

THE EMISSARY

By
Ronald Pergola

Copyright 4/6/17

FADE IN:

EXT. NORTHERN NEW JERSEY TOWN - BUSINESS CENTER - NIGHT

Very dark. Very early morning.

Eerie.

The business center of upscale Saddle River is dead quiet, totally devoid of people. All businesses are closed.

Shannon BMW, the prominent business of the town center, occupies one entire block.

A green fluorescent mist spreads over the dealership.

The front show room window explodes outward. Shards of glass cover the street.

An expensive, tinted windowed, sports car escapes through the opening.

EXT. NEW YORK STATE THROUGHWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

The sleek black BMW sports car speeds north in the fast lane.

All other vehicles appear motionless.

Adirondack hills, trees, streams and lakes begin to mark the late autumn countryside.

INT. STATE TROOPER'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Parked, in wait, off the highway, a State Trooper unwraps his breakfast. His radar screen pulses normally, anxious to report.

A whirling, misty, black blur passes the trooper's vehicle.

The screen pulses: no lights, no sounds, no change.

The trooper looks up; looks out. His gaze returns to the screen.

He calmly bites into his early morning breakfast sandwich, unfazed.

EXT. HARDYSTON TOWN CENTER - DAY

Headlights capture the "Welcome to Hardyston" town sign as the sports car slows down.

An assessment in process.

Main street awakes. The sports car gradually speeds up, passing several blocks of small businesses: HENLEY'S BAR & GRILL, BILLY'S BIKES, CAMP MOR, INC., etc.

The sports car exits the town center.

Two miles out of the Hardyston town center, the sports car comes to a STOP at the entrance to a bridge.

An engraved sign spans the entrance: GREAT GORGE BRIDGE.

No toll booths.

Several minutes elapse. The sports car proceeds slowly across the quarter mile bridge.

Exiting the far side of the bridge the sports car resumes speed and skids around a tight right turn.

It comes to rest on the shoulder and completely shuts down.

EXT. HARDYSTON CEMETERY - DAY

A frosty afternoon. Sun fades behind a distant mountain.

BYRON JENNINGS (35) unshaven, down jacket, baseball hat, no gloves, sits on a cheap, plastic folding chair before a gravestone. The stone reads: MELISSA LOVE JENNINGS, 1973 - 2006

In one hand he holds a small fold-open frame with a picture of his beautiful wife, while in the other, a small bouquet of flowers.

He speaks to the stone. Between sentences he chugs from a bottle of bourbon resting between his thighs; pitiable.

A soliloquy comes to a tearful closure.

BYRON

... So, I'm fine. The boys keep me going... Oh, the cabin? Going slowly. Bathroom, okay. Floors, need staining. Kitchen, empty... Not much furniture. Cold. You know... Anyway... God, I miss you...

Takes a huge swig from the bottle of bourbon. Breaks down crying.

Finally, composing himself.

BYRON

I love you... Always will. I'll never forget... soulmates, in life and death. Together again... On the other side...

Another huge chug. He rises and then prostrates himself over the grave arms spread.

Byron stands, places the bouquet on the grave. He refolds the chair and tucks it under his arm.

With bottle in hand, he turns towards an old RED pick-up truck across the road.

He wobbles slowly to his ride.

It begins to snow.

EXT. WOODED NORTH COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The snowfall dances across the shining headlight of Byron's old, severely damaged, pick-up truck. The vehicle faces the forest, see-saw teetering, over a snow covered tree limb.

The other headlight, front bumper and hood are victims of the large tree trunk lying over the roof.

Wipers thrash.

Across the road, facing in the opposite direction, an expensive black sports car rests, unattended, collecting snow.

INT. BYRON'S PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

Byron sits in jeans, flannel shirt and skewed baseball cap.

UNCONSCIOUS, his hands choke the steering wheel.

Eyes open suddenly, hands start trembling.

A splash of blood on his forehead.

The radio blasts country music.

An empty fifth of Jack Daniels lies on the floor of the cab next to a nine-millimeter service pistol.

Byron moans, turns off the radio and wipers.

He turns his head to glance through his window and is startled by the girl's face on the other side of the pane.

STARING

Byron turns the window crank. Nothing.

BYRON
You bitch! You should be dead!

The crank comes off in his hand.

BYRON
Damn... Dead, dead! You hear me,
bitch?

The girl turns away and walks around the sports car towards the forest.

Byron tries to open his door unsuccessfully.

BYRON
Shit!... Get back here you!
I'm not a country moron. Flashing
that green shit at me in this
stuff? At this time of night?
Bitch!

Byron, painfully, slides over and exits the truck from the passenger side.

EXT. WOODED NORTH COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Byron quickly inspects his truck while limping across the road. He bends over, vomits and then shouts at her disappearing image.

BYRON
Texting, right? I know all about
it! You're done, Sweetie. That
thig-a-ma-jig is history. You're
gonna eat that thing! Ya hear!?

He limps to the spot where she entered the forest, looks down, spies footprints in the snow.

Byron follows the foot-printed path. A dilapidated wooden shack appears in the distance.

He steps onto the shack's front porch, grabs the door handle and angrily opens the door.

INT. WOODEN SHACK - NIGHT

The shack is dark and empty, save for one small table and four chairs in the center of the shack, all neatly positioned.

With her back to Byron, sits EMMI (30); long, silky brown hair down to her waist.

BYRON

Hey, you!.. You almost killed me!
I don't like near misses.

No response from Emmi.

A faint beeping and green flashing emit from her aura.

BYRON

Get off that God damned thing,
bitch!

Byron limps over to Emmi, grabs her by the shoulders and spins her around to face him.

She is beautiful but expressionless.

His hands move to her throat. He squeezes.

BYRON

I'm gonna teach you a lesson. You
little--

Bright green laser beams shoot from Emmi's eyes into Byron's eyes. He hears her unspoken words.

EMMI (V.O.)

Warning! Slow down... Stop!
Perilous! Certain death!

INT. HENLEY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Quaint, north country, neighborhood restaurant. Reservations not required. Old wooden bar, worn stools.

All twenty tables are vacant tonight.

The only two patrons, HACK (40) and BILLY (30), play shuffle board in the rear.

SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE

Baseball hats, scruffy beards and work clothes.

Billy slides a weight. Both men, keenly focus on this final sliding.

A red weight knocks off a blue weight and stops, just short, of the end of the table.

BILLY
Yes! Yes! Yes!

Arms raise. He slaps Hack on the back.

HACK
Shit. Nice slide, rookie.

Billy turns to the table behind them and empties a pitcher of beer into their glasses.

He shouts towards the bar and performs a little victory dance.

BILLY
Maisie! Beer Here! Hack's got
this one.

Empty pitcher raised. He sits. Hack joins him.

MAISIE (55) plump, joyful, stands behind the bar, crossword puzzling. She shouts back.

MAISIE
Yo! six-letter word. Starts with A,
ends with D, "Dutiful Butler"?

Maisie pulls the tap handle and fills a pitcher.

HACK
An hour-and-a half late on a snow
night... and "Cemetery, Saturday".
We should have driven out to him. I
hope he didn't start boozing early.

BILLY
It's worse than that, Hack. Don
Haggerty, Fire Marshal, spoke to
him yesterday. Results of the fire
investigation, came in finally;
ARSON. Someone touched it off.

HACK
What!!? That is worse, way worse.
I hope he decided not to come and
just got wasted at home.

BILLY
 (doubtful)
 Yeah, maybe. He's been pretty bad lately.

Maisie saunters over with their pitcher.

HACK
 Maise, would you try him again? My phone's not working.

MAISIE
 I've called him at home six times, now, on the bar phone. No answer. He's either on the road or home and wasted... you know.

Maisie pulls out a flip phone. Tries to call.

MAISIE
 No service... Look, it's pretty bad out there. Why don't you two sleep in the back room tonight. Jack's okay with that.

HACK
 Thanks Maise, but no. Only supposed to get a couple of inches. The Jeep eats this stuff up. We've only got a mile drive. We'll be fine.

BILLY
 Hope Byron is. The wind's blowing crazy out there tonight. And the snow on Gap Road can be a little frisky.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

Byron... passed out and seat-belted in the totally reclined passenger seat.

At six-foot-two, his frame extends the entire length of the mini interior.

His eyes open for just a moment. The car speeds. The snow falls. The wipers wipe. Emmi drives.

Byron smiles and returns to unconsciousness.

EXT. GREAT GORGE - DAY

Hack and Billy walk and circumvent two police cars parked head to head across the road. The police cars block the entrance to the missing GREAT GORGE BRIDGE.

Hack and Billy stand behind police saw horses at the edge of the Gorge. They look down into the chasm.

A collapsed bridge is vaguely visible at the bottom of the Gorge. Snow covers everything below.

BILLY

Is that a truck down there?

Billy points. Hack looks.

HACK

Can't tell.

Simultaneously, they look up and gaze across the void. The other side of the Gorge is closed off similarly.

A PATROLMAN (50) stout, joins them.

PATROLMAN

Boys, you need to back away.
There's nothing to be done here.

HACK

Gotcha. Um... Any injuries?
Deaths?

PATROLMAN

We can't get down there. Too
dangerous. It will be a while
before we know anything. The good
news is, no reports of anyone
missing.

A helicopter circles above.

EXT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - DAY

Byron's home is a simple, two-bedroom log cabin; mid reconstruction, wrapped in Tyvek.

Far to the right is a windowless detached barn and garage.

The snow covered tall tree, mountainside setting features few houses.

A quiet, early winter scene.

The blue township water tower in the distant hills reads:
HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP.

Hacks's pick-up truck speeds down the winding, dirt road
towards the cabin.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - DAY

BEDROOM

Byron, asleep in boxer shorts. He awakens, slowly,
painfully... hang-over lethargic.

He sits at the edge of the bed, massaging his head. He
finally vomits into a nearby waste pail.

Byron looks around, smiles, thrilled to be familiar with his
whereabouts.

BYRON

Let that be a lesson to you BY Boy.
You and JACKIE D are through, you
don't mix well.

A sudden, KNOCKING; Rapid and hard at the front door.

BYRON

What!?!? Leave me alone!

EXT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - DAY

FRONT PORCH

Relieved expressions appear on Hack and Billy. Their knocking
continues.

HACK

Byron, open up. It's us!

BILLY

Yeah, it's us!

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - DAY

LIVING ROOM

Byron clumps in from the bedroom and opens the front door for
Hack and Billy.

HACK

Where the hell have you been? We called all last night and this morning.

BYRON

... the phone?

HACK

(sarcastic)

No, out the window! And don't say, "No signal out here". Maisie also tried on the bar phone.

Billy walks to the kitchen. Byron slumps on the sofa. Hack remains standing.

HACK

When you didn't show at Henley's last night we got worried but we figured the snow and all. We finally had to let it go.

BYRON

Uh... Yeah, the snow. I remember drinking some Jack, getting in the truck and I--

HACK

Said "no way" and turned around. Right?

BYRON

Yeah. I guess.

BILLY (O.S.)

(shouting)

Good thing. Get this BY. The GAP Bridge gave out last night. It's demolished, lying at the bottom of the Gorge.

Byron's eyes open wide.

Billy exits the kitchen gripping three mugs of coffee. He distributes the mugs and takes a seat next to Byron.

HACK

(sipping)

Ya know, in that snow, you might have never noticed. It would have been too late. Brakes... skidding and then, you're history. Good decision to turn back.

BYRON
Uh... huh, yeah.

HACK
The media and cops are gonna be
buzzing around the Gorge for
months. That's a long painful
detour for locals.

Hack moves to the window and looks towards the garage.

HACK
Bridge should have been updated
years ago... Truck's in the garage,
huh? Smart move.

BILLY
We had to drive the long way
around, through Montgomery to get
here.

HACK
So, you're doing okay? We really
wanted to be with you last night
BY. I'm sorry.

BYRON
Look. I'm okay. Just need some
recovery time. Uh... yeah, in the
garage, I guess.

HACK
Hey! We're going to spend the day
at PACKY'S in Montgomery. They got
that NFL pool going on over there
on Sundays. Get your shit together
and join us... Game day! Be there.

Hack and Billy chug their coffee. Hack gives Byron a hug
from behind. Billy pats him on the head. They make a quick
exit.

BEDROOM

Byron lies in bed.

