

"PET SEMATARY"

by

Stephen King

FADE IN ON

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

DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. A GRAVE MARKER SUMMER DAY

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

MAIN TITLES BEGIN.

EXT. ANOTHER GRAVE MARKER

A child's printing again, this time on a chunk of warped crating:
BIFFER BIFFER A HELLUVA SNIFFER UNTIL HE DIED HE MADE US RICHER
1971-1974.

MAIN TITLES CONTINUE

EXT. TWO MARKERS

I think all these shots are LAP DISSOLVES. All is silence but for
the crickets and the wind stirring the grass. Around the markers
themselves, the grass has been clipped short, and by some markers
there are flowers in cheap vases. Crisco cans, Skippy peanut
butter jars, etc.

These two markers: IN MEMORY OF MARTA OUR PET RABBIT DYED MARCH 1, 1965 (on a wide flat board) and GEN PATTON (OUR! GOOD! DOG!) APRIL 1958 (another board).

MAIN TITLES CONTINUE

EXT. FIVE OR SIX MARKERS

We can't read all of them; some are too faded (or the "gravestones" themselves too degenerated), but we can see now that this woodland clearing's a rather eerie -- and well-populated -- animal graveyard.

We can see: POLYNESIA, 1953 and HANNAH THE BEST DOG THAT EVER LIVED. HANNAH'S tombstone is part of an old Chevrolet hood, painstakingly hammered flat.

MAIN TITLES CONTINUE.

EXT. ANGLE ON THE PET SEMATARY

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

MAIN TITLES CONTINUE

EXT. THE ARCH, FROM THE PATH SIDE, CU

MAIN TITLES CONCLUDE. Written on the arch in faded black paint is the work of some long-gone child: PET SEMATARY.

THE CAMERA HOLDS ON THIS FOR A MOMENT OR TWO, THEN PANS SLOWLY DOWN to look through the arch. From this angle we are looking across to a deadfall--a tangle of weather-whitened old dead branches at the back of the graveyard. It's maybe twenty-five feet from side to side and about nine feet high. At either end are thick tangles of underbrush that look impassible.

AS MAIN TITLES CONCLUDE, THE CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN on the deadfall. And as it does, we realize that there is a horrible snarling face in those branches. Is this an accident? Coincidence? Our imagination? Perhaps the audience will wonder. THE CAMERA HOLDS ON IT and then we

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK. And a white title card: MOVING DAY.

EXT. A HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY EVENING

SOUND of crickets: ree-ree-ree-ree...

To the left of this house: a big empty field. Behind it: the woods. Before it: a wide two-lane road.

The house is a pleasant two-story New England dwelling with a shed/garage attached. In front of it is a sign which reads QUINN REALTORS 292 HAMMOND STREET, BANGOR. A big SOLD strip, like a bumper sticker, has been plastered across it diagonally.

GROWING SOUND: the rumble of a truck. A big, big truck. It belts between the CAMERA and the house -- a tanker truck with a silver body and the word ORINCO written on the side in blue letters. Its short-stack is blowing quantities of dark brown smoke. Behind it comes a Ford wagon, which slows, signals, and turns into the driveway of the house we've been looking at.

EXT. REAR OF THE WAGON

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

The ENGINE SOUND stops. For a moment or two we hear only the ree-ree-ree of crickets. Then:

ELLIE CREED (voice)

Is this our new house, daddy?

LOUIS CREED (voice)

This is it.

EXT. THE WAGON, A NEW ANGLE

The two front doors and one back door open. LOUIS CREED, about 32, gets out from the driver's side. RACHEL CREED, his wife, gets out from the passenger side. From the rear door comes ELLIE CREED, a girl of 6. They are staring, fascinated, at the house.

They come together, the three of them, by the front of the wagon, still staring at the house. LOUIS is clearly nervous.

LOUIS

So...what do you think?

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

RACHEL

It's gorgeous!

ELLIE

Am I really gonna have my own room?

LOUIS

Yes.

ELLIE

Yaay!

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

ELLIE (to RACHEL)

Is that a swing?

RACHEL

Yes, but the rope might be--

ELLIE

Yaay!

She goes running toward it. RACHEL gives LOUIS a tired smile.

LOUIS

Let her go. It's cool.

RACHEL

Louis, the house is beautiful.

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

RACHEL

The Master of Disaster awakes.

This SOUND is joined by the unhappy yowling of a pent-up tomcat.

LOUIS

And Buckaroo Banzai.

RACHEL

Come on--let's parole 'em.

They walk to the car, RACHEL going to one of the back seat doors, LOUIS to the rear of the wagon.

INT. THE FRONT SEAT, WITH RAHEL AND GAGE

GAGE is sitting in his car seat, not exactly crying but certainly yelling to be let out. The seat, dash, and floorboards are littered with roadmaps, soda cans, Big Mac boxes, and similar crud. These folks have driven all the way from Chicago to Maine in this station wagon, and the wagon looks it.

RACHEL

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

She begins to unbuckle the straps and harnesses. GAGE is just wearing a t-shirt and a diaper. He's fifteen months old.

EXT. THE REAR OF THE WAGON, WITH LOUIS

He opens the doorgate and lifts out a cat carrier. We see a big tomcat inside--mostly what we're aware of are shining green eyes.

ELLIE (voice)

Daddy! Mommy! I see a path!

LOUIS, cat carrier still in hand, turns toward:

EXT. ELLIE IN THE TIRE SWING

She's got it penduluming back and forth in long wide arcs.

EXT. THE VIEW UP TOWARD THE WOODS, ELLIE'S POV

We see the field, and a clearly marked and mown path leading up its flank and into the dark woods.

THE CAMERA DIPS AND PENDULUMS as ELLIE swings.

EXT. RACHEL AND GAGE (FRONT OF THE CAR)

RACHEL (irritated)

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

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

EXT. THE ROPE AND THE BRANCH, CU

The bark has rubbed off the branch--it looks like a bone peeping through decayed flesh. The rope is old, discolored. And it is fraying away as we look at it. Soon ELLIE, like Humpty Dumpty, is going to have a great fall.

EXT. LOUIS (REAR OF THE CAR)

He's set the cat-carrier down and is straightening up.

ELLIE (raptuous voice)
Wheee!

LOUIS
Ellie, you heard your m---

His eyes widen.

EXT. ELLIE

ELLIE
Wh--

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

LOUIS and RACHEL run to her.

LOUIS RACHEL
Ellie! Are you all right? Honey? Are you okay?

EXT. ELLIE, RACHEL, LOUIS, A CLOSER SHOT

ELLIE'S parents reach the tangle of tire, rope, and six-year-old girl.

ELLIE
Hurrts! It hurrrrts!

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

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

EXT. GAGE

He's standing in the driveway by the front of the car, utterly forgotten in the heat of the moment. His diaper is sagging quite a bit; the boy needs a change.

He stares toward the scene of the accident for a bit, then loses interest. CAMERA FOLLOWS as he walks down the side of the station wagon, little bare feet slapping on the asphalt. He stops for a

moment at the back, looking at the cat-carrier, which LOUIS never got around to opening. CHURCH is staring hopefully out through the mesh.

GAGE

Hi-Durch!

CHURCH

Waow!

GAGE bends down and tries to open the cat-carrier's door. No soap. Either he can't solve the latch or his fingers don't have the strength. Anyway, he stops trying after a moment.

SOUND: Growing thunder of an approaching truck - a big one.

EXT. THE ROAD (GAGE'S POV)

A big tanker truck--silver body, ORINCO written on the side in blue letters--blasts by.

EXT. GAGE, BY THE CAT CARRIER

The windlash if the passing truck blows GAGE'S hair back from his forehead. We should be scared here--not by the truck, but by GAGE'S lack of fear. He's smiling, happy.

GAGE

Druck!

He starts down the driveway toward the road.

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

ELLIE has been disentangled from the swing. She's sitting by the wreckage at the end of the driveway, weeping hysterically (as much from tiredness as from pain, I think) as LOUIS and RACHEL examine her scraped knee. The wound doesn't look too serious.

LOUIS (to RACHEL)

Would you get the first aid kit?

ELLIE (screaming)

Not the stingy stuff! I don't want the stingy stuff, daddy!

RACHEL suddenly looks around toward:

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE WAGON (RACHEL'S POV)

No one there.

EXT. RACHEL, ELLIE, LOUIS, BY THE SWING

RACHEL

Gage's gone!

LOUIS

Jesus, the road!

They get up together.

EXT. GAGE, AT THE EDGE OF THE ROAD

A truck is coming. A great big one.

EXT. ANGLE ON THE TRUCK, CU

The grille looks like a tombstone that's learned how to snarl.

EXT. GAGE

He takes a step into the road...and then big, gnarled hands grab him.

GAGE looks rather surprised at this, but not worried--this kid is used to being picked up and treated humanely. To GAGE strangers are as interesting as...well, as interesting as Orinco trucks.

EXT. GAGE AND JUD CRANDALL

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

JUD CRANDALL (to GAGE)

No you don't, my friend--not in that road.

But he softens this with a grin. GAGE grins back at him.

GAGE

Drucks!

JUD (low)

No shit, Sherlock.

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

RACHEL

Gage!

JUD (hands him to her)

He was headed for the road, looked like. I corralled him for you, missus.

RACHEL

Thank you. Thank you so much.

LOUIS

Yes--thanks. I'm Louis Creed.

He sticks out his hand and JUD shakes it. LOUIS takes it easy--no crushing JayCees grip, or anything like that--the old guy looks as if he might have arthritis.

JUD

Jud Crandall. I live just across the road.

RACHEL

I'm Rachel. Thanks again for saving the wandering minstrel boy, here.

JUD

No harm, no foul. But you want to watch out for that road. Those damn trucks go back and forth all day and most of the night.

He leans over toward ELLIE.

JUD

Who might you be, little Miss?

ELLIE

I'm Ellen Creed and I live at 642 Alden Lane, Dearborn, Michigan. (Pause) At least, I used to.

JUD

And now you live on Route 9 in Ludlow, and your dad's gonna be the new doctor up to the college, I hear, and I think you're going to be just as happy as a clam here, Ellen Creed.

ELLIE (to LOUIS)

Are clams really happy?

They all laugh--even GAGE.

RACHEL

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

JUD

Same here. Come over and visit when you get the chance.

As RACHEL, carrying GAGE, moves away:

ELLIE (worries)

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

LOUIS

No-I guess not.

ELLIE

Yayyy!

She goes belting off.

JUD (amused)

I guess your daughter there ain't going to die after all.

LOUIS (also amused)

I guess not.

