitchen and returns with a large knife. There's still a
little blood on it. He holds it up to Dr. West's throat --
and cuts the tape around her mouth so she can talk.

DR. WEST

Oh my God.

JERRY

You're welcome.

CLOSE ON JERRY'S FACE --

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

And now we're back in Jerry's point of view, the skewed universe we've been seeing for most of the movie.

DR. WEST
Jerry, I'm scared.

MR. WHISKERS
She wasn't scared last week when she threatened to send you back to the slam!

JERRY
What do you want?

DR. WEST
I want to make a call.

MR. WHISKERS
She'll call the cops.

JERRY
You'll call the cops.

DR. WEST
No! I just don't want to be alone.

JERRY
Okay, I got an idea.

Jerry walks to the kitchen, followed by Bosco and Mr. Whiskers. Opens the fridge.

CHLOE'S SEVERED HEAD
Bon jour, Jerry.

Jerry picks up Chloe's head by the hair and carries her out to the living room. Dr. West is apoplectic; nearly in shock as Jerry sets the talking severed head on the coffee table so it faces Dr. West. We still see what Jerry sees.

Dr. West faces the severed head and SCREEEEEEAAAMS.

Chloe's severed head SCREAMS back.

Mr. Whiskers and Bosco SCREAM right along with them.

JERRY
Bosco! Mr. Whiskers! Dr. West!
Chloe! Cut it out! SHUT! UP!

One by one, they quiet down. Just then, Jerry sees BLUE AND RED lights flashing across his window -- just for an instant.

Then it stops. Mr. Whiskers bounds over to the window; so does Bosco.

BOSCO
Something weird Jerry.

MR. WHISKERS
I got a bad feeling about this Jer.

Jerry crosses to the window and looks out --

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT -- JERRY'S P.O.V.

Half a dozen black and white cop cars are arrayed along the perimeter of the bowling lane parking lot; several more are rolling in behind them, lights off.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Jerry freezes in place. His cat, his dog, his psychotherapist and the severed head of his first victim look at him with worried anticipation.

JERRY
It's the cops.

Mr. Whiskers, Bosco, Dr. West and Chloe all nod.

BOSCO
Cops. Cops everywhere. Grrrrr.

JERRY
I have a plan.
(to Dr. West)
You did the best you could. It's not your fault.

DR. WEST
What are you going to do to me?

JERRY
Nothing.

He picks up Mr. Whiskers and holds him tight, then heads for the bathroom. Bosco follows behind him.

MR. WHISKERS
Put me down put me down I'll claw your eyes out God damn it put me down you fucking psycho.

Jerry ignores him. They go into the bathroom. Jerry slams the door behind him. Dr. West is left alone on the couch, still taped up.

INT. JERRY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jerry sets down Mr. Whiskers, who climbs onto the sink; Bosco sits next to the toilet. Jerry stands in the bath tub. At the end of the tub is an access panel, which he opens. Inside, the building infrastructure is revealed: pipes, framing, and electrical conduit.

Mr. Whiskers races past Jerry and bolts into the crawl space, disappearing into the dark.

BOSCO

This is your whole plan? To go
into the bowling alley?

JERRY

It's the best I've got.

BOSCO

Okay, buddy.

Jerry picks up Bosco and shoves him through the access panel. Bosco's none too happy about it --

BOSCO (CONT'D)

Easy, Jerry! I can't go in there!
Help. This is awful. Jerrrrry!

And then Bosco's gone. Jerry ducks into the cramped crawlspace after Bosco, and jams himself in.

INT. CRAWLSPACE - NIGHT

The crawlspace expands into an attic; one side is used for storage; on the other, twenty-six mute pin setting machines wait in vain for bowlers. Bosco is nervously walking around sniffing things; Mr. Whiskers is nowhere to be seen.

JERRY

Come on, boy.

Jerry leads Bosco to the door at the end of the crawlspace. They go through.

INT. JERRY'S APARTMENT - REALISTIC VIEW - NIGHT

Dr. West, hands and feet bound, looks around in disgust at the apartment, and especially at the rotting severed head that's across from her on the coffee table. She swallows her disgust and rolls off the couch onto the floor, inadvertently knocking into the coffee table. The head falls off.

Dr. West keeps her shit together and crawls toward the telephone across the wretched, foul floor.

With difficulty, she reaches the telephone.

She knocks the receiver off of the cradle.

With her nose Dr. West presses 9. Then 1. She's reaching for the final 1 when all hell breaks loose.

The DOOR explodes open --

FLASH BANGS fill the room with explosive noise --

A CYLINDER is hurled in and fills the room with tear gas.

A dozen body-armor clad S.W.A.T. COPS in full riot gear and gas masks storm the room and take up positions, ready for a full-on confrontation.