He holds a framed picture of Melissa, his wife. Her message,
"Soulmates Forever and After" scripted boldly across the
photo.

Byron replaces the picture on the bed table, grabs his coffee
mug.

He rises, unsteadily, walks to the closet and slides the pocket door open.

Emmi, faces him. Green eye beams zap into Byron's eyes.

EMMI (V.O.)

Hello.

Byron drops the coffee mug.

BYRON

What? Oh God... you. What is this? Who are you? What are you?

Emmi's gaze shifts left.

BYRON

What do you want! Okay, you're not a bitch. I surrender!

Emmi's eyes close totally. Byron hears her communication sans green eye beams.

EMMI (V.O.)

Emissary--

Byron falls backwards on the bed.

KITCHEN - LATER

Byron sits at the small kitchen table, coffee mug between his hands. Robed, still in boxers.

Emmi stands across from Byron; EYES CLOSED.

BYRON

Okay. You're not from here, I guess. I got that part... That's all of it? Come on!

No response from Emmi.

BYRON

Emissary?? From where?... Mars?

Byron stares at Emmi. No response.

BYRON

And you HAVE to hang with me? You can't leave? I'm confused...

Emmi remains stoic.

BYRON

I don't need a body guard or a guardian ange-- Can you stop with the ESP bullshit?! It gives me a headache. And lose the green laser beam eye shit. For Pete's sake, move your lips; talk!

Emmi's eyes open.

BYRON

(obsequiously)
Oh, can you?

Byron shields his eyes, ducks, expecting laser beams.

Emmi speaks, her gaze, a foot to the left of Byron.

EMMI

Emissary.

BYRON

Okay. We're making progress. I still don't get it. But I guess I owe you for last night. Although, you could have done me a big favor.

Emmi's gaze remains off to the left.

EMMI

Yes.

BYRON

Look, I'm not ready for any kind of relationship or extra friendship; especially with... whatever you are. I love my wife. I really love my wife.

Byron looks down for a moment and then back to Emmi.

BYRON

Loved my wife.

He stands and places his mug in the sink. He turns back to Emmi.

BYRON

What do you want? Why won't you leave?

EMMI

Soon.

BYRON
 So, you're an Emissary?
 Well... I'm gonna treat you like
 you're not even here. Got it?
 You're nothing. You're invisible.

Emmi's eyes swirl green. Byron ducks again.

EMMI
 Invisible.

A long pause from Byron. He stares at Emmi. The green eye swirling stops.

BYRON
 So, I'm finally there... I'm
 crazy... What do I call you?

Emmi's head turns from the left, to Byron; face to face. She looks deep into Byron's eyes. He flinches at first.

EMMI
 Emmi.

BYRON
 Emmi? Go figure.

BEDROOM

Byron dresses. He walks to the bed table and lifts the picture of Melissa to show Emmi.

Emmi ignores the offer.

BYRON
 My wife.

Emmi moves close to Byron.

EMMI
 Yes.

Byron replaces the picture frame on the bed table.

When he turns back to Emmi, they are eye to eye. Byron is caught off guard.

BYRON
 (unsurely)
 Uh... Wow, you really are
 beautiful.

EMMI
 Go.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - DETACHED GARAGE - DAY

Byron and Emmi stand just inside the garage door. The BMW sports car is the only vehicle in the garage.

BYRON
Where's my truck?

EMMI
Not here.

BYRON
I can see that.

Emmi holds up a key.

BYRON
What about my truck?

EMMI
Later. Drive.

Byron's frown turns into an impish smile as he checks out the sports car.

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

The sports car rests just outside the garage. The drive way is barely covered with snow.

Byron behind the wheel, engine purrs. He turns his head towards Emmi.

BYRON
You know, I've never been a fan of perfume but there's something about yours... that's--

EMMI
Drive.

BYRON
Okay. Where to?

EMMI
Gas.

Byron checks the gauge.

BYRON
We don't need gas.

EMMI
Drive.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. SAINT ROSE - GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

SUPER: SIX MONTHS AGO

The gym floor, filled with western dressed dancing couples; the annual, church, fund-raising Square Dance.

Lots of denim, blue jeans, bandanas, string ties and cowboy hats.

On the stage sits cowboy outfitted ROY (50) Disc Jockey. The dance music is loud and driving.

Smiles and laughing throughout the dancing crowd.

Cafeteria tables line the perimeter of the gym. Bags of popcorn, soda cans, bottles and paper cups cover the tables.

Balloons and streamers hang from ceiling.

Byron dances with his wife MELISSA(34), stand-out beauty.

Hack dances with his wife JOAN (40) plain, pleasantly amusing, loud.

Billy dances with his date, MAUREEN(25) red head, cute, pretentious.

Upstate New York blue collar, working friends.

The dance number finishes. The dance crowd applauds wildly. FATHER DAN MCGUIRE (45) very handsome, clerical shirt, collar, and cowboy hat steps up to the microphone.

FATHER MCGUIRE
Wow! Okay buckaroos, we're gonna
give Ron--

The disc jockey waves and mouths his name to the priest.

FATHER MCGUIRE
(laughing)
Oh, Roy... Like Rogers? Hey?
(MORE)

FATHER MCGUIRE (CONT'D)
Anyway, Roy will be back in fifteen
minutes. How 'bout a nice round of
applause for our D J.

The dance crowd applauds and disperses. Some folk converse in
groups. Others take seats at tables and refresh themselves.

FATHER MCGUIRE
In the name of the father and the
son and the Holy Ghost.

The crowd goes silent.

FATHER MCGUIRE
I want to take a moment to thank
all of you for coming tonight.

He folds his hands and bows reverently.

FATHER MCGUIRE
This evening's celebration is a
glorious kick-off to our first
Third World Mission Fund drive.
Thank you for your generous
contributions and may God bless
you.

He pauses for a prayerful, solemn moment.

FATHER MCGUIRE
Enjoy the rest of your evening.

Byron, Melissa, Hack, Joan, Billy and Maureen take seats at a
cafeteria table. The men sit directly across from their
women.

Joking and jostling.

Billy, secretly, removes a flask from his pants pocket below
the table. He looks, right, to Hack and knee nudges him.
Hack, glances right and signals Byron.

One by one, the men, take their cups of soda and move them to
below the table. The opened flask is passed. Each man pours
himself a healthy dose.

The ladies chat. The men return their cups to table level,
and join the friendly conversation.

Roy returns to the stage and addresses the crowd at the
microphone.

ROY

Alright, cowboys and cowgirls. I know you've all been waiting for this. It's time to show off. Virginia Reel!!

The crowd shouts and applauds.

All rise, return to the gym floor and take positions, excited and prepared for this.

Roy starts the music, calls out dance instructions through the mike.

EXT. SAINT ROSE GYMNASIUM - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The six friends exit the doors and gather on the sidewalk at the bottom of the steps.

BILLY

Hey, it's early... Maureen and I are going over to Packy's, in Montgomery, Dart Night. They're open till two. Maureen's a pro. Sand Bagger.

(sarcastically)

"Ooh, darts? Looks dangerous. I don't know Billy. Don't want to break a nail"

Maureen gives Billy a playful kick.

BILLY

She cleans up every time she plays. What do you say?

BYRON

I'm in. Love darts. What do you think, Melissa? You were awesome last time we played.

MELISSA

Honey, I'd love to but I'm beat. You go. Have some fun. I'll get a ride with the Russo's.

BYRON

No way. We can do it some other time. Wait here. I'll get the truck.

MELISSA

(Insistent)

No. Stay. Have some fun! You've earned a night out... I'll be throwing in spirit with you, Soul Mate.

BILLY

(sarcastic again)

Soul Mate? Sickening.

BYRON

Eat me.

MELISSA

Oh, there's Roberta.

She shouts to a stout woman in the distance.

MELISSA

Roberta! Can I catch a ride?

Roberta turns and motions for Melissa to come.

MELISSA

Honey, throw 'em straight. Have a great time... AND, you stay at that motel across the street from Packy's. I don't want you driving home tanked. We don't need a late night incident.

BYRON

Oh, Melissa.

MELISSA

No argument. I'll see you tomorrow morning.

Byron hugs Melissa. She runs to Roberta. Hack converses with another group. Byron shouts.

BYRON

Hey, Hack. You in for darts with me and Billy? Dart tournament at Packy's.

Hack leaves the group and walks up to Byron and Billy.

HACK

Are you kidding me? I've been dying for a rematch with you guys and you pick tonight? Man! I'm on call at the Fire House tonight.

BILLY

Getting to be a regular thing.

HACK

Just a weekend every now and then. Ralph Budnick is sick. Subbing for him tonight. Just doing my civic duty for the "cause".

BILLY

What cause?

HACK

The "Be" Cause... I may have to save your silly ass some day.

Billy, Maureen and Byron trade good-byes with Hack and Joan. They all walk to the church parking lot.

INT. PACKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Billy, Maureen and Byron walk directly to the bar.

PACKY (60), full beard, side burns, chef's apron, greets them.

The tavern is packed. Packy serves, pours, chats from behind the bar. Doesn't miss a beat.

PACKY

Well, it's the Hardyston boys. Oh, and girl. How's things? What brings you low lifes to Montgomery?

He looks to Maureen.

PACKY

Sorry, not including you honey.

Maureen smirks.

BILLY

Great, Packy. But we didn't come here to laugh at your hairy face. How about three draughts of Bud?

Packy begins filling the mugs.

BILLY

We're here for the dart tournament.

PACKY

Sorry, boys and GIRL. It's over;
ended half-an-hour ago.

Billy and Maureen frown. Packy points to the far rear corner of the tavern.

PACKY

The winning trio are still
throwing. Not real friendly.
Really don't know 'em.

The Hardyston trio turn towards the dart throwers. Byron recognizes them.

BYRON

Melissa and I were in here once
before, while they were throwing.
Bad dudes, mean streaks. We waited
till they left before we played.

Billy, Maureen and Byron take their mugs. They find stools at the end of the bar.

Billy and Maureen occasionally draw beads on the dart throwers.

Thirty minutes pass. The trio consumes several mugs of beer.

Maureen eyeballs Billy and Byron.

MAUREEN

I say we challenge them.

Billy chuckles.

BILLY

I'm in. What-da-ya say Byron?

BYRON

I'm telling you Billy. This may
not be a good idea. But I'll
throw, if you two are that game.

BILLY

They won tonight. They're in a good
mood. No worries.

The Hardyston trio finish their beers.

DART ALCOVE

Billy, Maureen and Byron approach the throwers.

CARL (44) tall, tough guy, missing front tooth. JOHNNIE (43) strong, pot belly. NICK (40) firm, dumb. Carl is throwing.

Johnnie and Nick sit.

One half full pitcher, several empty pitchers and empty shot glasses adorn their table, a pile of dollar bills center table.

BILLY
(to the table)
Understand you guys were the big winners tonight. Interested in a friendly game?

Carl throws his last dart and nails a double 20.

CARL
Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! The Winner.

Carl turns back to the table and pockets the pile of ones.

He goes face to face with Billy.

CARL
So Donald, Goofy and Minnie want a chance at fame?

BILLY
Uh, Yes... Why not?

Carl laughs and intentionally belches into Billy's face.

BYRON
Come on, Bill, let's save it for another night.

Carl turns to Maureen, winks and licks his lips.

CARL
(under breath)
Me-ow! Pussies, I guess.

Billy grabs Byron and moves out of ear shot. Maureen follows.

BILLY
Byron, one match and we're outta here. I wanna take 'em down.

MAUREEN
Me too! Big time.

BYRON
 Still think this is a bad idea...
 but we're here... If you're
 sure... Okay.

They return to the alcove. A waitress clears the table.

BILLY
 Okay, we're in.

CARL
 Twenty bucks a thrower. Put up or
 shut up.

Carl turns to Byron.

CARL
 I remember you. With Victoria...
 Uh? The model girl. Right?

JOHNNIE
 Victoria Secret.

CARL
 Yeah, her.

Carl, Johnnie and Nick laugh.

BYRON
 Hey, friend, we just came over for
 a friendly game.

CARL
 Look Goofy, if you don't want to
 throw, the bar's thatta way.

Billy, quickly, places two twenties on the table. Byron
 frowns but finally follows suit.

CARL
 Team closest to the Bull throws
 first. High Score, to 1000.

DART ALCOVE - CONTINUOUS

The blackboard scribed; a chalk line down the middle.