JUD

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

SOUND: A truck engine, gearing down.

EXT. A MOVING VAN

It blinks and comes lumbering into the Creed's driveway.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

LOUIS

Hey--they actually found the place!

JUD

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

LOUIS

Well, maybe I----

RACHEL (voice)

Louis, what's this?

EXT. RACHEL AND GAGE

GAGE has been changed, and RACHEL is following him as he explores the nearest edges of the new homestead. They are fairly close to the wreckage of the tire swing, and here is the head of the path ELLIE has already glimpsed.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

They cross to the van. The FIRST and SECOND MOVERS are just climbing out of the van.

FIRST MOVER

You Mr. Creed?

LOUIS

Yes. Just a second.

EXT. RACHEL AND GAGE, AT THE HEAD OF THE PATH

She's holding GAGE on her hip now, and both of them are looking at that strange (and oddly enticing) path which disappears into the deepening twilight. LOUIS and JUD join them.

LOUIS

The movers--

RACHEL

Yes--I know. This path, Louis? Where does it go?

LOUIS

I don't have the slightest idea. When I saw the house, this field was under four feet of snow.

RACHEL (smiling)

I bet Mr. Crandall knows!

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

JUD

Oh, ayuh! I know. It's a good story, and a good walk, too. I'll take you up there

sometime, and tell you the story, too--
after you get settled in.

He smiles at them and they smile back--it is a look of understanding and real liking, in spite of the age difference between the CREEDS and JUD.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE NIGHT

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

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

INT. THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

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

LOUIS is drinking a can of Pepsi, and he looks pretty damned tired--anyone who's ever moved house and can remember the first night in the new place will understand.

He finishes the last of the Pepsi and surveys the living room. He sits on one of the bigger boxes, takes cigarettes from his pocket, and lights one. He drops the spent match in the empty can, and taps into the can during the scene.

SOUND: Feet coming down the stairs. The door on the far side of the room opens and RACHEL comes in, wearing a nightgown.

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

LOUIS
Great.

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

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

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

RACHEL

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

LOUIS

Did you see his shirt?

RACHEL (giggles)

Sure. Bruce Springsteen.

LOUIS

I really do have a million questions about the area...but the thing I'm really curious about is how come this octogenarian Yankee is decorating the slumped remains of his pecs with the Boss.

She laughs.

EXT. THE PATH OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE NIGHT

Pervasive SOUND of the crickets as LOUIS comes rather hesitantly up the crazy-paved path from the road's edge.

JUD (voice)

That you, doc?

EXT. THE SCREENED-IN PORCH OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE

We hear the SQUEAK of a rocker; we see the dim red fitful glow of JUD'S Pall Mall. We see by its glow that he is wearing Walkman earphones.

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS

It's me.

INT. THE PORCH, WITH JUD

The Walkman is in his lap. He switches it off and puts the headphones casually around his neck, like a kid.

JUD

Well, come on up and have a beer.

INT. THE PORCH, A SLIGHTLY WIDER SHOT

LOUIS comes on up. JUD has got a pail of ice beside his chair with

some cans of beer in it. He opens one and hands it to LOUIS.

JUD

You need a glass?

LOUIS

Not at all.

JUD

Good for you.

LOUIS drinks half the can at a draught.

LOUIS

God, that's fine.

JUD

Ain't it just? The man who invented beer, Louis, that man was having a prime day for himself.

LOUIS

What were you listening to?

JUD

Allman Brothers.

LOUIS

What?

JUD

The Eat A Peach album. God, they were good before drugs and bad luck caught up with them. Listen to this, Louis.

He passes the headphones over. LOUIS puts them on. JUD presses the Walkman's PLAY button.

SOUND: Ramblin' Man blasts us out of our seats.

LOUIS winces and rakes the spidery earphones off his head.

JUD

I'm sorry. Wait.

He turns it down.

JUD

Try that.

LOUIS puts the earphones back on and listens for a few moments.

It's the instrumental break. Gregg and Duane Allman dueling hot Fenders. LOUIS takes the earphones off.

LOUIS

Nice.

JUD

I like rock and roll. No...I guess that's too mild. I love it. Since my ears started to die out on me, it's the only music I can really hear. And since my wife died...I dunno, sometimes a little rock and roll fills up night. Not always, but sometimes. (Pause) One more time--welcome to Ludlow. Hope your time here will be a happy one.

LOUIS (great sincerity)

Thank you, Mr. Crandall.

He drinks again--they both do. There's a moment of companionable silence here, broken by the SOUND of a big truck. They look toward:

EXT/INT. THE ROAD (THROUGH THE PORCH SCREEN)

One of those big tanker trucks goes rumbling by--now there are little amber running lights on top of it. It's going fast, too--sweeps by in a blast of air.

INT. THE PORCH, WITH LOUIS AND JUD

LOUIS (wincing)

Jesus!

JUD (lights a cigarette)

That's one mean road, all right--you remember that path your wife commented on?

LOUIS

The one that goes into the woods--sure.

JUD

That road--and those Orinco trucks--are the two main reasons it's there.

LOUIS

What's at the end of it?

JUD (smiles)

Another day--after you get settled in a

bit. Meantime, doc---

Here JUD raises his glass in a toast.

JUD (continues)
Here's to your bones.

LOUIS clinks his glass against JUD'S.

LOUIS
And yours.

They drink.

EXT. ROUTE 9 NIGHT

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

He walks to its head and stands looking out at it--it glimmers in a wide cut swath that's a bit ghostly in the dark.

A SHAPE suddenly lurches out of the high grass at him, and LOUIS recoils with a startled, muffled cry.

EXT. CHURCH

The cat, sure; who--or what--else? We see his big green eyes in the dark as he cries his strange feline hello: Waow!

EXT. LOUIS AND CHURCH, AT THE HEAD OF THE PATH

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

CHURCH
Waow!

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

EXT. THE ROAD, LOUIS'S POV

Another Orinco tanker drones by, fast.

EXT. LOUIS AND CHURCH

LOUIS (to the cat)
I know one thing that will keep you
home, good buddy.

He starts toward the house.

BLACK. And in that blackness, we see a second title card: THE DEAD
SPEAK.

INT. A KITCHEN BLACKBOARD, CU DAY

Written on it is: MONDAY 1.) CHURCH SPAYED 10 A.M. QUENTIN
JOLANDER, D.V.M. And below, in even bigger letters: 2.) ELLIE'S
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!!

THE CAMERA PANS LEFT, showing us the kitchen. There are still a
few cardboard cartons around, but the place is getting in shape.

We look out the window and see the CREEDS, led by JUD CRANDALL,
climbing the path toward the woods. LOUIS has got GAGE in a
Gerrypak.

EXT. AT THE TOP OF THE HILL, WITH CREEDS AND JUD

They are also at the edge of the woods. JUD stops and lets them
catch up.

JUD
Take a look behind you.

They turn around, and their faces express their wonder.

LOUIS
My God!

RACHEL
It's beautiful!

EXT. THE VIEW

It is indeed beautiful. The CREED house is in the f.g., Route 9
just behind it (with one of the ever-present Orinco trucks droning
along), but behind that is the great sweep of the Penobscot river
valley, dozing under a fall sky of clear blue.

EXT. AT THE TOP OF THE HILL, WITH JUD AND THE CREEDS

JUD
You folks ready to go on?

LOUIS

Sure.

ELLIE

But where are we going, Mr. Crandall?

JUD

You'll see soon enough, hon.

They go into the woods, still following the path.

EXT. FOREST DAY

These are old woods indeed--huge trunks with dusty sunlight shafting through them. It looks as though man has never made his mark here.

THE CAMERA PANS SLOWLY DOWN to them, on the path. Here it is carpeted with pine needles, but it is just as clearly marked.

JUD stops. LOUIS looks glad of the rest; he's sweating and there are wide dark patches under his arms where the Gerrypak's straps are.

LOUIS

Who owns the woods up ahead? Paper companies?

JUD

Nope. The Micmac Indians. What's up ahead is all that's left of their tribal lands.

ELLIE (giggling)

Micmac, Ricmac, Kickmac, Sickmac.

JUD (smiles)

Ayuh, it's a funny word, ain't it?
You tired of totin' that yowwen yet, doc?

LOUIS

Not yet...how much further is it?

JUD

Aw, you'll be okay. Less than a mile.

He starts off again, fresh as a daisy. ELLIE scampers after him. LOUIS rolls his eyes at his wife and RACHEL rolls hers back. Then they press on.

EXT. THE ARCH READING PET SEMATARY

EXT. JUD AND THE CREEDS, ON THE PATH

JUD (stopping)
This is the place, honey.

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

ELLIE
What's it say, mommy?

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

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

She runs for the arch. RACHEL starts; looks more uneasy than ever.

RACHEL
Ellen--!

EXT. ELLIE

She's almost under the arch. She looks back, questioning.

EXT. RACHEL, LOUIS, JUD

RACHEL (a bit lame)
Be careful.

EXT. ELLIE

She goes racing into the Pet Sematary.

EXT. RACHEL, LOUIS, JUD

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

JUD
I told you it was a bad road,
Louis--it's killed a lot of pets
and made a lot of kids unhappy.
But at least something good come
of it. This place.

ELLIE (excited voice)
Mom! Dad! Y'oughtta see it!

EXT. ELLIE, AT THE EDGE OF THE SEMATARY

She surveys the rude markers with puzzled delight, then runs toward the center, pausing to investigate some of the markers as she goes. We clearly see the symmetrical pattern of rings.

EXT. RACHEL, LOUIS, JUD

They are walking slowly toward that rude archway. LOUIS is extremely interested in all this, but it's becoming clearer and clearer that RACHEL is troubled. They stop and look in.

RACHEL

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

JUD

Well, but Missus Creed! It ain't
quite that way, deah!

LOUIS

I think it's rather extraordinary.

RACHEL

Extraordinarily morbid, maybe.

She's growing more and more upset. JUD looks at her curiously.

JUD

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

RACHEL (coldly)

Why?

JUD

Well...well, because--

ELLIE (voice)

Mommy! Daddy! Look at me!

EXT. ELLIE, ON THE DEADFALL

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

EXT. THE GROWNUPS, AT THE ARCH

JUD (alarmed)

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

He hurries in.

EXT. ELLIE, ON THE DEADFALL

She looks back at JUD.

ELLIE

It's okay, Mr. Crandall--

EXT. ELLIE'S FOOT, CU

The branch she's on breaks with a dry CRRRACK. Her foot drops down suddenly.

EXT. ELLIE AND JUD

She totters backward, pinwheeling her arms, and JUD catches her as she falls. Not much of a catch because she wasn't too far up.