Dr. West, terrified, tears streaming down her face, yells --

DR. WEST
I'm here! Don't hurt me!

A FEMALE S.W.A.T. cop, looking every bit like an alien in her gas mask and body armor, kneels next to Dr. West and puts a Kevlar-wrapped hand on her shoulder, then speaks through the gas mask --

FEMALE S.W.A.T. COP
It's going to be okay.

Dr. West just stares.

INT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

While Bosco and Mr. Whiskers watch, Jerry finds the light panel and flips a few switches. Most of the old fluorescent tubes flicker eerily but provide little useful light. Many of the lanes have been used for storage, of furniture, clothes, boxes -- junk. Jerry keeps flipping switches, and many of the ancient pin-setting machines grind to life.

Then, a brilliant light shines down on Lane 11. A bowler, obscured by junk, throws a strike. The ball comes back to him, and Jerry is drawn to Lane 11 as if by a tractor beam.

There, a man dressed head to toe in white robes, with long dark hair and a beard, winds up to throw the ball again --

JERRY

Jesus?

It is indeed Jesus. And He doesn't want to be interrupted; He puts a finger to His lips, for Jerry to be quiet. Jerry looks at the automated scorekeeper and realizes: the savior of all mankind is one strike away from a perfect game.

Jesus winds up again. Releases the ball. Jerry, Bosco and Mr. Whiskers watch transfixed as the ball rolls down the lane and -- it's a strike. Jesus throws a celebratory fist in the air -- 300! Bosco and Mr. Whiskers stare in awe.

JERRY (CONT'D)

That's a perfect game. So You really are Jesus?

(Jesus nods)

Wow, You're a good bowler.

JESUS

Thanks, Jerry.

JERRY

I feel better now that You're here. We have something in common.

JESUS

Hardly! I'm the Son of God, and you're a multiple murderer.

JERRY

I meant, bowling.

JESUS

Bowling? Bowling makes up for you killing four people? As King of Kings I hear some pretty crazy shit but that's gotta take the cake.

JERRY

I only killed three people. Three and a half if you include my mom.

JESUS

You killed your mother -- it should count double!

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

And, since I am all knowing: you never bowl, anyway. Look at this place. It's a wreck.

JERRY

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

JESUS

Shut up. I know, you're sorry. Do you want to be forgiven?

JERRY

Sure -- what do I have to do?

JESUS

You have to be willing. Can you forgive yourself?

JERRY

I think so.

JESUS

Then it's done. Can you forgive others? Like your stepfather?

JERRY

No. Not him.

JESUS

If you can't cut some slack to the guy who raised you, even if he botched the job, how can you expect forgiveness from people you killed?

JERRY

I hadn't thought of that.

JESUS

It's important. He's right there.

Jesus points to the hard plastic seats at the end of the alley, where Mack sits, nursing a beer.

Jerry walks towards his stepfather, and takes the seat next to him. Mack bristles.

JERRY

Mack?

MACK

I always worried you'd wind up like this, Jerry. I wasted my life. I didn't want you to waste yours.

(MORE)

MACK (CONT'D)

But -- here you are. A worthless piece of shit just like me.

JERRY

Jesus! He's still a dick.

JESUS

He is who he is. His life wasn't a picnic -- and he never killed anyone. If you want peace you have to forgive him.

Jerry turns to Mack and stares him straight in the eye.

JERRY

You did the best you could.

MACK

Yeah, I guess so. Thanks, psycho.

Mack wanders off into the darkest part of the bowling alley; as soon as he disappears, Mr. Whiskers bounds out, and jumps on Jerry's lap. Jerry pets his cat while Jesus watches.

JERRY

Why did you put me through this?
This life of hell on earth?

JESUS

It's part of the bigger picture that you cannot understand. Trust Me, there are no mistakes.

JERRY

How is it possible that a guy who hears voices and kills women is not a mistake?

JESUS

Incomprehensibility is its own virtue. The mystery of life enshrouds man at all times and must be accepted on its own terms. Your deeds shed light on the world, because they are senseless.

JERRY

I don't follow you.

JESUS

You'll never fully understand -- that's My point!

JERRY

Okay. One more thing: am I going to survive this night?

Jesus shrugs. Jerry knows what that means.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

The parking lot is filled with police cars, an ambulance, a tank-like battering ram, and lots of body-armored cops.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Dr. West, freed of her bonds, a blanket around her shoulders, debriefs Detective Weinbacher.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

We believe he's in the bowling alley. Do you think he's armed?

DR. WEST

I don't know.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

Then have to assume he is. We'll be entering with maximum force.

DR. WEST

Please don't hurt him. He's ill.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

Our first priority is our own safety.