Champs (Carl, Johnnie, Nick) and Chumps (Billy, Maureen,
 Byron).

A heated match ensues. Each team member throws three darts
 in succession; nine darts per team turn.

The scores are erased and re-chalked after each team throws.

Gradually , scores on both sides climb towards 1000.

Competition close. Atmosphere angry.

The tavern empties.

Maureen closes the Champs out with a triple 20, and two double bulls eyes. Game over.

Maureen woo-hoos and grabs the cash from the table.

Angry, Carl grabs a dart, throws it wide of the cork, just missing Byron.

Billy and Maureen hug. Byron joins them, high fives around.

Carl, Johnnie and Nick sit, annoyed brooding.

Billy offers an unaccepted handshake. No words or eye contact from the Champs.

Byron, wisely, coaxes Billy and Maureen away from the Champs.

BYRON
(quick and quiet)
Let's go.

EXT. PACKY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Billy sits astride his Harley Sportster. Maureen astride behind him, helmetted and effervescently happy.

They pull out, stop at the curb in front of Packy's and bid farewell to a smiling Byron.

Billy revs the engine. They depart. Maureen waves back to a lone Byron. The parking lot is empty.

Byron walks over to his pick-up truck.

He begins to remove keys from his pocket,

SHOVED from behind.

Byron turns to face Carl, flanked by Johnnie and Nick.

NICK
You set us up. We want our money back.

JOHNNIE
Yeah, now buddy boy. Get it?...
She was a ringer.

BYRON
Look, we just wanted a friendly
game. The stakes were your idea.

CARL
Bullshit! Now!

Carl grabs Byron's shirt, chest high, at the buttons.

BYRON
That's not a good idea.

CARL
Oh? Why not Goofy?

BYRON
Ranger.

CARL
The Lone Ranger, Kemosabe?

Carl laughs and tries to put a fist through Byron's face.

BYRON
No. Army.

Byron deflects Carl's punch and counters with a vicious left hook. Carl stumbles backwards.

Johnnie tries to grab Byron and receives a boot to the groin from a spinning Byron. Johnnie goes down, moaning.

Nick throws a hard right that totally misses Byron. As Nick teeters forward, Byron catches him with a right uppercut to the chin.

Nick bleeds, face down on the pavement.

A final rush from Carl prompts another spinning kick to the head from Byron.

Fight over.

INT. MONTGOMERY MOTEL - DAY

The next morning. Byron speaks to Melissa on the motel room phone.

BYRON
How do you feel?

MELISSA (O.S.)
I'm fine. Much better than
yesterday. I'm... good. The darts?

BYRON
Fun. I'm leaving now. See you in
sixty.

MELISSA (O.S.)
Okay. Church picnic today.

BYRON
Um. You sure you're up for that?
Hello?

Melissa hangs up.

EXT. MONTGOMERY MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Byron walks over to his pick-up truck, windshield, newly
cracked.

EXT. COUNTY PARK - PICNIC - DAY

Saint Rose sponsored event. Beautiful day. A large county
park: picnic tables, barbecues, folding chairs.

Families, kids, fun. A softball game in the near distance.

BALL FIELD

Team players are all women.

Snack-consuming men occupy the bleachers.

A fourteen-year-old girl bats at home plate; a runner on
third. Father Dan McGuire pitches.

Maureen, Joan and Melissa sit on the first base side, team
bench.

JOAN
Come on Jackie! Lay into it!

MAUREEN
Woo!! Do it honey!

The entire bench, clapping, encouraging Jackie.

Maureen, between Joan and Melissa, quietly, nudges and steels
their attention.

MAUREEN

Why does a guy that good looking
decide to become a priest?

JOAN

Stop Maureen!

MAUREEN

He could have had the pick of the
litter. The most eligible
bachelor. Lots of hungry hearts
I'll bet.

JOAN

Maureen!

MELISSA

He is handsome.

JOAN

Okay, ladies this is a priest we're
talking about. Let's reel it in.

The fourteen year old batter drives one into left field. The
runner on third comes home.

The bench rises enthusiastically, shouting, clapping.

MAUREEN

There's more to the story. We'll
talk later. After a few brews.

JOAN

Meliss, you're up. Maureen, on
deck.

Melissa grabs a bat, takes a few practice swings and steps to
the plate.

JEREMY (35) good looking, expensive, L.L. Bean outfit sits in
the third base bleachers.

Next to Jeremy... a wife and two, grade school, children
share popcorn. A visibly affluent family.

Jeremy, clearly bored, looks out to the field. He focusses on
the new batter. Eyes and mouth open wide. He mumbles under
his breath.

JEREMY

That's Melissa Love.

PICNIC TABLES

Maureen, Joan and Melissa stand around two tables pushed together. AUDREY (35) short, Peter Pan cute, joins the group. She sits.

Four men attend the grill.

The girls empty picnic baskets, set the tables. Maureen sips from a beer can.

JOAN

You know. I'm tired of this. Next year, we grill. They set.

MELISSA

I'm in. Done deal!

AUDREY

So what did I miss? Any good gossip?

JOAN

How come you didn't play? We missed our all-star second baseman.

AUDREY

Yeah. Had to help Larry with the play-pen, carry and set up. We have to jail Petie if we're gonna have any fun here.

Audrey points to a confined three-year-old, play-penned at the left side of the grill. Maureen takes over.

MAUREEN

Well, Father Dan was the universal pitcher again. Same as last year. All of a sudden someone commented on how good looking he is.

JOAN

That was you, Mo.

AUDREY

He is handsome.

MAUREEN

And someone might have said that she wondered why he became a priest.

JOAN

That was you Mo.

MAUREEN

I mean, women were probably lining up at his doorstep from day one.

AUDREY

Maureen, celibate is celibate.

MAUREEN

Yeah, I know... Okay, this doesn't go any further. I mean, it's just a story...

She has their full attention.

MAUREEN

So, Billy decides to surprise me with a weekend at Tupper Lake for the Maple Syrup Festival.

AUDREY

Ooh, Larry and I did that a couple of years ago. Fun time. Where'd you stay?

MAUREEN

We pack some snacks and some fishing tackle and head out on the Sportster. Stayed at Molly Boyd's B and B. Great pancakes! All you can eat. Billy broke some kind of record, twenty five, I think, and the Maple Syrup--

JOAN

Mo...

MAUREEN

Right. Anyway, we're sitting in church on Sunday, Saint Matthews. I'm checking out the church bulletin and there's a photo of their monsignor and two priests. One of the priests is none other than our Father McGuire.

MELISSA

So he moved from their parish to ours. It happens.

MAUREEN

Molly Boyd, was at mass. When I got back to the B and B I casually asked Molly if she knew what happened to Father Dan.

JOAN

And?

MAUREEN

He was asked to leave Saint Matthews. He was seen hugging and kissing a young woman, a mid-twenties beauty, in broad daylight. Nothing was done. And then, a fifteen-year-old girl reported to the Monsignor that Father Dan "came on" to her sexually.

AUDREY

Really? I can't believe it.

MAUREEN

The parents of the fifteen-year-old were furious. He decided to leave rather than face a parish furor.

JOAN

Well, I don't believe it. I think he's wonderful and his behavior and actions here have been open, honest and supportive.

MELISSA

I agree. He's turned this parish into a thriving, caring, important part of the community.

MAUREEN

Just a story, Mel. You have to admit, he is good looking.

BARBECUE GRILL

A folding table opened next to the grill advertises packages of buns, salads and condiments.

A cooler also rests on the table with burgers, dogs and cold drinks.

Hack, apron adorned, grills.

LARRY (35), Audrey's husband, short, stocky, mustached, opens packages of buns. Stacks them on a tray.

Billy and Byron flank Hack and sip sodas.

HACK

No dart tournament but a satisfying victory?

BILLY

Oh yeah. We buried the winners of the tournament.

BYRON

He means Maureen buried them. Billy and I were steady but Maureen was awesome.

BILLY

Those dudes from Scotia were toast from the get-go. This big guy had a mouth. I thought he was gonna explode. Yeah, CARL. A real nasty creep. Carl the creep.

HACK

Carl? Scotia? A missing front tooth?

BILLY

That's him.

HACK

Surprised you got out of there without a confrontation. He's got a dark reputation. Vengeful... Tim Warren told me this story over a couple of boiler makers at Henley's.

Billy and Byron take a seat. Larry walks over to the playpen and picks up his crying son.

HACK

Several years ago, hunting season, in the hills behind Scotia...

FLASH BACK TO:

EXT. SCOTIA WOODS - DAY

Early morning.

Clad in hunting togs, Carl traipses uphill, along a leaf strewn path in the deep woods.

Cradling a Remington 850 twelve gauge shot gun, he eyes a huge buck lingering fifty yards in the distance.

The foliage is thick. Carl raises the gun. Peers down the site. No clear shot.

A tree stand in the distance, peripherally, comes into view.

Another hunter, clearly identified in his bright orange vest and hat, occupies the stand.

The buck walks directly towards the stand, a clear target for the hunter, an easy kill.

Carl draws a bead on the hunter.

The Remington fires. The hunter falls to the ground.

Carl runs to the site and takes two more shots at the buck. The buck escapes into the wooded distance.

The dead hunter's vest and hat removed and hidden by Carl.

Satisfied, Carl walks off and disappears.

Ten-year-old Bobby, head to toe in orange, hides behind a large boulder, shaking fearfully.

He moves to the dead hunter's body; a quick examination.

The young boy sprints off in the opposite direction from Carl's departure, crying.

FLASHBACK ENDS

BACK TO:

BARBECUE GRILL

Hack continues relating the Carl story and tongs a dog into a bun.

HACK

The kid gets home. Cries the story to his mother. Missing toothed shooter and all. Turns out the dead hunter is the kid's uncle; the mom, his sister.

Hack flips a few burgers.

HACK

Mother freaks, goes to the local authorities. They know Carl. He spent six years in county for second-degree murder.

(MORE)

HACK (CONT'D)

A pool room fight... killed a guy
with a pool cue.

Billy and Byron stand.

HACK

Scotia cops say Bobby will have to
identify Carl in a line up. They
bring Carl in for questioning. He
has an iron-clad alibi: hunting
with two friends fifty miles away.

BILLY

Don't tell me Johnnie and...

BYRON

Nick.

HACK

Yeah. Real names Nicholas
Grabowski... and John Wexler.

Larry walks over holding Petie.

LARRY

How we doing? We're starving.

HACK

A week later the kid is found
drowned in McGee's Pond and the
mother commits suicide a day after
that; pistol shot to the head, no
suicide note.

BYRON

What?

HACK

Yeah, scary, right?

LARRY

Ya know, I remember reading about
that in the county paper.

HACK

The woman was a single mom and the
boy was her only child. The whole
story evaporated pretty quickly.

BILLY

That's way more than just scary.

HACK

Like I said, you're lucky you got
out of Packy's without a fight.
Surprised they didn't threaten you.

BILLY

Yeah. For sure.

HACK

Let's eat!

PICNIC TABLES

The four couples sit. Petie is asleep in his playpen. Food
is passed around family style.

A slight beer-buzzed atmosphere.

Casual, friendly conversations. The meal is winding down.

Billy stands abruptly, walks to the head of the table.

BILLY

I've given this a lot of thought
and I'm certain this is the right
moment. The right time. In the
company of the right people. My
best friends. For my best-- I mean,
for my only girl.

Billy slides a hand into a jeans pocket. Maureen's hands
move to her mouth. He looks at Maureen. She trembles.

BILLY

I'm no Romeo, but Maureen, I know I
love you.

Billy walks over to Maureen and takes her hand. Maureen
rises, Billy kneels.

BILLY

Mo, will you marry me?

Maureen, cries, jumps. Arms and legs cradle Billy.

MAUREEN

Yes! Yes! Yes!

The table applauds and roars.

AUDREY

(laughing)

Well, since we're sharing good
news. I have some.

(MORE)

AUDREY (CONT'D)

Larry and I have number two in the oven. Found out yesterday.

The table excitement continues. Billy and Maureen sit. Hand shakes all around.

All smiles except for Joan. Joan rises and walks to the bun table. Emotionless, she begins cleaning up.

Obvious to all, there's been a shift in mood.

AUDREY

(softly)

I'm sorry, Hack. Didn't think that through.