LOUIS joins JUD and ELLIE. GAGE jounces along on his back.

LOUIS

Have you got a death-wish, Ellen?

ELLIE

Well, I thought it was safe--

JUD

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

ELLIE

Bite?

JUD

Ayuh.

EXT. RACHEL, STANDING AT THE ARCH

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

RACHEL (calls)

Is she all right, Louis?

EXT. LOUIS, JUD, ELLIE

LOUIS (calls back)
Fine! Come and see!

EXT. RACHEL, STANDING AT THE ARCH

RACHEL (calling)
I think I'll sit this one out, doc.

EXT. LOUIS, JUD, ELLIE--BY THE DEADFALL

ELLIE
I want to look around, daddy--
may I?

LOUIS
For a little while.

JUD looks toward:

EXT. RACHEL AT THE ARCH (ELLEN IN F.G.)

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

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

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

ELLIE (voice)
Dad! Daddy! Look! A goldfishie!

EXT. ELLIE

She runs from one tombstone to the next, cheerful as maybe only a kid could be in such a place. She looks at BIFFER'S tombstone; at SMUCKY'S.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

They are walking slowly toward her. LOUIS is looking at the tombstones.

LOUIS
I can hardly read these.

JUD
Ayuh--they get older as you go
toward the middle. (Points) Pete

LaVasseur's dog is buried there...
(points) the Stoppard boys' racing
pigeon that Missus Cowley's cat
got...and I think that's the cat
himself right there, although it's
been so many years I can't tell for
sure.

(calling)

Missy Ellen! Come over here just a
minute!

EXT. ELLEN

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

JUD

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

He points again, and Ellen goes over for a look-see.

EXT. ELLEN, AT THE GRAVE MARKER

It is a small slate marker slanted to one side. ELLEN reads the
words laboriously, tracing them with her finger.

ELLEN

"Spot a good fellow we love you boy."
(Pause) "Owned by Judson...Judson..."
Gee, I can't read the rest.

EXT. JUD AND LOUIS

JUD

Last name's Crandall, little missy.

LOUIS looks at him sharply as ELLIE rejoins them.

JUD

That's where I buried my dog Spot
when he died of old age in 19 and
14. Dug it good and deep. By the
time I finished, I had blisters all
over my hands and a hell of a crick
in my back. Soil's stony up here.

ELLIE looks awed. LOUIS looks a little awed, too.

JUD sweeps a hand around, indicating the whole sematary, but is

still looking at ELLEN.

JUD

Do you know what this place is, Ellie? Oh, I know you know it's a boneyard, but a bone ain't nothing and even a whole pile of 'em don't amount to much. Do you know what a graveyard really is?

ELLIE

Well...I guess not.

JUD

It's a place where the dead speak, Missy.

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

JUD

No--not right out loud. Their stones speak...or their markers. Even if the marker ain't nothing but a tin can someone wrote on with a Magic Marker, it speaks. Ain't that so, Louis?

LOUIS

I think it is so, Ellie.

ELLIE

What if you can't read what's written on there anymore?

JUD

Well, it still says some animal got laid down here after, don't it?

ELLIE

Yes--

LOUIS

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

ELLIE

To remember.

JUD (smiles)

Yes. To remember. This ain't a scary place, Ellie. It's a place of rest

and speaking. Can you remember that?

ELLIE (a little awed)
Yes, sir.

They start to walk slowly back toward the arch.

EXT. RACHEL, OUTSIDE THE ARCH

It's clear she's impatient and out-of-sorts with the whole thing.

RACHEL (calls)
Louis, can we go? I'm tired!

EXT. LOUIS, ELLIE, JUD

ELLIE
Mommy! This is a place where dead
animals talk! Mr. Crandall said so!

EXT. RACHEL AND ELLIE

But RACHEL is not amused. She doesn't like any of this.

RACHEL (soft)
Did he.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

LOUIS
My wife is not crazy about cemeteries
of any kind. As you may have noticed.

JUD
Me neither. But I believe in knowing
your enemy.

LOUIS looks at him, startled, then decides this is a joke. He
laughs. JUD smiles, a trifle thinly.

EXT. THE ARCH, A NEW ANGLE

The men rejoin RACHEL and ELLIE.

LOUIS (voice)
Did we take too long?

RACHEL (curt)
Well, if supper's burned, I'm not
the one going out for pizza.

They move away.

EXT. THE DEADFALL, FROM THE ARCH

The face we saw at the beginning of the movie wasn't there when the visitors were there...but it's sure there now, leering at us.

INT. THE KITCHEN TRASH CAN NIGHT

There are two greasy boxes poking out with NAPOLI PIZZA stamped on them. Guess dinner was burned.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see LOUIS sitting at the kitchen table. The table is covered with newspapers. On it, LOUIS is putting together a complicated model boat, using glue and tweezers. He's wearing glasses.

ELLIE comes in, wearing a nightgown. She watches him for awhile.

LOUIS (not looking around)
Hi, babe.

ELLIE
Daddy, that Pet Sematary is there because of the road, isn't it?

LOUIS looks around at her, surprised.

ELLIE
That's what I think. I heard Missy Dandridge tell Mom when Church was fixed he wouldn't cross the road so much.

LOUIS
Well, it's always better to take precautions--but I'm sure Church will be all right, honey...

INT. JUST OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN DOOR

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

ELLIE (voice)
No he won't! Not in the end! He won't be all right in the end no matter how you fix 'im!

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE

Ellis has started to cry.

ELLIE

In the end he's gonna croak, isn't he?

LOUIS

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

ELLIE

It doesn't seem long to me. It seems short. I think the whole thing about pets dying s-s-sucks!

Poor kid's bawling her eyes out now. LOUIS folds her into his arms and she hugs him tightly, wanting his comfort.

LOUIS

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

ELLIE (muffled)

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

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

INT. THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN, WITH RACHEL

She is crying silently.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM NIGHT

She is a dimly perceived hump in the darkness. An oblong shaft of light falls on her, illuminating her more clearly. She's asleep with her teddy encircled by one arm and her thumb corked into her mouth.

INT. THE DOORWAY, WITH RACHEL

RACHEL looks at her daughter with infinite love and then quietly closes the door.

INT. LOUIS'S AND RACHEL'S BEDROOM NIGHT

LOUIS is in his pajamas, propped up on pillows on his side of the

bed. There a number of medical books scattered around him and he's making notes from one as RACHEL comes in.

RACHEL

She's finally asleep.

LOUIS

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

RACHEL

It was that place. That creepy cemetery
up in the woods. Whatever disease the
kids in this town have got, I don't want
Ellie to catch it.

LOUIS

Jesus, Rachel, what's got into you?

RACHEL

Do you think I didn't hear her tonight,
crying as if her heart would break?
Here she is thinking Church is going to
die.

It should be clear to us by now that, despite her words, RACHEL is much more upset than ELLIE was. LOUIS slowly puts his notebook aside and caps his pen.

LOUIS

Rachel...someday Church is going to
die.

RACHEL (whirls on him)

That is hardly the point! Church is
not going to die today, or tomorrow--
Never mind. I can see you don't have
the slightest idea what I'm talking about.

She stalks to the bathroom, which adjoins. LOUIS follows. She goes in and slams the door. He goes for the knob.

LOUIS

Rachel--!

SOUND: CLICK OF THE LOCK.

LOUIS stares at the door, bewildered and upset.

EXT. ROUTE 9 NIGHT

Here comes a big Orinco truck, droning along, headlights glaring.

INT. LOUIS'S AND RACHEL'S BEDROOM

The headlights of the truck illuminate the room and we see LOUIS and RACHEL asleep, each as far over to his/her own side as he/she can get, with a big empty space in the middle.

Lights and TRUCK SOUNDS slowly fade.

INT. GAGE MORNING

Cheerful little clots of scrambled eggs are scattered all the way across the tray of his high-chair--it looks a little like a map of the Pacific islands done by a guy who only had a yellow crayon. Now he scoops up a handful and throws them.

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE, WITH ELLIE

Splat! Eggs on the serving plate of toast.

ELLIE

Yee-uck! Gross!

INT. THE KITCHEN, A WIDER SHOT

RACHEL is at the sink, doing dishes (we see the blackboard with its message near her).

LOUIS comes in, wearing a sport-coat and slacks, ready for his first day on the job...and ELLIE is in a pretty first day of school dress.

LOUIS

He can't help it, babe. Emily Post is going to be beyond him for a few years.

INT. BY THE KITCHEN DOOR

Here is the cat-carrier with CHURCH inside it. He waows unhappily.

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE, WITH ELLIE AND GAGE

ELLIE gets down and goes across to the cat-carrier.

ELLIE

I don't want him to get his nuts cut, daddy! What if he dies?

INT. RACHEL AND LOUIS, BY THE SINK

LOUIS looks shocked and amused by ELLIE'S colorful choice of words.

LOUIS

Good God! Where'd you hear that?

INT. ELLIE

ELLIE

Missy Dandridge. And she says it's a operation!

INT. RACHEL AND LOUIS, BY THE SINK

LOUIS tries to kiss RACHEL'S mouth. She turns her head slightly so he gets her cheek instead. She's still mad. LOUIS'S amusement dies.

RACHEL

Honey, Church will be fine.

INT. ELLIE, BY THE CAT CARRIER

ELLIE

But what if he dies and has to go to the Pet Sematary?

INT. LOUIS AND RACHEL, BY THE SINK

She gives him a look as if to say: "There! Now do you understand what you did?"

RACHEL

Don't be silly. Church is not going to die.

LOUIS

According to what Mr. Crandall says, the road's a lot more dangerous than the operation. Church will be just the same. Well--almost the same--and we won't have to worry about him getting turned into catburgers by one of those damn Orinco trucks.

At this RACHEL tightens up still more in that funny way--she's actually angered by LOUIS'S reference to catburgers--but under the anger we sense she is deeply shocked, as a prudish woman might be shocked by a dirty joke. For RACHEL, that's just what death is.

RACHEL

That's enough of that kind of talk!

LOUIS

I just said--

RACHEL

I know what you just said. Ellie,
clear your place.

ELLIE goes slowly back to the table.

ELLIE (sets the plate down)

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

ELLIE bursts into loud tears and puts her hands over her face.

INT. THE KITCHEN, A NEW ANGLE (FEATURES LOUIS AND RACHEL)

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS as they go to the table to comfort ELLIE.

RACHEL

You'll be fine, Ellie. Now you can be
excused. Go and wash your face.

LOUIS

And Church will be fine.