Off Dr. West --

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

Twenty-five armor-suited S.W.A.T. guys stand near a battering ram. Detective Weinbacher gives final directions:

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER

On my count, the battering ram will breach the east wall and insert pepper spray and explosive distraction devices. Do not enter until the building is fully secured. Is that clear?

His S.W.A.T. guys all nod their consent.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- MINUTES LATER -- NIGHT

The monstrous phallic battering ram GRINDS forward at increasing speed until it PUNCHES THROUGH the bowling alley wall. Then, HISSING GAS is followed by an EXPLOSION.

Weinbacher keeps his hand up -- don't go in --

FEMALE S.W.A.T. COP
It's on fire, sir.

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER
Wait. Let him come out.

Dr. West and the S.W.A.T. cops and the ambulance attendants and half a dozen onlookers watch helplessly as flames spread within the bowling alley. Through the filthy windows they can see the fire quickly ignite everything that can burn.

DR. WEST
My God, do something!

DETECTIVE WEINBACHER
Fire department's on the way.
Jerry controls the situation. He
can exit the building at any time.

The downstairs of the bowling alley burns brightly. A WINDOW blasts out, propelled by a torrent of flame. The pillar of fire recedes and is followed by a backdraft which turbocharges the horrific conflagration.

INT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S -- NIGHT

Flames burn bright. Jerry's on the ground, choking on the dark smoke. Mr. Whiskers races around frenetically, like a balloon that's deflating; Bosco runs in worried circles.

A secondary explosion spreads relentless flames and grim smoke through the bowling alley.

Jerry's breathing is increasingly labored as smoke fills his lungs. He stops breathing, and he's utterly motionless.

The camera moves toward Jerry, getting closer until his face fills the screen: it's utterly immobile and gray. Hold for an uncomfortably long time on him, so long you may think the movie is over. And then hold some more. Because it's not.

As we stay on Jerry's face, music begins to play: the intro to *Dance to the Music*. The light changes, and color returns to Jerry's face. His eyes POP open. And we pull out. And everything has changed.

INT. VEEDERSBURG LANES - JERRY'S FINAL REVERIE - NIGHT

The bowling alley is as good as new -- better than new. The bright flashing lights and shined floors are hyper-real, as glossy as the stage from an excellent, elaborate rock show. Multicolored sparklers ignite; mylar confetti drifts down.

The thick black smoke is now stage fog. Busting through the door are twenty S.W.A.T. team members; but not the brutes who stood outside. No, these are cool and sexy dancers, ten men and ten women in stunning S.W.A.T.-like outfits that render them awesomely fabulous. When they throw off their gas masks, their hair and make-up are spectacular.

Behind them, a stage rises from the floor, holding Sly and the Family Stone, circa 1969, at the peak of their beauty and musical prowess. Sly gestures for Jerry to stand up.

Jerry leaps to his feet. He's got a great new haircut; and he's wearing an astonishing sequined rock star version of the clothes he had on before. Behind the S.W.A.T. dancers are Mack, Jerry's mother, Lisa, Chloe and Alison, lively and healthier than they ever looked when they were alive.

JERRY

Mom! Dad!

JERRY'S MOTHER

Hi, Jerry.

MACK

Creep.

JERRY (CONT'D)

Hey -- Lisa! Chloe!

CHLOE

Bon jour, Jerry!

LISA

Hey, Jerry!

JERRY

Alison?

ALISON

Oh yeah!

JERRY

Sorry I killed you guys!

LISA

Let's not bring up all the bad things! Let's just be happy.

EXT. VFED RSBURG BOWL NG LAN S - NIGHT

A firetruck rolls into the parking lot but it's too late; the building is fully engulfed in flames, the heat so intense it drives the cops and witnesses back into the road.

INT. VEEDERSBURG LANES - JERRY'S FINAL REVERIE - NIGHT

Jerry smiles at his parents, and Chloe, Lisa and Alison, and the S.W.A.T. team, and Sly and the Family Stone. Then, Jesus emerges from the mist, and He throws another strike.

JERRY

Hey, Jesus!

JESUS

Hi, Jerry!

JERRY

Thanks for coming.

JESUS

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

JERRY

Are my pets going to be okay?

Bosco and Mr. Whiskers, idealized to the highest standards of beauty that a dog and cat can achieve, step forward.

JESUS

You betcha!

JERRY

Hey there, Mr. Whiskers! Hey there, Bosco!

BOSCO

Hi, Jerry! You're a good boy!

MR. WHISKERS

Let's get it on! Dance, people!

Jerry and his parents, Mr. Whiskers and Bosco, Lisa and Chloe and Alison, Jesus, and the S.W.A.T. unit line up, and they dance together, finding the connection in death that they never enjoyed in life, a unified dance troupe of loving friends and family in Jerry's insane oxygen-deprived mind, exuding togetherness, beauty, exuberance and joy.

FADE OUT:

THE END