HACK

It's okay. She always rebounds. Ya know, she wants kids so badly. It's tough. We started talking adoption but we're not there yet... We're not there yet.

Hack rises and moves to Joan. Begins helping her.

INT. HARDYSTON SWEET SHOP - DAY

Melissa sits across from Jeremy in a booth at the rear of the shop nursing cups of coffee. Melissa grins.

MELISSA

So is this a coincidence or are you following me. Bumping into me on the street? Come on?

Jeremy laughs.

JEREMY

Both, I guess... Melissa Love.

MELISSA

Jennings.

JEREMY

Right. Look I just moved back here from Westchester. I'm ten miles outside of Hardyston.

Jeremy adds sugar and cream to his coffee, bites into a muffin.

JEREMY

Saw you at the Saint Rose picnic,
softball game. Same unmistakable
"going for the fences" swing. I
just asked around--

MELISSA

What do you want, Jeremy? You
always wanted something.

JEREMY

Relax, Meliss. We DO have history.
Senior prom. Camping. Lake George.

MELISSA

That was a long time ago.

JEREMY

(coyly)

Okay. Well... I'm in the area if
you ever need a friend or want to
reminisce. Here's my number.

Jeremy slides a post-it note across the table.

Melissa stands.

MELISSA

Thanks for the coffee. I'm late
for work. Don't choke on your
muffin.

INT. CAMP MOR OUTDOOR STORE - DAY

Melissa enters the store.

Joan stands behind a counter discussing a display of hunting
knives with a customer.

She waves to Melissa and points to the office in the rear.

OFFICE

Hack sits behind a desk, arm deep in paperwork. He finally
looks up.

MELISSA

Sorry I'm late.

HACK

It's okay.

MELISSA
Byron's training reserves again.
Two weeks... In Watertown.

Joan enters the office.

HACK
Oh, okay... and there's a new
shipment of vests that needs to be
inventoried.

JOAN
I'll help you, Melissa. Come on.

They start to leave the office.

HACK
And get Warren for me. I want the
kayaks repositioned on the floor...
and a new one placed in the window.

SHOWROOM

Joan and Melissa walk towards Warren.

JOAN
So Sergeant Jennings is doing his
Army Reserves thing again.

MELISSA
Yeah, ya know Byron. He loves
training new reserves and the
military pay is good.

JOAN
He still works part time at the
bike shop?

MELISSA
Oh yeah, Bill's real flexible with
his hours. It's a perfect job for
Byron and we need the extra cash.

JOAN
Do you mind being alone? When he's
away? A little scary at nights?
No? I'm sorry, I shouldn't have
asked that.

MELISSA
It's okay. Byron has that cabin
protected with the best in home-
security systems.

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

And seriously, we don't have anything that anyone would want to steal anyway?

JOAN

I guess. It's just me.

MELISSA

And Joan, it's only two weeks a year, one weekend a month. It's okay. I'm use to it.

Joan and Melissa reach the hunting and fishing department. Warren is no where to be seen.

JOAN

(shouting)

Hey, Warr! You here?

Warren's head pops up from beneath a counter. Several tackle boxes dislodge and crash to the floor.

JOAN

Hack needs you.

INT. BILLY'S BIKES - DAY

Billy, in the garage, works on a Harley.

Byron, in the shop, organizes and stocks shelves with motorcycle accessories.

A black Kawasaki motorcycle pulls up and parks in front of the shop.

CATE (25) African-American, black leather motorcycle pants, boots and jacket, parks the bike. She removes her helmet, tall, shapely, very pretty.

She walks into the shop. The bell, nailed to the door, jingles.

THE SHOP

Byron puts down the box of gloves he is unpacking and treads to the register.

BYRON

Hi. Can I help you?

CATE

Byron?

BYRON

Yeah... Do I know you? That your Ninja H2? Quite a ride. Like it?

Byron nods towards the bike outside the shop window.

CATE

Gets me where I have to go. When I have to go. Fast. Actually, I just need some info. I'm looking for a church. Uh, Saint Rose?

BYRON

Saint Rose? Continue north down the main drag about a mile-and-a-half. If you get to the Gorge, you've gone too far.

Billy comes in and joins Byron at the register.

BYRON

You take a right on Harmony Road. It's another mile, east, on Harmony. There's a huge park across the road, from the church. Can't miss it.

BILLY

You need anything?

CATE

Uh, no. Thanks for the directions. Maybe, on the return trip, I'll come in for a browse before I leave. Gotta go. Ciao.

Cate exits the shop. She powers her bike to life and zooms out of the lot.

BILLY

I guess she needs some praying.

BYRON

Don't think she's a nun.

BILLY

Hey, By, I can't find any clutch cover gaskets. Need one for the Nightster. Somewhere in the back, top shelf, I think. Thanks.

INT. CAMP MOR OUTDOOR STORE - DAY

Melissa works the register. She scans a customer's credit card. The customer signs and Melissa turns to bag the items.

The next and only customer in line is Jeremy.

MELISSA

Again? What's up with you? You stalking me now?

JEREMY

Cut it out, Mel. Look, I had business in town. Thought I'd try again. You know, to catch up.

MELISSA

Jeremy, I don't need catching up.

JEREMY

Jeez, why are you being so mean? Come on, Mel. Have lunch with me at Henley's.

MELISSA

No... Oh, alright. Look, I only get forty-five minutes. So we'll catch up, but then I don't want to see you around, again. Understand?

INT. BYRON'S PICK-UP TRUCK - DAY

Melissa enters and buckles up behind the wheel.

She looks over and down and notices a catalogue on the passenger seat and a brown paper bag on the floor.

A crumpled Victoria's Secret catalogue on the seat, a dead bird in the bag.

She tosses the catalogue and bag out the window. She starts the engine.

EXT. SAINT ROSE PARKING LOT - DAY

Audrey sits on a bench outside the church rectory under a shade tree. It is hot, sunny and quiet.

Petie is asleep in a stroller.

Joan exits the rectory and joins Audrey on the bench, lost in thought.

AUDREY

How'd it go.

JOAN

He is such a wonderful man. I told him everything. I think I actually said the word "infertile" . I wasn't uncomfortable at all.

AUDREY

What did he say?

JOAN

He took my hand and then he hugged me.

AUDREY

Hugged you?

JOAN

Audrey. It was a priestly kind of hug. A sympathetic priest hug. That's all. And then we prayed. I kind of cried. He offered to speak to Hack and me together.

AUDREY

And?

JOAN

I told him I thought that was a good idea... and then I started crying again.

AUDREY

You poor thing.

JOAN

Oh, I'm alright. I'm gonna talk to Hack about it. Maybe tonight.

AUDREY

How about joining Petie and me for a stroll in the park?

JOAN

Ya know, that's just what I need. Melissa will cover for me.

INT. SAINT ROSE CHURCH - CONFESSIONAL - DAY

Father McGuire sits in the booth administering penance to a confessing sinner.

FATHER MCGUIRE
 ... for your Penance say five Our
 Fathers and now, offer an Act of
 Contrition...

The confessor exits the confessional and walks to the altar.

Father McGuire closes the confessional screen. He turns on a reading light and reads.

Minutes pass.

Cate enters the booth. Father McGuire turns off the light and slides open the screen.

CATE
 Bless me, Father... I love you with
 all my heart and soul.

FATHER MCGUIRE
 Cate? Cate? And I love you.

INT. HENLEY'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

A busy lunch at Henley's. Melissa and Jeremy sit at a table for two; center bar and grill.

Jeremy chomps a cheese burger with a beer chaser. Melissa eats a green salad with iced tea.

JEREMY
 I love this place. Lots of
 memories.

MELISSA
 You're down to thirty minutes,
 handsome.

Maisie approaches their table.

MAISIE
 Well, look who's here. A blast from
 the past. What brings the little
 rich kid back to Hardyston? Oh,
 can I say that?

JEREMY
 Sure you can. Still rich. Had to
 see my favorite waitress of all
 time: The Magnificent Maisie.

MAISIE

Cut me some slack, rich boy. You were a snob. You are a snob. You'll always be a snob. But your dough is always welcome here. Later.

Maisie leaves, removes dishes from another table.

MELISSA

Twenty minutes.

JEREMY

Okay, okay, okay. I was just a little shocked to see that you were still here. I mean, I'm not unhappy you're still here, pleasantly surprised, actually.

Melissa stops eating and looks down, realizing where the conversation is headed.

JEREMY

What happened to the Melissa Love I dated? Going to California, actress, Hollywood, fame and fortune? You were there. You had the entire package.

Melissa appears dejected.

MELISSA

Let it go, Jeremy. It's a long story. Lots of obstacles I didn't figure on and I met someone.

JEREMY

Okay, okay. Not gonna open up any old wounds. I'm done prying. I was just curious.

MELISSA

Good. Your time's up. Oh, wait... Was that dead bird routine and the catalogue your way of getting my attention?

Jeremy examines the check.

JEREMY

What?

MELISSA

Still with the little surprises?

Jeremy looks confused.

JEREMY

Anyway... Mel. The wife and kids are gone for a month; in-laws. I heard your husband is away doing Army stuff. You're alone. I'm alone. I'm thinking, maybe we could try to rekindle the old magic.

Melissa dumps the remainder of her iced tea in Jeremy's lap and exits the grill.

EXT. HARMONY PARK - DAY

Joan and Audrey exit the park. Joan pushes Petie's stroller.

They walk to Audrey's SUV. Petie is harnessed into his car seat. The stroller is folded and secured in the rear.

Audrey looks across the road to the church.

Father Dan has his arm affectionately wrapped around Cate's shoulders. The lovers stroll and reach the rectory.

Father Dan and Cate share a long hug and an affectionate kiss.

Audrey and Joan are dumbfounded.

JOAN

Oh, my. That's not how he hugged me.

Cate walks to her bike. She speeds off.

AUDREY

A motorcycle?

INT. BYRON'S PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

The truck pulls up next to the Hardyston Bus Stop. Melissa drives.

A bus idles at the stop.

Byron, clad in Army fatigues, kisses Melissa, exits the pickup and boards the bus.

He takes his seat, looks out the window for a final wave. The truck is gone.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

A weathered, two pump, Scotia service station: two garages. A deteriorated sign reads "New York's Best Gas".

MARVIN (55) grey, janitorial uniform, hunting cap taps off the tank of his rusting Ford F 150; replaces the gas cap.

He walks towards the office to pay.

INT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT**OFFICE**

The office is empty. A grey cash box on an old desk.

Marvin enters. Takes a quick look around.

He takes two twenties out of his shirt pocket.

Marvin turns towards the rear office door that leads to the garages.

The door is slightly ajar. Music plays over a barely audible conversation.

A light shines through. He peers in.

GARAGES

One garage is completely filled with automotive junk. Low volume country music plays from a radio on a work bench.

Carl and Nick sit at a make-shift table, in front of a truck parked in the second garage, playing cards.

Johnnie joins them. He carries two gas containers.

He places the containers in the truck bed.

NICK

Gin!

Carl grabs the remaining Hostess cupcake and smashes it into Nick's face.

CARL

Fuck you! Shit head.

Nick laughs while wiping his face.

NICK

Temper. Temper.

Carl stands, chugs the remainder of a beer and forcefully pushes Nick, chair and all, to the ground.

Johnnie giggles.

JOHNNIE

Boys. We're wasting time. Nick has gotta be in Cheney early tomorrow morning. Someone's gotta vouch for our whereabouts.

CARL

Get up, moron. The ladder is behind the shed.

Nick stands. Walks towards the rear exit. Stops.

NICK

Where's the house again?

JOHNNIE

Outskirts of Hardyston. Quiet, rural and Mr. Army is out of town.

The old hotel bell on the office desk rings repeatedly.

The three heads turn to the resonant thumping.

CARL

Who's that?

Carl looks to Nick.

CARL

I told you to shut down. See who it is, Johnnie.

OFFICE

Johnnie enters. Nods to Marvin and takes a position behind the desk.

Marvin places the two twenties on the desk in front of Johnnie.

Johnnie doesn't look up. The twenties join cash in the small, metal grey box. Marvin waits.

JOHNNIE

What? You want a receipt? Get out. We're closed.

Marvin decides against requesting his change. He exits the office, drives off.

The Service Station lights abruptly extinguish.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Melissa paces, book in hand. The phone on the end-table next to the sofa rings.

She sits on the sofa, covers her legs with a throw and answers the phone.