ELLIE (anxious)

Do you promise, Daddy?

LOUIS

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

RACHEL

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

LOUIS (reluctantly)

Church will be fine. I promise.

ELLIE

Yayyyy!

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

RACHEL

Thank you, Louis.

LOUIS

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

He gets up and leaves the table. She looks after him, stunned and a little frightened.

INT. GAGE

GAGE (conversationally)
Here, Durch!

He picks up a large glob of scrambled eggs from his tray and throws it in the direction of the cat-carrier.

INT. THE CAT-CARRIER

CHURCH is close to the mesh, looking out. Scrambled eggs hit the mesh, driving him back, surprised.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE MORNING

The school bus pulls up, red lights flashing. ELLIE runs toward it across the lawn, with her lunch-box.

EXT. LOUIS, RACHEL, AND GAGE, IN THE FRONT DOORWAY

RACHEL
Have a great day!

LOUIS grabs GAGE'S hand and makes him wave it.

GAGE
Bye-bye!

EXT. THE BUS

ELLIE climbs aboard. The red flashers go out and the bus pulls away.

EXT. THE CREED DRIVEWAY MORNING

The station wagon is parked there. LOUIS comes out with a heavy briefcase in one hand and the cat-carrier in the other. He opens the wagon's doorgate.

A small car turns into the CREED driveway and parks beside LOUIS. A rather sour-looking middle-aged woman gets out and crosses the front of her car. Her color is bad. This is MISSY DANDRIDGE. She looks at the cat-carrier.

MISSY

Gonna get his--

LOUIS

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

MISSY

Don't mention it.

She opens the passenger side door of her car and we see a big neat pile of folded sheets. She reaches for them, then winces and presses her hands against her midriff for a moment, as if with an attack of indigestion.

LOUIS (sees this)

How's that belly-ache of yours?

MISSY (gets the sheets)

No better and no worse.

LOUIS

You ought to see a doctor about it.

MISSY

It'll pass. They always do.

She starts toward the house with the sheets.

EXT. THE SIDE YARD MORNING

RACHEL hurries past MISSY, who turns to look and then goes on into the house. LOUIS has just put the cat-carrier into the back of the wagon and closed the doorgate as RACHEL reaches him.

RACHEL (anxious)

Still friends, doc?

LOUIS appears to consider this seriously for a moment...and then he smiles and hugs her. They kiss.

RACHEL

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

LOUIS (smiles)

Not so much as a sprain.

EXT. VICTOR PASCOW AND FRIENDS MORNING

PASCOW is in a blanket that is being carried by three boys and one girl. They are all yelling at each other not to joggle him, not to drop him. A small knot of horrified college kids moves with the bearers.

PASCOW'S head is upside down to the CAMERA, which retreats ahead of the advancing students. Fixed eyes stare. Half of his head has been shattered inward. Before the catastrophe he was a husky male of about twenty. He's dressed in a U of M muscle shirt and red jogging shorts.

THE CAMERA PULLS JERKILY TO ONE SIDE, allowing the bearers to mount the steps of a brick building. The infirmary. The lookers-on break to either side. The infirmary doors open.

EXT.. NURSE CHARLTON, AT THE DOORS

She's the head nurse, a tough old babe of about fifty.

CHARLTON

Holy Jesus.

(turns)

Steve! Steve! Dr. Creed! Dr. Creed,
we've got a mess here! Stat!

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

INT. THE INFIRMARY RECEPTION AREA

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

As the students bring in PASCOW, LOUIS comes running, followed by STEVE MASTERTON, his P.A. Standing to one side are two student nurses in candystriper uniforms. They're boggled and horrified.

LOUIS kneels. THE CAMERA RUSHES FORWARD, shoving between onlookers. LOUIS looks at the wound. There's shattered bone and pulsing brain tissue beneath.

There's a scream; the girl who was carrying one corner of the blanket is having hysterics.

GIRL

Vic! Vic! Oh Christ! Vic!

LOUIS (to CHARLTON)

Get her out. Get them all out.

CHARLTON puts her arms around the girl.

GIRL (struggling)

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

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

CHARLTON is just pushing the last of them gawkers and bearers out the door.

LOUIS

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

STEVE

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

LOUIS

--a new muffler, oh shit--

PASCOW makes a weird gargling noise. Blood suddenly spurts out of his mouth. He begins to seizure.

One of the candystripers shrieks. THE CAMERA JERKS UP TO COVER the student nurses. One turns and throws up on the wall.

CHARLTON rushes over.

CANDYSTRIPER

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

CHARLTON (slaps her)

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

As they start away, one helping the other down the hall, and as CHARLTON starts over to where PASCOW lies dying on his blanket, THE CAMERA DROPS TO LOUIS AND STEVE.

LOUIS

Help me hold him.

They hold PASCOW'S spasming body.

STEVE

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

LOUIS

It wouldn't matter if we had the SST.

PASCOW begins to quiet.

LOUIS

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

CHARLTON

It won't--

LOUIS

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

She leaves. LOUIS is alone with PASCOW. CHARLTON has drawn the drapes, so the doctor and the dying man have complete if temporary privacy.

INT. LOUIS AND PASCOW, A CLOSER SHOT

LOIS

There wasn't even supposed to be a sprain today, my friend--that's what I told her.

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

PASCOW

...Pet Sematary...

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

LOUIS (whispers)

W-What did you say...?

PASCOW struggles hard to speak again. At first he can only gurgle.

PASCOW

It's not the real cemetery...
(Long pause) The soil of a man's heart is stonier, Louis...a man grows what he can...and tends it.

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

LOUIS

How do you know my name?

PASCOW (gurgling)

I'll come...to you.

LOUIS grabs PASCOW'S bloody shoulder.

LOUIS (low but urgent)

Dammit, how do you know my name?

INT. HALLWAY ENTRANCE TO RECEPTION, WITH STEVE

STEVE

Louis, they're sending a--

INT. LOUIS AND PASCOW

PASCOW begins to spasm again.

LOUIS (snaps)

Help me!

PASCOW spews more blood as STEVE kneels beside LOUIS.

INT. THE MAIN INFIRMARY HALLWAY

CHARLTON is pushing along your basic MEDCU goodie-cart, covered with emergency life-saving gear.

INT. LOUIS, STEVE, PASCOW

PASCOW'S spasms are weakening.

LOUIS (to CHARLTON)

Never mind. He's going.

PASCOW'S hand comes up and paws at LOUIS'S shirt, leaving a bloody handprint. Then it falls limply back. PASCOW is dead.

LOUIS

Steve, will you get a sheet to cover him with?

STEVE leaves the frame and LOUIS stares fixedly down at the body of VICTOR PASCOW. He closes the eyes.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD, LATE AFTERNOON

It's the leading edge of Maine fall, sunny and wonderful. Here

comes LOUIS'S station wagon. As it reaches THE CAMERA, it swivels to TRACK.

RADIO (voice-over)

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

INT. THE CAR, WITH LOUIS

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

LOUIS abruptly turns off the radio and swerves over to the side of the road.

EXT. THE STATION WAGON

IT comes to a slueing, shuddering stop, almost going in the ditch.

INT. LOUIS, BEHIND THE WHEEL

LOUIS

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

He stares blankly through the windshield.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE NIGHT

All lights are off. It's late.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM NIGHT

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

SOUND: Loud, hollow BANG. It's very loud--loud enough to wake the dead.

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

INT. THE DOORWAY, WITH PASCOW

He's exquisitely dead. Now pallid as well as smashed up.

PASCOW

Come on, doc. We got places to go.

INT. LOUIS

He is in terror...but he is also in a state of near-trance.

INT. PASCOW

PASCOW

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

INT. LOUIS

He glances at RACHEL. Although PASCOW has spoken in a fairly loud voice--and the opening door was like a bomb--she's still fast asleep. LOUIS looks back toward PASCOW...and then gets out of bed. He's naked except for a pair of pajama bottoms.

INT. PASCOW

He turns and leaves the doorway.

INT. LOUIS

He reaches the bedroom doorway himself and looks back at:

INT. THE BED, LOUIS'S POV

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

INT. THE DOORWAY, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS (relieved)

Oh. Thank God.

PASCOW (Voice)

Hurry up, doc.

INT. THE KITCHEN

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

PASCOW (low)

Come on, doc...

LOUIS goes into:

INT. THE SHED/GARAGE

The station wagon is a dark hulk. LOUIS crosses to it and stands, perplexed.

PASCOW looms softly behind him and puts an arm around him. LOUIS turns... and suddenly his face is less than an inch from PASCOW'S mutilated face.

PASCOW
Let's go, doc.

LOUIS (moans)
I don't like this dream.

PASCOW
Who said you were dreaming?

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

EXT. THE FIELD BEHIND THE HOUSE, LONG NIGHT

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

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY ARCH

CAMERA HOLDS, THEN PANS DOWN as LOUIS passes under the arch.

EXT. LOUIS, CLOSE

He looks around, obviously afraid.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY, LOUIS'S POV

We can see why. By starlight this is one scary place.

EXT. LOUIS

He suddenly sees something else, and now his fear is close to terror.

EXT. THE DEADFALL, LOUIS'S POV

The face is back in the tumbled branches. It yawns and snarls.

EXT. LOUIS

He walks toward the deadfall as if hypnotized. PASCOW'S hand falls on his shoulder. LOUIS turns, terrified.

EXT. PASCOW, CLOSE

He really is a dreadful mangled mess.

PASCOW

This is the place where the dead speak.

EXT. LOUIS

He closes his eyes.

LOUIS

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

EXT. LOUIS AND PASCOW

PASCOW

The door must not be opened. The
barrier must not be crossed. Don't
go on, doc. No matter how much you
feel you have to. There's more
power here than you know.

He points at:

EXT. THE DEADFALL

That grinning face--and perhaps now there are other effects as
well, subtle but there? Dim red light? A misty smoke drifting
through the tumbled dead branches? The director will know.

After a moment there is a HUGE GRUNTING ROAR from the woods behind
the deadfall--it sounds like no animal we've ever heard before.
There is the sound of something huge shifting and snapping a tree
like a toothpick.

EXT. PASCOW AND LOUIS

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

LOUIS

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

PASCOW

The power of this place is old and
always restless. Sometimes the dead

do more than speak. Remember, doc.

CAMERA BEGINS MOVING SLOWLY IN ON LOUIS.

LOUIS
Leave me alone!

PASCOW
Remember.

CAMERA IS TIGHT ON LOUIS.