Nervous, anticipating this call back.

MELISSA

Hello. Byron?

BYRON (O.S.)

Yeah, Melissa, it's me.

MELISSA

I forgot to tell you something this afternoon... Um, well... I'm... uh... The truck's acting up again.

BYRON (O.S.)

What? Oh. Well, make sure you don't drive anywhere without your phone.

MELISSA

Yeah... transmission ya think?

BYRON (O.S.)

Maybe. Honey, have Billy take a look at it. I'll be home in a week, promise. I love you.

MELISSA

Me too. Okay, in a week.

INT. NICK'S PICKUP TRUCK - NIGHT

Nick, Johnnie and Carl sit three across. The truck motors slowly down a dirt road. Nick drives.

CARL

Any questions?

NICK

The fire, the bust and the get
away. Got it!

Nick turns his head, looks through the back window and
inspects the truck bed.

He turns forward, drastically yanks the steering wheel.

A speeding car crosses the non-existent yellow line; no
headlights, swerving. A near miss.

JOHNNIE

Watch out! Jesus!

CARL

Okay, enough with the pre-dawn
jitters. Settle down. This will be
a piece of cake.

The truck continues down the road for several more miles.

CARL

This is good... U-Turn. Turn the
truck around. We need to get out
of here, quick.

Nick completes the U-Turn.

CARL

Good. Pull in here... Leave the
doors unlocked.

The three men exit the truck.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Truck bed, unloaded.

Carl hugs a ladder under an arm. Johnnie carries two
containers of gasoline. Nick secures a back-pack.

They hike through the woods towards Byron's house.

EXT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - NIGHT

They exit the woods at the rear of the house.

Carl walks quietly to the front of the house. Johnnie
follows.

Carl carefully places the ladder against the roof's eaves and climbs two rungs.

Johnnie passes Carl a gas container. Carl climbs the ladder, container in hand and places it on the roof.

He returns for the second container and repeats the action.

Johnnie joins Nick at the rear of the house, outside the bedrooms.

Nick removes two bricks from the back-pack and hands one to Johnnie.

Carl soaks the front slope of the roof with gasoline and drops the containers to the foot of the ladder.

He regains the top of the ladder and strikes a match.

The roof blazes.

Carl slides down the ladder. He grabs the empty containers with one hand, the ladder in the other.

Dragging the ladder, he races to the rear of the house.

Johnnie sees Carl and lobs a brick through the right bedroom window.

CRASH

Nick lobs a brick through the left bedroom window.

CRASH

Nick takes the ladder from Carl. Johnnie takes one of the containers.

CARL
Go! Go! Go!

The three race away through the woods to the truck.

They gain the truck and execute an efficient get-away.

INT. NICK'S PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

A faint, shimmering glow appears in the rear-view mirror.

Carl and Johnnie turn around and revel in the source of the glow.

CARL
Done. Pay back.

Nick drives, spits out the window and laughs.

NICK
Byron! Byron! Byron! Help me! Help
me! Help me! I'll bet she pees
herself. He's gonna freak.

JOHNNIE
Barbecued Victoria Secret.

They all laugh.

CARL
Now we lay low until this blows
over... Take a right up here. We
need to get off this road.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT

Four screaming, flashing, fire trucks halt behind a large
fallen oak tree spanning the road.

A fifth truck, snagged in the woods, attempts to circumvent.

Fire fighters with chain saws challenge the obstacle.

Smoke spreads throughout the adjacent woods.

EXT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - NIGHT

Fire trucks, police cars and an ambulance park precariously
close to the house.

Hoses streaming. Axes flogging. Ladders climbed. Fire
fighters pushed to their limits.

A futile attempt to extinguish a fire out of control. The
structure blazes.

A Lost Cause.

EXT. ARMY RESERVES TRAINING CAMP - OBSTACLE COURSE - DAY

Five AM. Byron dressed in Military Physical Fitness Uniform.

Alone. He excels through the Confidence/Obstacle course:
rope climb, A-frame climb and the "slide for life" from a
forty-foot tower.

Byron completes a long distance run. He jogs to the barracks and enters.

INT. ARMY RESERVES TRAINING CAMP - BARRACKS - DAY

Sergeant Renner (35) firm, fit, military fatigues rounds the corner, bumping into the hustling Byron.

SERGEANT RENNER
Sergeant Jennings. What? Who are you trying to impress, wimpy? You almost missed chow.

BYRON
The newbies will appreciate it.

SERGEANT RENNER
Right. Oh, Captain Hall needs to see you. Stat. Better hurry.

BYRON
Captain Hall?

INT. CAPTAIN HALL'S OFFICE - DAY

Captain Hall (55), dignified, military proud, sits behind a meticulously arranged desk top.

There are two chairs in front of Captain's Hall desk. One chair is vacant.

Lieutenant Rizzo(45) sharply dressed in his Army Service uniform, occupies the other chair.

Byron in fatigues, knocks on Hall's door.

CAPTAIN HALL
Enter.

Byron enters. Appropriately, respectful army military introductions are exchanged.

CAPTAIN HALL
Sergeant Jennings, have a seat.

BYRON
Thank you, sir.

Byron sits in the vacant chair.

CAPTAIN HALL

(hesitant)

Lieutenant Rizzo is a military advisor. I've asked him to be here today for this meeting to speak with you.

Byron acknowledges the Lieutenant with a curious glance.

BYRON

Yes, sir.

LIEUTENANT RIZZO

Sergeant Jennings, it is with the deepest regret that I must inform you that your wife has died.

Byron, unresponsive to what he thought he had heard.

LIEUTENANT RIZZO

Her death was the result of a catastrophic house fire--

Disbelief reigns.

CAPTAIN HALL

Byron. I'm so sorry. Is there anything I can do?...

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

SUPER: PRESENT DAY

Byron and Emmi pass through the Montgomery town center.

BYRON

There's a gas station two blocks ahead on the right...

He checks the fuel gauge.

BYRON

That's odd. The gauge hasn't moved at all. Should I stop?--

EMMI

Drive.

BYRON

Finally, we're speaking the same language. Packy's is just up ahead. I really should check in. They're expecting me, Hack and Billy.

Emmi hesitates at first.

EMMI

Yes.

Byron drives into Packy's parking lot and parks. He turns to Emmi and grins.

BYRON

Okay, this is great. I won't be long. One hour, no more. Just stay here. Sit tight. Understand?

Byron exits the BMW and enters Packy's.

INT. PACKY'S TAVERN - DAY

Five flat panels broadcast various NFL games.

Byron scans the busy, blue-collar worker filled tavern and spies Hack and Billy at the bar.

Billy removes his coat from a bar stool saved for Byron. The friends exchange greetings.

BILLY

Yo, Pack! We need a beer here.

BYRON

What a day.

Byron drops his head to the bar surface.

HACK

Well, it's gotta be better than your night was.

BYRON

You don't wanna know... So what's the Buffalo-Miami spread and can I still get in?

He calls out loudly down the bar.

BYRON

Packy!! Where's the sheet?

Byron's beer arrives. He takes a long-needed swig.

An hour passes. The friends have a great time.

Emmi appears, stands at the bar between Byron and Billy, leaning into Byron.

BYRON

Whoa! What the... I told you to stay in the car!

Byron panics, looks about expecting reactions from Hack and Billy. Nothing from either of them.

BYRON

Oh, um, this is a... Pamela from Austria, uh, Australian, exchange student. Not much English. Actually, I met her outside, a Dolphin fan... Can you believe it? And she walks into here... Gutsy I guess...

Byron realizes Hack and Billy are not paying attention.

Hack screams at the Flat Panel.

HACK

Interference? Come on!

Billy throws a handful of pretzels at the Flat Panel.

BILLY

The ref's blind!

Billy elbows Byron.

BILLY

What'd you think, BY?

BYRON

Uh, Yeah, holding, holding, definitely holding.

BILLY

Holding?

Byron stands and turns to Emmi.

BYRON

You're way too beautiful to walk into this place ALONE on NFL Sunday. The guys in this place are animals.

Billy stares at Byron confused.

BILLY
 Uh, I came in with Hack, BY. Uh,
 beautiful's a stretch. I have been
 working out though... You okay BY?

EMMI
 Hour. Over.

BYRON
 I'm not ready to leave!

Confused, Billy responds.

BILLY
 You don't have to leave, BY.

Byron and Emmi are eye-to-eye. Emmi's eyes begin to swirl bright green.

EMMI
 Gas. Now.

Byron starts for the exit.

BILLY
 Where are you going?

Byron responds to himself but loud enough for his friends to hear.

BYRON
 Gas? Again with the gas.

Billy and Hack watch Byron exit.

HACK
 What's up with Byron?

BILLY
 He's got gas? I guess?

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron starts the sports car and exits the parking lot.

BYRON
 Where to?

EMMI
 Gas. Drive.

BYRON

You want me to drive out of town,
out of Montgomery? Far out of
Montgomery? For gas?..

EMMI

Drive.

The BMW travels along two-lane road through rural country.

BYRON

What was the deal in Packy's? So
they couldn't see you?

EMMI

Invisible.

BYRON

What?

Emmi's eyes swirl green.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - FLASHBACK - DAY

KITCHEN

Byron responding to Emmi earlier in the day.

BYRON

Well... I'm gonna treat you like
you're not even here. Got it?
You're nothing. You're invisible.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron returns from the memory vision.

BYRON

Oh, right. But I saw you... Wait.
You're invisible to every one else?
Great. I am crazy.

EMMI

Yes. Stop.

BYRON

Now what?

Byron pulls the car over to the shoulder.

EMMI
Too beautiful. Alone.

BYRON
What?

Emmi's eyes swirl green.

INT. PACKY'S TAVERN - FLASHBACK - DAY

Byron addressing Emmi in the tavern.

BYRON
You're way too beautiful to walk
into this place ALONE on NFL
Sunday. The guys in this place are
animals.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron returns from the memory vision.

Emmi pulls Byron over and delivers a passionate, electric
kiss.

Byron pushes back at first. He surrenders to the passionate
advance.

Disappointed with himself, Byron recovers and collects
himself.

BYRON
It's your perfume, right? Some
kind of love mist? Well, cut it
out! I told you. I'm still
married.

EMMI
Trust. Compassion.

Emmi turns her head, stares out the front windshield. Byron
shakes his head.

BYRON
Trust, compassion? Weird name for
perfume. Look... Uh, Emmi.
(MORE)

BYRON (CONT'D)

You're incredibly alluring. I'd be lying to say I'm not attracted to you.

Byron takes a deep breath.

BYRON

I think some men struggle with making decisions when emotions are involved. Sometimes their physical side gets the best of their spiritual side and they do something they end up regretting.

Emmi's eyes swirl green.

BYRON

I still have feelings for my wife. We had a spiritual thing going. It was all about TRUST and COMPASSION. I'll never let her go. We'll be together again. I know it... Soul mates forever.

Emmi's eyes return to normal.

EMMI

Gas. Drive.

EXT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

One-hundred yards in the distance, an isolated Service Station comes into view.

The remote, run down, two-pump service station is dimly lit.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

Emmi elbows Byron and points to the station.

EMMI

Gas.

Byron pulls in and rolls up adjacent to a pump. He checks the fuel gauge.

BYRON

What? The gauge still shows full. I don't get it. It must be broken or stuck. I mean. We must need gas by now. What do you think?...

(MORE)

BYRON (CONT'D)
It's late. I don't think they're
open.

He turns towards Emmi.

Emmi has exited the car. She opens the Service Station front door and enters.

Byron lowers the passenger side window.

BYRON
(shouting)
Hey, where are you going?

Byron turns off the ignition, exits the car and walks towards the office.

INT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

OFFICE

Byron enters and scans the room. No Emmi. No one.

BYRON
Hello? Hello?

The minimally decorated office is dark and dusty. The translucent glass of the rear office door is aglow.

Byron crosses to the rear office door. His hand moves to the door knob.

The barrel of a shot gun jolts Byron from behind.

CARL
What do we have here? We're
closed. Hands on head!

Carl does not recognize Byron. Byron obeys the command.

CARL
Now! Open it! Don't do anything
stupid, pal. Ain't your lucky day.
Move!

Carl pushes Byron through the door into the garages.

GARAGES

Slowly they gain the rear of the room.

Carl forces Byron to about-face at the end of an industrial work bench.

He points the shot gun at Byron's heart from two feet away.

Marvin faces the bench at the far end. His hands are duct-taped to a vice.

Johnnie seals Marvin's mouth with tape.

JOHNNIE

What do we have here?

CARL

Another unfortunate late night patron.

Carl recognizes Byron.

CARL

What!! ?? Are you kidding me?
Johnnie, jack pot! It's soldier boy!

Carl looks to the ceiling, deducing.

CARL

Oh, I think I got it. How much did you pay 'ol Marvin for our names? Was it more than the thousand he demanded from us to keep his mouth shut?

Johnnie smacks Marvin in the head.

CARL

And the two of you come out here together to squeeze us. Whoops. Sorry. We don't like squeezing.

Carl pumps a cartridge into the chamber. Johnnie moves to a position next to Carl, out of harm's way.

JOHNNIE

Are you sure you want to do it here?

CARL

Sure, this is perfect. A little bleach and the floor cleans up swell.

Carl turns to Byron.

CARL

If there's still any doubt, the answer is yes. We cooked your house.

Carl lifts the gun to a comfortable firing position.

CARL

Not too frisky with a rifle pointing at you. Hey, Ricky Ranger? Oh, I wanted to ask you. Did she come out medium-rare or well-done?

Emmi walks towards the action from the front of the garages.

BEAUTIFUL RESOLVED

She passes between Carl and Johnnie.

CARL

Always been a fan of extra-crispy, myself. Real tasty!

Emmi, eyes swirling green, walks directly into Byron.

Her spirit invades Byron's body. They become one spiritual entity. A bright, green, pulsating, unified spirit.

Carl fires two shells into the Byron-Emmi, newly created, entity.

Byron flinches.

The shells pass through the entity, narrowly missing Marvin and destroying a portion of the work bench.

EMMI

Go.

Byron steps out of the entity. He kicks Carl in the groin and takes the shot gun.

Carl goes down face up, howling in pain.

Johnnie turns to run. Byron clubs him with the butt of the gun. He goes down hard, unconscious.

Byron pumps another cartridge into the chamber. He stands over Carl, seething. His trigger finger begins to flex.

EMMI

No.

Byron's aim is fixed on Carl's heart.

He looks up at Emmi.

BYRON

Yes!... He murdered Melissa! He's
pure evil!

EMMI

No.

Emmi's eyes swirl green.

EMMI

Trust. Compassion.

INT. SPORTS CAR - FLASHBACK - DAY

Byron speaking to Emmi.

BYRON

I think some men struggle with
making decisions when emotions are
involved. Sometimes their physical
side gets the best of their
spiritual side and they do
something they end up regretting.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. SERVICE STATION - NIGHT

GARAGES

Byron returns from the memory vision.

Carl's writhing diminishes. He tries to stand.

Byron clubs him unconscious.

Nick explodes through the rear garage door. He witnesses the
clubbing and skids to a halt.

NICK

What the...

Nick turns, exits panic stricken.

A car engine revs and tires screech from behind the station.

Byron finds a box cutter on the work bench. He frees Marvin, stupefied and relieved.

MARVIN

How come you're not... I don't get it but thank you, thank you, thank you. I'm outta of here.

BYRON

Whoa! Marv!

Byron throws the roll of duct tape to Marvin. He points to Johnnie.

BYRON

Bind him. Face down. Hands and feet. Don't skimp on the tape.

Byron smashes the shot gun against a cement-filled lally column. The barrel falls to the floor. He tosses the stock.

He uses several extra-long extension cords and secures Carl in an extension cord cocoon.

Marvin completes his task. Stands.

MARVIN

Can I go?

BYRON

No. Use the office phone and call the police. Tell them what you know about the fire. Don't leave anything out. Except me. You can sneak out the back when they arrive. Understand?

MARVIN

Will do. I got it. I owe you. Thanks.

Marvin runs to the office.

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Emmi drives. Byron sleeps in the passenger seat.

Byron wakes, slowly assesses the situation. He turns to Emmi.

BYRON

So the gas station was your thing, your idea, your message. For me?

Nothing from Emmi. Byron turns away.

BYRON

I should have killed them. Why did I let you stop me? They don't deserve to be alive.

Byron turns back to Emmi.

BYRON

What happened in there? I mean, you walked into me. I saw you. I felt you and the perfume, drugging me again? We were... One.

EMMI

Yes.

BYRON

I owe you, again, for saving my life, the Gorge and now the Service Station.

No response from Emmi.

BYRON

Now what? Uh... Emmi.

EMMI

Nick.

BYRON

Nick? What Nick? You mean the guy who scrambled out of there?

EMMI

Yes.

Emmi floors the accelerator. She drives the sports car off the road into dense woods via a secluded dirt road.

EXT. DENSE WOODS - DAY

She skillfully avoids several trees, ditches and boulders through a series of tight turns.

The sports car splashes through a raging stream.

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron tightens his seat belt.

BYRON

Whoa! Take it easy Mario! What's going on?

EXT. DENSE WOODS - CLEARING - DAY

The sports car exits the woods and enters a clearing.

An old truck is parked next to a run down mobile home. A wooden shed sits at the edge of the clearing.

Emmi rams the mobile home. Nick, panic stricken again, exits the mobile home partially dressed, gripping a hand gun.

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron turns to Emmi.

BYRON

What happened to the thing about the physical side getting the best of the spiritual side? Now what?

EMMI

Go.

EXT. DENSE WOODS - CLEARING - DAY

Nick fires several shots at the sports car. He sprints away.

Emmi turns hard. The glove compartment pops open revealing Byron's service revolver.

Byron's eyes open wide. He grabs the revolver.

Emmi adeptly motors forward and pins Nick against the shed.

He is unable to escape. He SCREAMS.

Nick turns, fires the hand gun. His eyes open wide, totally mesmerized.

NO DRIVER.

Byron exits the sports car.

Nick fires at Byron, emptying his pistol. Byron avoids the fusillade.

Emmi revs the sports car, pins Nick tighter to the shed.

Nick fires an empty pistol and uselessly tosses it at Byron.

Byron puts his revolver to Nick's head and starts to squeeze the trigger. He closes his eyes and opens them slowly.

BYRON
(softly)
Trust. Compassion.

Byron turns to Emmi and lowers his revolver.

He turns back to Nick and raises his gun again.

BYRON
You bastard! You killed my wife.

NICK
No! It wasn't like that. We threw bricks through the bedroom windows, to wake her. She should have been out way before the fire got going.

Byron stares and tries to digest Nick's words. Nick shakes.

NICK
Yeah, we started the fire but we were just trying to scare her. She wasn't supposed to die. I swear.

Byron re-enters the sports car. They drive out of the clearing into the woods.

Nick falls forward on his hands and knees, gasping.

INT. SAINT ROSE CHURCH - CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - DAY

Father Dan McGuire walks down the church aisle, Bible in hand.

He enters the confessional, sits and turns on the reading light.

No parishioners sit in the pews beside the booth.

Father McGuire hears a confessor enter the booth. He turns the reading light off and slides the screen open.

As usual, the confessor's face is just a dark, outlined shadow.

Two green lights swirl within the shadow.

FATHER MCGUIRE
Cate?

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Emmi, off road, motors in the woods.

BYRON

So they didn't intend to kill her.
They're still responsible for her
death. Cowards.

Emmi down shifts and motors up a dangerous grade.

BYRON

Let me guess. That was another
message for me?

EMMI

Yes.

BYRON

Can't you just tell me?

EMMI

No.

BYRON

I'm afraid to ask. Now what?

EMMI

Henley's.

Byron smiles.

BYRON

Henley's? You know Henley's?

The sports car exits the woods. The day fades to evening.

INT. HENLEY'S BAR AND GRILL - NIGHT

Byron and Emmi enter the bar.

BYRON

Anywhere in particular you want me
to sit?

Emmi does not respond. Byron sits at the bar. Emmi stands
behind him.

Maisie approaches Byron.

MAISIE

Hey, Hon. So you made it? Your
friends were freaking.

BYRON

Oh, yeah. A little snow, a little wind, no problems. Quiet in here for dinner time?

MAISIE

Yeah. No bridge; no crowd. We're still getting locals but the dinner business is hurting. Jack thinks we may have to close down for a while.

Father Dan McGuire and Cate enter the Bar.

Byron turns and watches the couple pass. He appears disconcerted.

They take seats at a table in the rear, next to the shuffleboard table.

MAISIE

Excuse me, BY.

Maisie comes from behind the bar and walks to Father McGuire and Cate. She takes their order and returns to the bar.

MAISIE

(to Byron)

What'll you have? Father Dan asked me to ask you if you'd like to join him. He really wants you to join him.

BYRON

Bottle of Bud.

MAISIE

I'll bring your drinks. Go!

Byron stands and walks towards the shuffleboard table. Emmi follows.

SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE

Father McGuire and Cate stand at the far end of the shuffleboard table. They slide weights alternately.

Byron takes a position at the near end of the shuffleboard table, observing. Emmi sits.

Cate slides her last weight. She hugs and then kisses Father McGuire.

She WHISPERS into his ear and pushes a piece of paper into his sweater pocket.

Father McGuire looks confused. He hugs and kisses her back.

Byron stares, shocked, confused, curious.

Cate walks to Byron.

CATE

Good to see you again, Byron.
Don't beat him too badly...

Cate places a hand on Emmi's shoulder. Their eyes share confirmation, a subtle gesture of recognition.

She exits Henley's.

Father McGuire joins Byron. A head nod, but no words are exchanged.

They take turns sliding weights and walk to the other end of the table.

They slide the weights again.

Maisie arrives with two bottles of Bud and places them on the table.

Father McGuire looks at Byron.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Yes. We should sit. I think we
need to talk.

Byron and Father McGuire take seats. Emmi sits in the chair between them.

Byron looks confused. He gets closer to Father Dan's ear.

BYRON

(softly)

We need to talk? We need to talk?
Before we talk about anything, I
have a few questions for you.

Father Dan sips his beer, relaxed.

BYRON

Who was the biker chick hugging and
kissing you? Do you know the
rumors that have been flying around
Hardyston the last few months?

Father Dan takes another relaxed swig. Byron lowers his voice further.

BYRON

You're forced to leave Saint Matthew's in Tupper Lake. You molest a fifteen-year old and get caught hugging and kissing a twenty five-year old! Was it the same girl as tonight?

FATHER MCGUIRE

Yes... Cate is my daughter.

Byron is taken aback, speechless.

FATHER MCGUIRE

I was nineteen. Her mother, a girl I barely knew. We never married. She died giving birth to Cate. She's the reason I became a priest.

BYRON

I'm sorry Father Mcguire.

FATHER MCGUIRE

I always wanted to be a part of Cate's life. She travels quite a bit now. She comes and goes. I don't see her as often as I would like, but we're very close. Usually, she just shows up.

BYRON

What about the fifteen-year old and the molestation accusation?

FATHER MCGUIRE

So you want all of it? Jenna was the lead altar server. Responsible, dutiful. I thought.

Father McGuire looks to the ground, soulfully.

FATHER MCGUIRE

I discovered she was stealing cash from the collection basket Sundays after mass. The first time I saw her taking the cash I was on the other side of the sacristy. I let it go. The second time, I caught her in the act. We had words. She was upset and tried to deny it.

Father McGuire appears remorseful.

FATHER MCGUIRE

I felt pretty bad. The next day the Monsignor informed me of the molestation charges. I guess Jenna was afraid I'd inform on her. I never did. She fabricated the story for her parents. I just left to avoid the melee. Fortunately, I had contacts at Saint Rose.

BYRON

Father McGuire, I was really out of line. I'm sorry.

FATHER MCGUIRE

It's alright my son. I mean Byron. Now, who is this quiet young lady?

Father McGuire smiles and takes Emmi's hand. Byron's eye brows raise.

BYRON

You can see her?

FATHER MCGUIRE

Yes, of course. We're here because Cate came to me with a message. She told me we had to meet you and a young woman, here, at Henley's, today.

BYRON

This is Emmi. A message?

FATHER MCGUIRE

Cate said you need my help... So Byron, do you need my help? What can I do for you? Is Emmi involved? It seemed important.

Byron looks at Emmi.

BYRON

(sarcastic)

I don't know. I've been getting a lot of help lately.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Cate has always been... soulful, very spiritual and at times very mysterious.