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

As the Ramones start blasting "Sheena Is A Punk Rocker":

INT. LOUIS, IN BED

His eyes snap open. He's in his own bedroom. As he sits up THE
CAMERA ANGLE WIDENS OUT so we can see that he's in bed alone; the
covers on RACHEL'S side are thrown back.

After the initial confusion and fear, LOUIS looks deeply relieved;
he looks the way I suppose we all look upon waking up and
realizing our worst dreams were only dreams after all.

RACHEL (calls)
You up, doc?

LOUIS
Getting there.

RACHEL
I got eggs down here!

LOUIS
Good d--

He throws the covers back and freezes.

INT. LOUIS'S FEET, LOUIS'S POV

They are covered with mud and pine needles. The sheets are greased
with woods-muck.

INT. LOUIS, CU

Utter terror.

INT. THE LAUNDRY CHUTE, CU

LOUIS'S hands enter the shot and dump a bundle of sheets into the chute.

INT. LOUIS, IN THE UPSTAIRS HALL

He's naked but for a towel around his waist. He's obviously fresh from the shower.

He starts down to the bedroom to dress.

BLACK. And on it a third title card: CHURCH.

Over this the SOUND of a RINGING TELEPHONE.

LOUIS (voice)
Hello?

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM AFTERNOON

There's a bowling match on TV. LOUIS, dressed in his Saturday afternoon grubs (jeans and a Maine sweatshirt), has the phone to his ear.

JUD CRANDALL (phone filter)
Louis? 'Fraid you may have a spot of trouble.

LOUIS (frowning)
Jud? What trouble?

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM, WITH JUD

He's on the phone, looking out his window.

JUD
Did you tell me Rachel took the kids back to Chicago for a few days?

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS
For Ellie's birthday, yes. I didn't go because her old man thinks I'm a shit and the feeling is heartily reciprocated...they'll be back tomorrow

night. Jud, what's this about?

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM, WITH JUD

JUD

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

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS

Church? Oh. Oh, Jesus.

EXT. THE CRANDALL HOUSE, MEDIUM-LONG

We're looking across from the CREED lawn. LOUIS waits for one of those trucks to go blasting by and then crosses. It's cold and windy. Downed autumn leaves fly.

LOUIS and JUD stand over a small furry body like mourners.

JUD (voice)

Well?

EXT. THE CAT'S BODY

It's lying on its belly and doesn't look much damaged. Hands-- LOUIS'S--come into the frame. He puts one hand under the cat's head and lifts it so the open eyes, now a dull green, stare into THE CAMERA. There's some blood on its ruff. That's all.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD, ON THE EDGE OF THE CRANDALL LAWN

LOUIS

It's Church.

JUD

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

LOUIS

Ellie will, though. She'll suffer plenty.

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

JUD

Loved that cat pretty well, didn't she?

LOUIS

Yes.

LOUIS twists the bag shut and puts one of those plastic ties on it. Then he holds it up.

LOUIS

Bagged cat. What a mess.

JUD

You going to bury him in the Pet Sematary?

LOUIS (a little bitter)

I guess that's what it's there for, huh?

During all of this JUD has grown peculiarly intense.

JUD

Going to tell Ellie?

LOUIS

I don't know.

JUD

Seems like you told me about a promise you made--

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN MORNING

GAGE is in his high chair. ELLIE, in her first-day-of-school dress, is in her place. LOUIS is sitting at his own place staring, hypnotized, at the middle of the table, where there is a large serving dish. On the dish is scrambled eggs, strips of bacon, and CHURCH'S corpse--staring eyes, bloody ruff and all.

RACHEL (impatiently)

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

EXT. THE CRANDALL LAWN, WITH JUD AND LOUIS

LOUIS (defensive)

That was a mistake. But Rachel... she doesn't like to talk about death, or even think of it. Her younger sister died of spinal meningitis when Rachel was eight. Rachel was there when it happened. Alone. I guess you could say it made a complex.

JUD

Cat's just as dead, Louis.

LOUIS (snaps)

Well that's a big help! (Pause) I'm sorry, Jud.

JUD

No need to apologize.

LOUIS

Maybe when they call I'll just tell Ellie I haven't seen the damn cat around. You know?

JUD (after a long pause)

Maybe there's a better way.

EXT. THE START OF THE PATH TO THE PET SEMATARY, LONG EVENING

LOUIS and JUD cross the road from the CRANDALL side. LOUIS is carrying the plastic bag in one hand and a flashlight in the other. JUD has a pick and shovel in one hand and a flashlight of his own in the other.

Evening shadows have grown long. It's maybe an hour until dark.

JUD and LOUIS stop near the replaced tire-swing.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

JUD has a Walkman clipped to the belt of his pants and earphones slung around his neck.

LOUIS

Jud, this is crazy. It's going to be almost dark before we get back.

JUD

It's going to be dark before we even get where we're going, Louis. But we can do it...and we're going to.

LOUIS

But--

JUD

Does she love the cat?

LOUIS

Yes, but--

JUD

Then come on.

He puts the earphones on, effectively forestalling further argument, and pushes the PLAY button on the Walkman. We can hear Marshall Crenshaw singing "Crystal Girl." JUD starts away. After a moment, LOUIS follows.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY AND THE BACK OF THE ARCH LATE EVENING

The SOUND of crickets...ree-ree-ree...

The SOUND of footfalls.

Faintly, the SOUND of Huey Lewis and the News, singing "Working For A Living."

It's now almost twilight.

JUD and LOUIS enter the Pet Sematary. LOUIS is looking around curiously.

LOUIS

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

JUD snaps off the Walkman and puts the earphones around his neck again.

JUD

What say, Louis?

LOUIS

Nothing. (Pause) Do we plant him on
the outer circle or start a new one?

JUD

We're still not where we're going.

He walks past LOUIS and toward the deadfall. LOUIS follows.

LOUIS

What do you mean?

JUD

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

He points at the deadfall.

LOUIS

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

JUD

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

LOUIS

I'm not climbing that.

JUD

Give me the cat. I'll take care of it myself.

He holds out his hand and LOUIS sees the old man means exactly as he says. After a moment he says:

LOUIS

Let's go.

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

LOUIS (low)

Thank God my Blue Cross is paid up.

EXT. THEIR FEET

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

EXT. LOUIS

He's grinning, exhilarated.

LOUIS

God, this is amazing!

EXT. JUD

There are beads of sweat on the old man's face. He looks both stern and a little scared.

JUD

Just don't stop and--

EXT. LOUIS

He looks down.

EXT. LOUIS'S FEET

A dead branch snaps under one of them like a gunshot and that foot plunges down maybe six inches.

EXT. LOUIS

He lurches to the edge of balance, then regains it.

LOUIS

And don't look down. Right.

He continues.

EXT. THE DEADFALL, REVERSE TWILIGHT

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

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS (amazed)

Holy...!

EXT. BIG GOD WOODS, LOUIS'S POV

In the dying glow of twilight, this should be a mystic, awe-inspiring shot. There's no more scrub underbrush and junk pines and juniper-bracken here; ancient firs rise almost like Sequoias. The sunset light shafts among them. This is a real forest... an old forest. And winding upward among the trees along that needle-carpeted floor, clearly marked by large white stones, the path goes on.

EXT. LOUIS

He's stopped on top of the deadfall, still surveying all this with frank amazement.

EXT. JUD

JUD (turns to look)

Come on, Louis--don't stop!

EXT. LOUIS, ATOP THE DEADFALL

LOUIS (grinning)
I'm all right! I'm f--

EXT. LOUIS'S FEET

One of the branches snaps. LOUIS'S foot plunges. His cuff rips.

EXT. LOUIS, JUD'S POV

We're looking up at a fairly steep angle as LOUIS staggers off-balance. He steps with his other foot, misses, and goes flying.

EXT. LOUIS, CLOSER

He does a half-somersault in the air and hits the deadfall on his back, the green garbage bag flying out of his hand. His flashlight also goes. Branches crack. White dust puffs out from under him.

EXT. JUD, AT THE BASE OF THE DEADFALL

LOUIS thumps to the ground nearby. JUD kneels beside him.

JUD
Louis! You all right?

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

LOUIS (dazed)
Sure. I guess I just lost my happy thoughts for a second there.

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

LOUIS (continues)
I shouldn't have stopped...and it does bite.

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

JUD
No, you shouldn't have stopped. But you got away with it. Important thing is are you sure you're all right?

LOUIS
Yes. (Pause) Where are we going, Jud?

JUD

You'll see before long. Let's go.

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

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD, FROM THE DEADFALL

Again, there should be a sense of awe and mystery as they go tolling up the path into the twilight, dwarfed by those ancient firs.

SOUND OF CRICKETS, LOW at first, then UP TO LOUD: Ree-ree-ree...

DISSOLVE TO:

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

Lots of undergrowth here, and creeping ground-mist, too. The SOUND OF CRICKETS is now only a part of the soundtrack: BUZZ OF CICADAS, THUMP OF FROGS. Swamp-sounds.

LOUIS looks frankly doubtful.

JUD

This next bit's like the deadfall, Louis-- you got to walk steady and easy. Just follow me and don't look down.

EXT. LITTLE GOD SWAMP, LOUIS'S AND JUD'S POV DEEP TWILIGHT

Mysterious...awesome...scary. Dead trees poke out of the murk like twisted hands. There's scummy water standing around tussocks covered with long grass, most of it dead. There's a lot of choking underbrush.

All of this fades away into a grim, obscuring fog.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD

JUD

Micmacs used to call it Little God Swamp.

LOUIS

Is there quicksand?

JUD

Ayuh.

LOUIS (nervous; joking)

Are there ghosts?

JUD looks at him expressionlessly.

JUD
Ayuh.

JUD starts off, stepping to the first tussock. After a moment, LOUIS follows.

EXT. JUD, CU

His face is set, strange.

JUD
There's a lot of funny things down
this way, Louis.

EXT. LOUIS, BEHIND JUD

LOUIS
You're telling me.

EXT. JUD

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

EXT. LOUIS

HE looks up and his eyes widen as he sees:

EXT. ANGLE ON LITTLE GOD SWAMP, LOUIS'S POV

A faintly glowing, ethereal shape hangs in the branches of one of the dead trees. It looks a bit like a corpse. In fact, I think it looks quite a bit like PASCOW'S corpse.

As we watch it fades...fades...is gone.

EXT. LOUIS

He's somewhere between being mystified and puzzled and being scared. Now a weakly glowing fireball rolls slowly across the surface of the standing water toward him...and then just fades into the thick mist.

LOUIS
It's funny, all right.

EXT. JUD

JUD

Just don't stop, Louis. You don't ever want to stop down here in Little God. (Pause) And you don't ever want to look behind you, whatever you hear.