BYRON

I don't know, Father Dan. Things have been a little crazy of late.

FATHER MCGUIRE

What about you, Emmi? Can you help unravel the mystery?

Emmi does not respond. She tightens her hand hold with Father Dan.

BYRON

Father Dan, she's not being rude. She just has a weird way of communicating. When I'm with her, things just have a way of working out.

Father McGuire is still lost.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Well, I have to get back. Byron, the offer is out there. If there is anyway I can help you, call or come over to the church, anytime.

Father McGuire stands and releases Emmi's hand.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Dinner date I think. Cate whispered to me as she was leaving, "See you at the Shack 7:00 PM". And then slides directions into my sweater pocket. That's my Cate. God bless her.

Father McGuire rises and exits Henley's.

INT. SPORTS CAR - DAY

Byron pilots the sports car.

BYRON

So, what was that all about? Was it that important that we have a shuffleboard meeting with Father Dan and Cate?

EMMI

Yes.

Byron appears confused.

BYRON

Well, I have to admit, I'm kind of growing fond of having you around. Saving my butt... Maybe it's that perfume stuff.

Byron looks to Emmi. No reaction.

BYRON

I have a feeling you're going to leave soon.

EMMI

Yes.

Byron appears melancholy.

BYRON

Oh... Now what? Or should I say, Now where?

EMMI

Gorge.

BYRON

The Great Gorge? It's a mess I imagine. Long drive from here. Why?

EMMI

Truck.

BYRON

What truck?

EMMI

Yours.

BYRON

Oh Jeez, I forgot all about it. Hope it's still there. Had lots of damage. They may have towed it.

EXT. GAP ROAD - HARDYSTON - NIGHT

Byron slowly drives down Gap Road leading to the former Great Gorge Bridge.

A dark, star filled, moon lit evening.

He flashes high beams at the side of the road where his pick-up truck used to be.

GONE

A silent construction scene comes into view in the distance.

The sports car continues. It stops before several road blocking saw horses.

A series of heavy duty, stymied, construction vehicles crowd the road before the Gorge.

Other than the hum of the sports car's engine, it is extraordinarily quiet.

Byron and Emmi exit the sports car.

BYRON

Well, they towed it. Big surprise.
Now what?

Emmi takes a position facing Byron. Her eyes swirl green.

She hugs him.

INT. HENLEY'S BAR AND GRILL - FLASHBACK - DAY

Byron speaking to Father McGuire..

BYRON

... She just has a weird way of communicating. When I'm with her, things just have a way of working out.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

EXT. GAP ROAD - HARDYSTON - NIGHT

Byron returns from the memory vision.

Surprised. He and Emmi are embracing, passionately kissing.

Byron breaks from the embrace, taken aback; confused.

BYRON

Emmi! I know this feels right but it's not right. I made a commitment to my wife. She's waiting for me, soul mates.

(MORE)

BYRON (CONT'D)

You don't understand. We... You need to cut it out. Enough!

Emmi, abruptly, leaves Byron's side. She walks around several large construction vehicles.

Byron follows.

Emmi comes to Cate's motorcycle parked on the side of the road. Byron recognizes the bike.

It straddles a foot printed path, leading into the woods, the same path Byron traversed the night he met Emmi.

Emmi leads. Byron follows.

A winding walk through the woods leads to the same dilapidated shack.

Emmi and Byron step onto the porch. They enter the dark shack.

INT. WOODEN SHACK - NIGHT

A pair of swirling green eyes shine in the far corner of the shack.

Emmi walks to Cate. They hug briefly and take seats at the four chaired, small square table.

Byron greets Cate and sits facing Emmi.

BYRON

Okay. The same old shack where I met you. Now what?

CATE

This place is a palace compared to my last one, Minnesota. A fishing shack on Lake Winnibigoshis. Freezing!

BYRON

Wait. You're an EMISSARY?

CATE

No. I'm a CATALYST.

BYRON

Oh, you're a catalyst? Um, okay. Why not?... What's a catalyst?

CATE

When an Emissary contacts me, I go.

A flashlight beam shines from underneath the door.

Father McGuire pushes the door open.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Cate? Am I late?

Father McGuire shines his light at the table.

CATE

Hi, Dad uh, Father. Any problems with the directions?

FATHER MCGUIRE

No, once I found your motorcycle I just followed the footprints... So what are we doing here?

Father McGuire takes the chair facing Cate.

BYRON

Well, I don't think we're here for parcheesi or scrabble and, Father, I don't think you'd approve of a seance. So, Cate, Emmi you're on.

CATE

Emmi is a spiritual EMISSARY. She contacted me. I'm a CATALYST. A CATALYST and an EMISSARY work together. We're going to help you.

BYRON

Help me?

CATE

Yes... You need a spiritual re-alignment.

BYRON

A spiritual re-alignment?

CATE

Father McGuire is here to provide divine guidance. Keep everything on track, so to speak.

FATHER MCGUIRE

Okay. I guess. And this is how I'm helping Byron?

CATE
Yes.

EMMI
Yes.

BYRON
(sarcastic)
Well, that clears everything up.
And, why are we at the shack?

CATE
A physical gateway, a conduit, so
that the physical and spiritual
have a place to "meld".

Emmi and Cate take hands with Byron and Father McGuire around the table. Green eyes swirl in the darkness.

The inside of the shack transforms from black to total green fluorescence.

The scene transports to the past.

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

LIVING ROOM

Melissa paces, book in hand. The phone on the end table next to the sofa rings.

She sits on the sofa, covers her legs with a throw and answers the phone.

Nervous, anticipating this call back.

MELISSA
Hello. Byron?

BYRON (O.S.)
Yeah, Meliss, it's me.

MELISSA
I forgot to tell you something this afternoon... Um, well... I'm... uh... The truck's acting up again.

BYRON (O.S.)
What? Oh. Well, make sure you don't drive anywhere without your phone.

MELISSA

Yeah... transmission ya think?

BYRON (O.S)

Maybe. Honey, have Billy take a look at it. I'll be home in a week, promise. I love you.

MELISSA

Me too. Okay, in a week. Bye.

KNOCKING

MELISSA

Coming. Hang on.

Melissa rises from the couch and walks to the front door.

She opens the door. Hack enters. They kiss.

HACK

Hi.

MELISSA

Hi, back at ya. You're early.

Hack passes her quickly. His gait, a drunken swagger.

He carries a bottle of wine into the kitchen, confident in his surroundings. Melissa follows.

KITCHEN

An empty bottle of wine and a half-full glass of wine sit on the counter.

Melissa takes an empty glass from the top shelf of a cabinet.

Hack opens the wine, a familiar routine they've shared before. He fills the glasses.

LIVING ROOM

They enter and sit on the sofa.

HACK

How did it go? You told him, right?

MELISSA

No... I couldn't. I can't yet.

HACK

What? You can't put it off any longer, Melissa. He's gonna figure it out.

Melissa takes a huge gulp, becomes insistent.

MELISSA

We agreed. You were going to tell Joan that you wanted a divorce first. You sell the store and we split for California. A new start for both of us. Get away from this small hick town existence.

Hack shakes his head.

HACK

Melissa, change in plans... I'm not divorcing Joan... You and I, we're done. Maybe an occasional--

MELISSA

Fuck?... Fuck you, Hack. What am I suppose to do with this? Huh, ass hole!

Melissa points to her stomach and chugs her glass of wine.

HACK

Tell him it's his. He'll be thrilled.

MELISSA

He won't believe it. He shoots blanks... and we can't afford it... You're taking me to California!

HACK

Look, I'm not telling Joan. Get an abortion. End it.

MELISSA

Abortion? Screw you!

Melissa grabs Hack's glass from the coffee table and throws the wine all over him.

Hack grabs Melissa at the neck.

HACK

Settle down!

MELISSA

Settle down? I'll settle down.
Now listen to me, you bastard. If
you don't tell Joan, I will.

Melissa pushes her cell phone to Hack.

MELISSA

Call her! Now!

Hack pushes the phone away. He grabs it and throws it at the wall.

HACK

Cut it out! I'm not calling
anyone!

Melissa grabs the bottle of wine. She swings at Hack's head.

Hack, stunned, falls to one knee.

He recovers, pushes up and lands a punch to Melissa's face.

Melissa falls backwards. Her head hits the corner of the coffee table. She rolls to the floor.

Hack stands over Melissa's body. Her eyes wide open, a deathful stare.

He shakes Melissa, hoping she'll respond.

DEAD.

Hack is remorseful. He shakes uncontrollably.

HACK

No! No! No! Please! No!

INT. NORTH COUNTRY LOG HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Hack sweats from unbridled anxiety.

He moves room to room. With solvent and a cloth, he wipes possible fingerprints from all surfaces.

He is particularly meticulous in the kitchen, bathroom and bedrooms.

In the bedroom he opens all the furniture drawers and flings the contents on the floor. The drawers remain open.

As a final measure he deposits the wine bottle, glasses and any small objects he remembers handling in plastic garbage bags.

Hack takes a final look around. Satisfied with his sanitizing cover-up, he exits the house with two garbage bags.

He runs to his car, enters and escapes down the dirt road.

INT. NICK'S PICK-UP TRUCK - NIGHT

Nick, Johnnie and Carl sit three across. The truck motors slowly down a dirt road. Nick drives.

CARL
Any questions?

NICK
The fire, the bust and the get
away. Got it!

Nick turns his head, looks through the back window and inspects the truck bed.

He turns forward, drastically yanks the steering wheel.

A speeding car, crosses the non-existent yellow line; no headlights, swerving, a near miss.

JOHNNIE
Watch out! Jesus!

CARL
Okay, enough with the pre-dawn
jitters. Settle down. This will be
a piece of cake.

The truck continues down the road for several more miles.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

INT. WOODEN SHACK - NIGHT

Byron sits ALONE at the table. The shack at pre-dawn, dimly lit.

He collects himself and exits the shack.

His walk on the path, resolved.

EXT. GAP ROAD - HARDYSTON - NIGHT

Byron follows the foot printed path back through the woods to the road.

Cate's motorcycle: GONE, a commercial trash receptacle in its place.

Byron makes his way around construction vehicles. A Chevy sedan occupies the space where the sports car was parked.

A woman driver and a male passenger are barely visible inside the sedan.

Byron charges the Chevy and raps on the passenger side window.

HARRY (50) work overalls, construction cap unhappily awakens and reluctantly rolls down the window.

HARRY

What!?

BYRON

What happened to the black sports car that WAS parked here?

Harry opens the door and steps out.

HARRY

What? Look, Mister, what-ever-your-name-- Wait. I know you. Packy's right? The guy who had the fire. Lost his wife. Oh... sorry 'bout that-- Um--

BYRON

The black BMW, did you see it leave?

HARRY

BMW ? I was asleep.

Harry leans his head in through the window. GLADYS (50) bath-robed, turns her head.

HARRY

Hon, did you see a sports car leaving when you pulled in?

GLADYS (O.S.)

What? Nah... Don't forget your lunch.

BYRON
Shoot! I need to get back to
Hardyston, other side of the Gorge.

HARRY
The other side?

Harry turns toward the Gorge and then, back to Byron.

NO BYRON.

Byron sprints along side a flatbed truck leaving the site.

A desperate leap and Byron lands on the flatbed. He hides himself under a tarp.

Harry grins as he observes the unusual departure.

EXT. CAMP MOR OUTDOOR STORE - DAY

Byron quickly exits the passenger side of a car that hasn't quite stopped in front of the store.

BYRON
(Without turning back)
Thanks!

INT. CAMP MOR OUTDOOR STORE - DAY

He crashes through the CAMP MOR doors.

Clearly focussed, he scans the store looking for Hack.

A few customers rummage in various departments of the store...

NO HACK.

Byron runs to the rear of the store and pushes through the office door.

OFFICE

Hack bends over an opened file drawer. Byron grabs Hack from behind and throws him against a wall.

Hack hits the wall and slides to the floor.

Byron seizes a huge hunting knife from an array of knives on Hack's desk.

BYRON

You, you...

Hack rises alarmed. From an umbrella basket he grabs a fishing rod.

He whips and strikes Byron's face several times. Byron drops the knife and grabs his face.

Hack rushes Byron and wraps him in a bear hug.

BYRON

You were supposed to be my friend!
My friend!

Byron regains the advantage and throws Hack against the wall again. Warren enters.

WARREN

What's going on?!!

Warren tackles Byron from behind.

The men wrestle on the office floor. Byron gets the upper hand. They struggle to stand.

Byron whips Warren into Hack's desk and slugs him in the face. Warren goes down.

Hack throws a box of shot gun shells at Byron.

Byron ducks and delivers a punch to Hack's mid-section.

A gasping Hack slumps over.

Byron spies a bungee cord on Hack's desk. He wraps the bungee cord around Hack's neck.

He pulls tight.

BYRON

I hate you! Bastard!

Hack can barely speak. He garbles.

HACK

I'm sorry... I'm sorry.

BYRON

Not enough! You're dead!

Byron straddles Hack, about to complete the death choke.

Before Hack's last breath, Byron releases one end of the bungee. He pulls Hack's head closer.

Mercilessly, Byron pounds Hack's face.

THUD

A dumb bell strikes Byron's head from behind.

Joan stands above the combatants, dumb bell at ready.

INT. MONTGOMERY EMERGENCY CARE FACILITY - DAY

ROOM

Byron lies in a hospital bed. He appears comatose.

His wrists and ankles are secured to the bed frame with straps.

HALL

Joan sits. Standing across from her is a police officer, SERGEANT PIKE (50) fastidious, all business.

SERGEANT PIKE

Okay, the other gentleman, uh... witness?

JOAN

Warren.

Sergeant Pike takes notes with a pad and pencil.

SERGEANT PIKE

Yes, Warren. He stated that Mr. Jennings was trying to kill your husband. You prevented the criminal act by clubbing Mr. Jennings from behind with a uh... uh...

JOAN

A dumb bell.

SERGEANT PIKE

So, you were defending your husband? Coming to his rescue?

JOAN

Yes... Sergeant Pike... Byron, Mr. Jennings is a long time friend of ours.

(MORE)

JOAN (CONT'D)

His behavior was indeed,
criminal... scary but totally out
of character.

SERGEANT PIKE

Indeed.

JOAN

We're so confused. We're sure it
must have something to do with his
grief finally surfacing.

SERGEANT PIKE

Grief finally surfacing?

JOAN

Yes, six months ago he lost his
wife in a tragic house fire. It
was arson. They never found the
who or the why. He hasn't been
quite the same since.

SERGEANT PIKE

I remember that night, that fire.

JOAN

And he was an Army Ranger. Now he
trains reservists. You never know
how an Army past can effect you, I
guess.

SERGEANT PIKE

Well, those past incidents could be
at the root of the behavior but
attempted murder is a very serious
criminal offense. We can't just
drop it.

JOAN

I would like to see him.

SERGEANT PIKE

When he... if he wakes, several
people will need to talk to him
first.

NURSE'S STATION

Down the hall three nurses attend to Emergency Care Center
business. One nurse stands and attends to a new arrival.

A second nurse sits at a terminal and enters data.

NURSE GOMEZ (55) sits and reads a magazine, occasionally glancing at patient statuses on a monitor.

The monitor beeps and flashes.

NURSE GOMEZ

The concussion in seventeen is back from the twilight zone. I'll trot down and see how he's doing.

Nurse Gomez exits the Nurses Station and briskly walks down the hall. She passes Sergeant Pike and Joan.

Before entering the room she turns.

HALL

NURSE GOMEZ

He's awake.

JOAN

Can we talk to him?

NURSE GOMEZ

I'm certain he's disoriented. He's not going to be in a good mood, bound and all. You best be patient. I won't be long.

ROOM

Nurse Gomez produces a bright smile for Byron. She takes a gander at his chart.

NURSE GOMEZ

Mr. Jennings. Good to have you back. How are your doing?

Byron tests the straps and winces.

BYRON

I'm fine. What am I doing here and when can I leave?

Nurse Gomez completes the normal bedside procedures: blood pressure, pulse and temperature.

She offers a plastic cup and straw with water. Byron takes a swig.

NURSE GOMEZ

Everything looks normal. A doctor will review your CT scan later today. Do you want something to eat?

Byron does not respond.

NURSE GOMEZ

Some people need to speak with you.

Nurse Gomez exits the room. Sergeant Pike enters.

SERGEANT PIKE

Byron Jennings? I'm Sergeant Pike. I'm glad to see you're awake. There was some concern. The nurse indicated you can expect a mild headache for several days.

BYRON

It's more like a tornado between my ears. Can you remove the restraints?

SERGEANT PIKE

No. You'll have to speak with several people: medical and law enforcement before that can happen. Once you're examined medically, you will be moved to another secure location.

BYRON

This is ridiculous.

SERGEANT PIKE

You threatened and then tried to kill someone, Mr. Jennings. He's in surgery. You broke his nose. He may lose his sight. If his wife didn't intercede, he would be dead. You'll need to answer for that. Good day.

Sergeant Pike exits the room. Joan is gone.

INT. MONTGOMERY EMERGENCY CARE FACILITY - NIGHT

ROOM

The light is off. Byron sleeps. Joan slowly opens the door and tip toes in.

She shakes Byron's foot until his eyes open.

JOAN

Byron? It's Joan... I'm sorry.
This is such a mess.

Joan cries.

JOAN

I don't understand what happened?
Your anger towards Hack?

Byron stares at Joan. No response.

JOAN

The fire? Losing Melissa? I know
you're sad but why Hack, your best
friend?

Joan breaks down.

JOAN

I have to go.

Joan turns to leave.

BYRON

Wait... I'm sorry, Joan... You
need to do one thing for me. Meet
with Father Dan. Insist that Hack
goes along. Ask Father Dan about
"The Shack".

JOAN

The Shack? I don't understand.

BYRON

Goodbye Joan.

Joan slowly turns away and departs.

BYRON

(to himself)
Yes, the Shack... Emmi.

INT. MONTGOMERY EMERGENCY CARE FACILITY - DAY

ROOM

Byron is dressed in his street clothes. He sits on the edge
of the hospital bed, one hand cuffed to the bed frame.

A nurse takes Byron's blood pressure and checks his pulse. Satisfied, she exits the room.

Sergeant Pike waits.

SERGEANT PIKE

Okay. Let's make certain we're on the same page. You've been the model patient-prisoner. They're giving you a lot of space because you're Army. So just relax. No slip ups. I am going to remove the handcuffs. Remember I have a Taser and a revolver. I will use them if necessary. You are officially in police custody.

Byron appears bored, almost asleep.

SERGEANT PIKE

We understand each other then. It's only a mile to headquarters. My vehicle is just outside the entrance.

Sergeant Pike unlocks the handcuff from Byron's wrist.

As soon as his hand is free, Byron grabs Sergeant Pike's hand.

With his other hand he closes the cuff around the Sergeant's wrist, the reversal completed with magician "hand" quickness.

Sergeant Pike is handcuffed to the bed frame.

Byron forces the handcuff key from the Sergeant's hand and throws it across the room.

SERGEANT PIKE

No! Stop! You're only making your situation worse.

Byron bolts for the door. Sergeant Pike shouts.

SERGEANT PIKE

Come back here! Help! Someone, get in here!

HALL

Byron sprints towards the main door. Sergeant Pike's shouts reverberate throughout the facility.

Several nurses and patients move in order to avoid being run over by Byron.

Byron bursts out of the facility through the main door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

He runs through the parking lot looking for a potential get-away vehicle.

A TEENAGER (19), takes a furtive scan of the lot and opens the front door of a RED pick-up truck.

He enters and starts the vehicle.

Byron opens the driver's door and pulls the teenager out of the truck.

BYRON

Sorry, I need your ride.

The teenager watches the truck speed away.

TEENAGER

(yelling)

Yeah, well... it's not my truck anyway!

Byron speeds through the parking lot past Sergeant Pike's patrol car and the main entrance.

Sergeant Pike exits the Emergency Care Facility with his revolver drawn.

He fires two rounds at Byron just before the pick-up truck exits the parking lot.

EXT. MONTGOMERY - MAIN STREET - DAY

The pick-up truck speeds.

Byron maneuvers the truck around a tight turn, swerving, skidding.

A bus stop comes up fast on the right side of the road. Emmi stands at the curb in front of the bus stop.

Byron, shocked, slams on the breaks. He pushes the passenger door open.

INT. TEENAGER'S PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

Emmi stares at Byron.

BYRON

Get in!

Emmi enters, sits, and looks forward.

Byron, agitated but thrilled to see Emmi.

BYRON

You left me! I needed you! No trust! No compassion! No Emmi perfume! I almost killed someone!

Emmi does not respond.

BYRON

Where did you go?... Don't do it again!

She turns to Byron. For the first time, a hint of a smile on Emmi's face.

The truck speeds through Montgomery towards the outskirts of Hardyston.

They pass a road sign that reads "Great Gorge Bridge four miles".

In the rear view mirror flashing lights appear. Five patrol cars follow in hot pursuit.

Sirens scream.

One mile to the Gorge.

Byron pushes the accelerator to the floor.

No saw horses or heavy construction equipment block the Gorge.

The teenager's pick-up truck is now Byron's pick-up truck.

One-hundred feet to the Gorge.

Emmi turns to Byron. She extends her hand.

EMMI

Trust. Compassion.

Byron looks to Emmi, takes her hand.

He pulls her towards him, into Him, One Entity.

The inside of the cab glows a shimmering, fluorescent green.

The pick-up truck lifts off the ground: AIRBORNE over the Great Gorge.

INT. SAINT ROSE CHURCH - DAY

Father McGuire exits the sacristy accompanied by Joan.

He proceeds to the confessional.

Joan sits next to Hack. A deep, tender eye to eye moment is shared.

They embrace.

Father McGuire nods to Hack and enters the booth.

Moments later Hack rises and enters the confessional as well.

INT. SHANNON BMW - SADDLE RIVER, NEW JERSEY - DAY

SHOWROOM

A sleek, black, BMW sports car is being rolled in.

Mechanics ensure the vehicle is parked, front and center of the new show room window.

They attach the appropriate tags and stickers.

SALES OFFICE

Two salesmen sit at their desks and watch the action in the showroom through the glass wall.

TOM (50) short, stocky, hair piece and BOB (45) average height, mustache, fastidious.

They drink coffee and kill time on desk top computers.

TOM

I loved that baby. Took 'em long enough to replace it. Did they ever figure it out? I mean, who made off with it?

BOB

As far as I know they're still in the dark. The BOLO's are out, all over the northeast. Nothing! Not a peep.

TOM

I'll bet twenty-four hours after it was stolen some sheik was tooling around downtown Dubai in it.

BOB

Ya know, the strange thing is, Harry made me check inventory records on it. Nothing. No VIN number. No Dealer Plate info. It's like it was never here.

TOM

Did you call manufacturing in South Carolina?

BOB

And National Motor Vehicles. Ya got no VIN number, ya got no car.

INT. SAINT ROSE CHURCH - DAY

The final vows of a wedding are being taken.

The church is filled.

FATHER MCGUIRE

You may kiss the bride.

Billy, flanked by Hack, kisses Maureen. Audrey, the Maid of Honor, beams.

The wedding couple turn and walk down center aisle.

FLASH BACK TO:

EXT. GREAT GORGE - DAY

Hack and Billy walk and circumvent two police cars parked head to head across the road. The police cars block the entrance to the missing GREAT GORGE BRIDGE.

Hack and Billy stand behind police saw horses at the edge of the Gorge. They look down into the chasm.

A collapsed bridge is vaguely visible at the bottom of the Gorge. Snow covers everything below.

BILLY

Is that a truck down there?

Billy points. Hack looks.

HACK

Oh no... That's Byron's truck!...
That's Byron's truck!

A fluorescent green entity glows within a mangled pickup truck cab at the bottom of the Gorge.

A green entity floats out of the wreck.

Within the entity, Emmi holds Byron's hand. She leads him out of the Gorge, out of the physical world, into the spiritual... soulmates.

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

EXT. ADIRONDACK MOUNTAIN ROAD - DAY

A shiny, black BMW sports car motors through the scenic hills.

An ostentatious "JUST MARRIED" sign is taped to the back panel of the auto. Several colorful streamers attached to the bumper swirl.

Maureen drives. Billy reclines, feet atop the dash board.

EXT. US HIGHWAY 80 - NIGHT

A blazing, black, Ninja H 2 motorcycle races along. The night rider speeds completely dressed in black.

Behind a tinted visor, two eyes swirling green.

FADE OUT