EXT. JUD AND LOUIS, LONG ANGLE NIGHT

We see them moving through the mist like wraiths, JUD with his digging tools, LOUIS with his light and his Hefty-Bag coffin. The whole swamp is glowing dimly.

EXT. THE FAR SIDE OF LITTLE GOD SWAMP NIGHT

In the extreme f.g. we can see firm ground sloping up. Ahead is a thick white mist. And here comes JUD and LOUIS slogging through it and out of it. Both of them are wet from the knees down. They head into the woods on the far side.

EXT. A LOW, STONY BLUFF OR STEEP HILL

In the book this is described as being almost a cliff, but a rocky hill rising out of the woods would serve just as well. We can see steps cut into the side, and two figures--LOUIS and JUD--toiling up them.

EXT. JUD AND LOUIS, A CLOSER SHOT

JUD'S panting and out of breath; LOUIS is, if anything, in worse shape.

JUD

Almost there, Louis.

LOUIS

You keep saying that.

JUD

This time I mean it.

He tops the last step and stands on a rocky level under the stars, the wind blowing his hair off his deeply lined brow. A few moments later LOUIS joins him and stares with undisguised wonder.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND, LOUIS AND JUD'S POV

The top of this hill or bluff is rocky and bare, but there are a

number of rocky piles. But for every pile of rocks we can see, there are ten littered heaps, as if the neat piles had been burst apart. There's a shape to all of this, and it is the shape of the Pet Sematary: concentric circles.

SOUND: The wind, blowing ceaselessly.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD, AT THE EDGE OF THE BURYING GROUND

LOUIS (awed)
What is this place?

JUD
This was their burying ground, Louis.

LOUIS
Whose burying ground?

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

LOUIS
Why? For God's sake, why?

JUD
I had my reasons, Louis. We'll talk later. All right?

LOUIS
I guess so...but...

JUD
You want to rest a bit before you start?

LOUIS
No, I'm okay. Will I really be able to dig him a grave? The soil looks thin.

JUD
Soil's thin, all right. But you'll manage.

He hands him the pick and shovel.

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

JUD walks away, leaving LOUIS with the digging tools in one hand

and the flashlight in the other. After a minute, LOUIS walks out into the burying ground.

EXT. LOOKING DOWN INTO A SHALLOW HOLE NIGHT

SOUND: The wind. It blows ceaselessly up here.

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

EXT. LOUIS

He drops the pick and sticks his hurt hands in his armpits. Beside him we see a low pile of rocks and earth.

JUD (voice)
Should be deep enough.

He joins LOUIS. He's got a lot of rocks in his arms.

LOUIS
You think so?

He notices the rocks.

LOUIS
What are those for?

JUD
Your cairn.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND, LOUIS'S POV

Those tumbled piles of rock are very obvious.

EXT. LOUIS AND JUD, BY CHURCH'S GRAVE

LOUIS
Doesn't look like they last long.

JUD
Don't worry about that.

LOUIS
Jud, why am I doing all this?

JUD
Because it's right.

He walks off again.

LOUIS looks after him for a moment, then kneels down.

EXT. LOUIS, BY THE GARBAGE BAG

He opens it and looks in at CHURCH'S stiffening corpse.

LOUIS

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

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

EXT. THE CAIRN, CU NIGHT

LOUIS'S hands come into the frame and add a final two or three stones.

EXT. LOUIS, BY THE CAIRN

He looks at it for a moment and stands up. JUD is right there.

JUD

That's fine. You did real good.

LOUIS looks at him.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE NIGHT

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

EXT. LOUIS'S FIELD NIGHT

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

SOUND, FAINT: The telephone.

LOUIS

Oh, shit! Rachel!

He drops the tools and sprints.

EXT. THE CREED'S SIDE YARD, BY THE TIRE SWING

LOUIS runs into the side yard. SOUND of the phone is louder.

EXT. THE KITCHEN DOOR OF THE CREED HOUSE, WITH LOUIS

He runs to the door and inside.

EXT. THE END OF THE PATH, WITH JUD

He stands there, eyes inscrutable.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM, WITH THE PHONE

It stops. A beat later LOUIS enters the room. He picks it up, although he already knows it's too late. He listens to the SOUND of the dial tone and then drops it back into the cradle, disgusted.

He starts to dial a number from memory.

JUD (voice)

Louis.

INT. THE KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM DOORWAY, WITH JUD

JUD

When you talk to 'em, not one word about what we done tonight. 'S'far's you know, the cat's still fine.

INT. LOUIS, BY THE PHONE

After a moment he lowers it into the cradle.

INT. JUD

JUD

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

During this, he's come across the room to LOUIS and dropped his hand on LOUIS'S shoulder.

LOUIS

But--

JUD

No buts! Accept what's done, Louis.
What we done was right. Another time
it might not be, but tonight it was...
at least I hope to Christ it was. Now
you make your call...but not a word
about tonight.

EXT. THE ROAD, WITH JUD

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

DORY GOLDMAN (voice)
Goldman residence.

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

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

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

INT. LOUIS, IN THE LIVING ROOM NIGHT

He's on the phone, smiling and happy.

RACHEL (voice)
You want to talk to the birthday girl?

LOUIS
That'd be real fine.

ELLIE (voice)
Hi...daddy?

LOUIS (sings)
Happy birthday to you/Happy birthday
to you/Happy birthday, dear Ellie/Happy
birthday to you!

ELLIE (voice)
That was awful, daddy.

LOUIS
Yeah, I know...how are things out
there in Chicagoland?

ELLIE

Fine...except when Mom was airing Gage's diaper rash, he walked away and got into Grampa's study and pooped in Grampa's favorite chair.

LOUIS (grinning broadly)

Way to go, Gage!

ELLIE (voice)

What?

LOUIS

I said that's too bad. What did you get for presents from Gramma and Grampa?

ELLIE (voice)

Lots of stuff! I got two dresses...and a Chatty Cathy doll...

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM, WITH ELLIE

She's dressed for bed, in fuzzy pink pajamas. Her Chatty Cathy is crooked in one arm. In her lap is a Garfield transistor radio.

ELLIE

...and a Garfield radio! How's Church, dad? Does he miss me?

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM, WITH LOUIS

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

LOUIS

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

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM, WITH ELLIE

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

ELLIE

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

LOUIS (voice)

Yuck! Kiss your own cat!

ELLIE

Want to talk to Gage?

Before he can answer, she puts the phone in GAGE'S hand. ELLIE and RACHEL watch, amused, as GAGE gobbles into it. Perhaps RACHEL encourages him to say a few words.

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM, WITH LOUIS

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

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE MORNING

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

EXT. THE GARAGE, WITH LOUIS

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

INT. CHURCH, ECU

He's on top of the car, but at this point we probably don't notice; THE CAMERA is so close that CHURCH looks like he's coming right down our throats. He's hissing angrily.

INT. LOUIS

He recoils and stumbles backward with a cry. He hits a tool-rack on the wall and a lot of them fall down with a LOUD JANGLING NOISE.

INT. ON TOP OF THE STATION WAGON, WITH CHURCH

He jumps down, frightened by the noise, and the CAMERA TRACKS as he goes flying out the garage door into the sunlight.

INT. LOUIS

He gets slowly to his feet again. He's getting over his fright but we can see he's totally freaked out by what gave him that fright. He goes to the garage door and looks out.

LOUIS (calls)

Church?

EXT. THE SIDE YARD, LOUIS'S POV

Grass and fallen leaves. No sign of CHURCH.

EXT. LOUIS'S STUNNED FACE, CU

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS

He's spooning cat-food into a dish. He goes to the door--there should be a total of three doors in the kitchen: one to the living room, one to the shed/garage, and one which leads directly outside. LOUIS uses this latter door now.

EXT. THE KITCHEN STOOP, WITH LOUIS

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

LOUIS

Food, Church...food!

SOUND: Miaow.

EXT. THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE, LOUIS'S POV

CHURCH comes slinking out of the bushes and comes slowly toward THE CAMERA. He stops, looking mistrustful.

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS

Come on, Church! Chow down!

EXT. CHURCH

He crosses to the stoop and begins eating the food.

LOUIS (to himself)

Christ. I don't believe this.

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

LOUIS (wincing)

God, you stink, Church.

CHURCH is looking at the food, trying to get out of LOUIS'S arms.

LOUIS

In a second.

He tilts the cat's head back so he can get a look at CHURCH'S

neck.

EXT. CHURCH'S NECK, CU (LOUIS'S POV)

There's some sort of mark here--a clear remnant of the crash. A line of white fur, or perhaps a dark red scar where no fur at all grows.

EXT. LOUIS AND CHURCH, ON THE STOOP

LOUIS sees something else as he lets the cat's neck go. He tweezes something out of CHURCH'S whiskers.

EXT. LOUIS'S HAND, ECU

It's a shred of green plastic.

EXT. LOUIS AND CHURCH

LOUIS

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

CHURCH suddenly claws at his face.

LOUIS

Ow!

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

EXT. JUD CRANDALL'S GARDEN, WITH JUD

The garden is a plot of about half an acre. JUD comes trundling slowly along a row, pushing a wheelbarrow. There are several pumpkins in it. JUD is wearing old khaki gardening pants and a Ramones sweatshirt. He's wearing his headphones and we can hear the Romantics doing "What I Like About You." JUD is singing along and bopping a little--as much as his arthritis will allow, if you can dig it.

He sees a real big pumpkin, stops, and bends over to get it.

He takes out his pocket-knife and slits the pumpkin-vine. He gets the pumpkin in his arms and stands up. He turns...and LOUIS is right there (kind of a cheap jump, but always fun), looking totally stunned.

JUD, startled, drops the pumpkin. LOUIS reaches out and slides the phones off JUD'S ears.

LOUIS

What did we do?

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN

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

JUD

I most generally don't start before noon, but this looks like an exception.

LOUIS

What did we do, Jud?

JUD

Why, saved a little girl from being unhappy...that's all. Drink up, Louis!

LOUIS drinks about half the beer.

LOUIS

I tried to tell myself I buried him alive. You know--Edgar Allan Poe meets Felix the Cat. But...

JUD

Wouldn't wash?

LOUIS

No. I'm a doctor. I know death when I see it, and Church was dead. He smells horrible and he uses his claws, but he's alive...and I feel like I'm going crazy. It was that place, wasn't it?

JUD

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

LOUIS drains his beer.

LOUIS

Can I have another one?

JUD

I guess it wouldn't hurt.

He gets up and goes to the fridge.

INT. JUD, AT THE FRIDGE

JUD

The Micmacs used to bury their dead up there long before the whites came.

He returns to the table with the beer.

JUD

They buried their dead and for a long time their dead stayed buried. Then something happened. Half the tribe died in a season. The rest moved on. They said a Wendigo had soured the ground.

LOUIS

Wendigo?

JUD

Spirit of the north country. Not a good spirit. Wendigos are great liars and tricksters, according to the stories. And if one touches you...

JUD pauses, perhaps a flustered, and gathers his thoughts.

JUD

Maybe it really was a Wendigo-- I ain't the one to say it wasn't-- or maybe it was just some disease. Whatever the reason, those that were left moved on. But they left that place...the way it is now.

JUD shrugs, and drinks.

EXT. JUD AS A BOY, CU/SEPIA TONE DAY

The time here is about 1910. JUD is wearing short pants. He's crying, not in any big-deal histrionic way, but as if he means to keep doing it for a long time. I mean he looks really sad.

JUD (voice)

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

JUD is sitting on the front stoop. It's the same house JUD lives in now, but the porch hasn't been added yet, and the road is dirt

rather than tar.

Along this road comes a horse-drawn wagon--STANNY B.'S wagon. The wagon's full of junk, rags, bottles...stuff to sell and swap. Strung across the top are bells, and we can hear their CHIMING SOUND...but faint, like bells heard in a dream.

STANNY B. is old and drunk. Dust spumes up behind the wagon as he draws up to the CRANDALL house and stops. He gets down, almost falls, takes a bottle out of his back pocket, drinks, and approaches JUD. We can see him speaking.

INT. JUD'S KITCHEN, WITH JUD AND LOUIS

LOUIS

You and this old Indian rag-man--

JUD

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

EXT. THE CRANDALL BACK YARD/SEPIA TONE DAY

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

JUD (voice)

My mother was with me.

She sees who it is--what it is--and backs away, screaming, horrified.

EXT. SPOT, CLOSER/SEPIA

JUD (voice)

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

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

SOUND of JUD'S MOM SCREAMING. Like the bells, these are screams heard in a dream.

EXT. THE BACK STOOP OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE/SEPIA

The BOY JUD comes running out, dressed in a night-shirt.

EXT. JUD'S MOM/SEPIA (JUD'S POV)

She's cringing against the fence at the rear of the yard. SPOT stands in front of her, swaying from side to side, as if doped.

JUD'S MOM (dim; far)

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

She is in utter terror.

EXT. THE BOY JUD/SEPIA

Horrified...ashamed.

EXT. JUD'S MOM/SEPIA

JUD'S MOM (terror)

COME AND GET YOUR DOG!!

INT. JUD AND LOUIS, IN JUD'S KITCHEN

LOUIS

How did your mother take it, Jud?
How did she take it when your dog came back from the dead?

JUD'S face is a complication. He's lying to LOUIS, certainly--but is he also lying to himself? Yes, I think so.

JUD

Well, she was a little upset at first, and that's why I thought you ought to hold your peace when you talked to your people last night...you did, didn't you, Louis?

LOUIS

Yes.

JUD

Why, then, things should be fine.

LOUIS

A little upset is all she was? Because I'll tell you, Jud, my brains feel a little like a nuclear reactor on the edge of a meltdown.

JUD

She got used to the idea. Spot lived another four years. He died peacefully in the night that second time, and I buried him in the Pet Sematary...where his bones still lie.

EXT. THE ROAD BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES, WITH LOUIS AND JUD

We see them crossing.

LOUIS (voice)

You still haven't told me why you did it.

EXT. JUD AND LOUIS, ON THE CREED FRONT LAWN

JUD

A man doesn't always know why he does things, Louis. I think I did it because your daughter ain't ready for her favorite pet to die.

LOUIS

What?

JUD

Ellie's a little scared of death. And the main reason Ellie's that way is because your wife is a lot scared of death. Now you just go ahead and tell me I'm wrong.

But LOUIS'S reaction tells him he's not wrong--in fact, JUD has hit the nail right on the head.

INT. BATHTUB FIXTURES, CU

LOUIS'S hands come into the frame and turn the spigots.

INT. THE BATHROOM, WITH LOUIS

He starts to undress, still looking troubled. We should notice that the door behind him is firmly shut. The bathroom has no windows.

INT. THE BATHTUB SPIGOTS

The hot water is steaming. LOUIS'S hands enter the frame and turn off the faucets. SOUND of LOUIS climbing in.

INT. LOUIS IN THE TUB

A big sigh and an expression of exquisite pleasure. He relaxes in the hot water. After a few moments he puts a wet washcloth over his face.

INT. BY THE KITCHEN SINK, WITH RACHEL

RACHEL

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

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE

GAGE is in his high chair. ELLIE is at her place, crying. In RACHEL'S place sits VICTOR PASCOW, bloody and wrecked. LOUIS sits in his place. On the platter of bacon and scrambled eggs is CHURCH'S mangled body.

PASCOW

The door must not be opened. The barrier must not be crossed.

LOUIS

You don't understand--

INT. THE BATHTUB, WITH LOUIS

The washrag is slipping, but it still covers his face.

LOUIS (muttering)

--I'm a doctor.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN TABLE

In attendance: PASCOW, LOUIS, ELLIE, GAGE in his high chair. Lying in the middle of the table, clotted with dirt and blood, eyes staring, neck a gory mess of infected wounds, is SPOT. He's also dotted with clots of scrambled egg and bits of bacon.

PASCOW

Sometimes the dead do more than speak. Remember, doc.

INT. RACHEL, AT THE KITCHEN SINK

RACHEL (with great force)

Don't shilly-shally, Louis. Promise me. Promise me. Promise me.

INT. THE BATHTUB, WITH LOUIS

The washcloth has slipped enough so we can see his eyes are closed--he's dozing.

LOUIS

Promise...

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN TABLE

To LOUIS, ELLIE, PASCOW, GAGE, and the corpse of SPOT enters JUD, his eyes shocked and staring.

JUD (to LOUIS)

You do it for all the best reasons,
but that ain't why. You do it because
it gets hold of you...you do it
because you have to.

INT. LOUIS, IN THE BATHTUB, CU

The washrag has worked its way down to his mouth by now. His doze is deepening; he's started to snore a little.

SOUND: A splash. Something has been dropped into the bath.

LOUIS opens his eyes. Looks puzzled. Looks down. Eyes widen in shock.

INT. THE BATHWATER, LOUIS'S POV

A very large and very mangled dead rat floats in the bath, actually brushing against LOUIS'S chest. Blood has begun to stain the water.

INT. LOUIS

Turns his head, preparatory to leaping out.

INT. THE TOILET LID, WITH CHURCH

Its mouth yawns open. It hisses, showing bloodstained teeth.

INT. THE BATHROOM

LOUIS leaps from the tub. Grabs a towel and begins to rub himself frantically. He's grossed out. The cat tries to arch against him and he hits it. CHURCH falls to the floor, hissing.

LOUIS looks at the closed door.

LOUIS

How the hell did you get in?

He may not know that, but he knows how it's going to get out. He opens the door to the upstairs hall. If CHURCH doesn't go at once, LOUIS helps it with his foot.

Then he looks down at:

INT. THE BATHTUB WITH BRER RAT, LOUIS'S POV

INT. LOUIS

Staring at the rat. Over this: THE SOUND OF JET ENGINES.

EXT. A DELTA 727

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

INT. A DEPLANING AREA DAY

Lots of people making their way up the jetway.

INT. LOUIS, OUTSIDE THE SECURITY POINT

He's looking anxiously for his people. In one hand he's got half a dozen roses. His face lights up.

INT. THE DEPLANING AREA, LOUIS'S POV

Here comes LOUIS'S family. ELLIE is a little ahead. RACHEL is pushing GAGE in his stroller. ELLIE sees LOUIS and lights up.

ELLIE

Daddy!

She runs for him.

INT. JUST OUTSIDE THE SECURITY POINT

ELLIE comes belting up to LOUIS, weaving among the deplanees like a slalom skier. She leaps into his arms. LOUIS swings her cheerfully.

LOUIS

Hi, sugar!

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

ELLIE

Daddy, is Church all right?

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

LOUIS

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

ELLIE

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

LOUIS (trying to smile)

That was a silly dream, wasn't it?

ELLIE

Is he really all right?

LOUIS

Yes.

ELLIE

Because you promised.

LOUIS

I know.

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

RACHEL

Want to take your son, doc?

LOUIS does. GAGE is ecstatic.

LOUIS kisses RACHEL deeply.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN, NIGHT

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

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM, NIGHT

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

ELLIE (entering)
Can cats have shampoos?

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

ELLIE (still upset)
I don't care. I'll save up my allowance
and pay for it. Church smells bad.

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

ELLIE
I hate that smell.

INT. LOUIS, CU

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

LOUIS
Yes--I hate it, too.

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

SOUND: A pen scratching over paper.

INT. A STUDY DESK, CU

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

The hand puts the pen down. It tears the paper in two, leaving
just the half with the message.

INT. THE DANDRIDGE CELLAR, NIGHT

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

SOUND: Descending footsteps.

INT. THE NOOSE, CU

SOUND of MISSY climbing onto the table.

Her face enters the frame. She looks very sick. She puts her head into the noose and rakes it tight at the hyoid bone.

EXT. THE DANDRIDGE HOUSE, NIGHT

One light on...a cellar light.

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

SOUND: Kick! THUMP!

SOUND: Ree-ree-ree...

INT. THE CELLAR, WITH MISSY DANDRIDGE

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

SOUND: Car engines starting up.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE GRACE METHODIST CHURCH DAY

People are coming out and getting into their cars and turning on the headlights, even though it is only mid-morning.

In the immediate f.g. is a hearse. Four pallbearers are loading a coffin into it.

EXT. LOUIS AND ELLIE, ON THE CHURCH STEPS

ELLIE

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

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

JUD

They do it to honor the dead, Ellen.

ELLIE

Is that right, dad?

LOUIS

Yes. To honor the dead.

EXT. THE CHURCH PARKING AREA

More cars start up; more lights come on; the back doors of the hearse swing closed.

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETARY DAY

[NOTE: In the book LOUIS finds it difficult to enter at night because of a high iron fence. Here we should see there's no such problem; there's only a low stone wall between the graveyard and the public road.]

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

MINISTER (voice)

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

EXT. LOUIS, ELLIE, JUD

As the mourners begin to break up, these three start back toward LOUIS'S car.

JUD

Rachel not feeling well?

LOUIS

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

ELLIE

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

LOUIS

That's enough, Ellen.

They've reached the CREED station wagon.

JUD

Out of the mouths of babes, Louis.

LOUIS

This babe has said enough.

He opens the front passenger door.

LOUIS

Hop in, Ellie.

She does, and LOUIS closes the door.

JUD

Poor Missy. God, I was sorry to hear. I remember when she was no older'n Ellen there, walking down to the store with her Raggedy Anne doll draggin' behind her in the dust. I don't know why God takes someone like her, who should have a bunch of years still in front of them, and lets an old shit like me just go on and on.

LOUIS

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

JUD

Ayuh...how is your cat, Louis?

LOUIS

It's Ellie's cat.

JUD

Nope. He's your cat now.

JUD opens one of the back doors as LOUIS goes around to the driver's side.

INT. THE BACK SEAT OF THE WAGON

JUD has tilted over in one corner and is snoring. His Walkman 'phones are on and we can hear the tinny sounds of Billy Idol. A little old man's drool trickles down from one corner of his mouth.

SOUND: ELLEN< crying.

INT. THE FRONT OF THE WAGON, WITH LOUIS AND ELLIE

Tears are spilling freely down ELLIE'S face.

LOUIS

Ellie? What's wrong?

ELLIE

No more chocolate chip cookies.

LOUIS

Huh?

ELLIE

Missy made the best chocolate chip cookies in the world--even Mom said so. Now there won't be any more because she's gonna be dead forever!

She cries harder. LOUIS reaches out and strokes her hair.

EXT. THE STATION WAGON, DAY

Moving up the country road toward home through blazing fall foliage.

INT. TV SCREEN, CU NIGHT

On it is a scene from "Night of the Living Dead."

NEWSCASTER

Bizarre as it may seem, it now seems almost beyond doubt: the dead are returning to eat the living.

ELLIE (voice)

Daddy?

INT. THE CREED LIVING ROOM NIGHT

There's a VCR on top of the TV; LOUIS has been watching "Night." Now he quickly uses the remote control to shut down the TV.

She's dressed for bed, and comes toward him slowly.

LOUIS

What's up, sugar?

ELLIE

Daddy, do you think Missy Dandridge went to heaven?

LOUIS

What?

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH RACHEL

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

INT. THE LIVING ROOM, WITH LOUIS AND ELLIE

She's gotten up into his lap.

ELLIE

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

LOUIS

Well, I think Michael McDowell is so full of shit he probably squeaks when he walks, my dear.

INT. RACHEL, AT THE DOOR

She smiles a little at this.

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE, IN THE LIVING ROOM

LOUIS

But don't you dare say that.

ELLIE

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

LOUIS

I don't know, honey. Different people believe all sorts of different things happen to us when we die. Some believe in heaven or hell. Some think we're born again as little children--

ELLIE

Sure, carnation. Like in that movie you rented, Audrey Rose.

LOUIS

Well, it's actually reincarnation, but you get the idea. And some people think we just wink out...like a candle flame when the wind blows hard.

ELLIE

Do you believe that?

LOUIS looks toward:

INT. THE LIVING ROOM SOFA, WITH CHURCH, LOUIS'S POV

CHURCH is sleeping.

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE

LOUIS

I think we go on. I'm not sure what happens after we die, but yeah-- I have faith in that.

ELLIE

You believe in it.

LOUIS

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

INT. RACHEL, AT THE KITCHEN DOOR

Listening intently.

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE

LOUIS (continues)

I'll tell you what faith is--it's the evidence of the heart; the assurance of things not seen.

ELLIE

I don't get it.

LOUIS

Well, here we are, sitting in my chair. Do you think my chair will be here tomorrow?

ELLIE

Yeah, sure.

LOUIS

Then you have faith in that. But we don't know it will be; after all, some crazed chair-burglar might break in while we're away and steal it, right?

ELLIE'S giggling.

INT. RACHEL, AT THE DOOR

She's smiling, too...but tears are running down her cheeks.

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE

LOUIS

But we plan on that chair. We believe in that chair. And I plan on going on somehow as Louis Creed, after I die. I believe I will.

ELLIE (awed)
You have faith in that.

LOUIS
Yes ma'am. Just like I have faith that it is now time for Ellen Creed to get ready for bed. So buzz.

He gets her off his lap.

ELLIE
I'm not tired!

LOUIS
I'm sure you're not.

ELLIE
Then why do I have to go to bed?

LOUIS
Because your mother and I need the rest, sugar. Now buzz.

She heads toward the stairs.

INT. LOUIS AND RACHEL'S BEDROOM

LOUIS is in bed, reading. RACHEL, wearing a robe over her nightgown, comes in.

RACHEL
I heard you tonight.

LOUIS
I thought maybe you did. I know you don't approve of the subject being raised--

RACHEL
That's not true. The subject scares me. Because of Zelda.

LOUIS puts his book down and looks at her thoughtfully.

LOUIS
Your sister, I know.

RACHEL sits down on the end of the bed. She's clasping her hands nervously together.

RACHEL

Sometimes you're so good with her,
Louis--so straight with her--that
you make me ashamed of myself.

LOUIS sits up and scoots down the bed to her. He tries to put an arm around her. She rejects it--but gently.

RACHEL

I'm sorry I couldn't go with you
to Missy's funeral. And that I
blew up when we went to that
silly animal graveyard.

LOUIS

That's forgotten.

RACHEL

Not by me, it isn't. I know how
badly I acted, how unfair I was.
It's just that I..you know.

LOUIS

Yes, I guess I do.

He makes a place for her beside him and hugs her. They lie silently together for awhile, taking comfort from each other.

RACHEL

I'm going to try to do better.

LOUIS

You're doing fine.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK. And on it, a fifth title card: GAGE.

SOUND: An idling truck motor.

EXT. THE GRILLE OF A TRUCK DAY

It looks monstrous...as high as a mountain.

EXT. THE TRUCK, A NEW ANGLE

It's an Orinco tanker. The driver, a young man in khaki fatigues

and a baseball cap, climbs up into the cab. He slams the door and jams the truck into gear.

IRWIN GOLDMAN (voice)

I knew something like this would happen.

EXT. THE ORINCO SHIPPING YARD DAY

The truck comes rolling slowly toward the main gate...stops so the driver can look both ways...and then pulls slowly out onto ROUTE 9.

IRWIN (voice continues)

I told her when you were first married.
'You'll have all the grief you can stand,
and more,' I said.

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

There are others here, but they are in the b.g., and concentrating on the scene the old man is making. He's RACHEL'S dad. LOUIS is sitting in the aisle seat of a pew-like bench. He looks terribly shattered--they both do, actually. He's staring at the old man as if he cannot in the least comprehend what he's saying.

IRWIN (continues)

And now look at this!

He gestures toward:

INT. THE FRONT OF THE FUNERAL CHAPEL DAY

Here, half-buried in floral tributes, is a child-sized coffin. GAGE'S.

INT. IRWIN AND LOUIS DAY

IRWIN (weeping)

Run over in the road like a...a
chipmunk!

EXT. ROUTE 9, W/TRUCK DAY

Getting up to speed.

EXT. A KITE, CU

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

EXT. THE FIELD BESIDE THE CREED HOUSE, WITH LOUIS

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

ELLIE (voice)
Go, daddy!

EXT. A PICNIC TABLE DAY

The remains of a picnic lunch are spread here. Looks like everyone ate well. In attendance: RACHEL, ELLIE, GAGE, and JUD CRANDALL.

GAGE
Go, dayee!

They all laugh--JUD ruffles the kid's hair.

EXT. LOUIS, RUNNING WITH THE KITE

He's paying out string--and the kite is going up.

LOUIS (voice)
Where's Rachel?

INT. THE FUNERAL CHAPEL, WITH LOUIS AND IRWIN

IRWIN looks toward:

INT. THE BACK OF THE CHAPEL, WITH RACHEL AND DORY GOLDMAN

They are by the sign-in book. Both are dressed in black. Both look haggard. But RACHEL looks more than haggard; she looks damned near insane with grief and horror.

INT. LOUIS AND IRWIN

IRWIN (leaning forward)
With her mother! Where she should be!
As for you, I hope you rot in hell!
In hell, do you hear me?

We should; by now he's screaming his head off.

INT. THE CAB OF THE ORINCO TRUCK DAY

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

EXT. ROUTE 9, TRUCKER'S POV

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

INT. THE TUCKER'S FOOT

Stamping the pedal closer to the metal.

EXT. THE ONCOMING TRUCK

Belting toward THE CAMERA. SOUND of the GROWLING ENGINE.

EXT. THE SKY, WITH THE KITE

LOUIS has clearly gotten it up okay.

EXT. LOUIS, IN THE FIELD

He's holding the string, looking up at the sky. Now he looks back at the picnic table.

LOUIS

Hey, Gage!

EXT. THE PICNIC TABLE

GAGE gets down and runs toward his father.

EXT. ROUTE 9 WITH THE ORINCO TANKER

Belting along fast. SOUND of the Ramones.

EXT. THE FIELD, WITH LOUIS AND GAGE

GAGE runs to his dad, chubby legs working. He reaches him, and LOUIS transfers the ball of string to GAGE'S hands.

GAGE

Dad?

LOUIS

String! You're flying it,
Gage--you got the hammer, my man!

GAGE

Gage fline it?

LOUIS

Bet your boots. Look--

LOUIS puts his hands over GAGE'S hands and pulls them down.

EXT. THE KITE

It dips in the sky.

EXT. LOUIS AND GAGE

LOUIS
See?

GAGE
Gage fline it!!

LOUIS (tenderly)
Bet your ass, little hero.

He kisses his son. They look up at:

EXT. THE KITE

Dipping and drifting in that gorgeous fall sky.

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

INT. THE FUNERAL CHAPEL, WITH LOUIS AND IRWIN

IRWIN
You--

But there is no way he can express his outrage with mere words. As LOUIS sits staring numbly up at him, IRWIN punches him in the nose. LOUIS sprawls backward, falling out of the pew onto the floor.

INT. THE REAR OF THE CHAPEL, FEATURING RACHEL AND DORY

RACHEL screams and starts forward. DORY pulls her back.

RACHEL
Louis! Daddy! Stop it! STOP IT!

INT. LOUIS AND IRWIN

LOUIS is getting up groggily. Hs nose is pouring blood.

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

IRWIN punches him in the stomach. LOUIS "oofs" and doubles over.

INT. ANGLE ON THE OTHER MOURNERS

Among them we see STEVE MASTERTON and MARCY CHARLTON.

STEVE (getting up)
Hey!

INT. LOUIS AND IRWIN

LOUIS is slowly straightening up. IRWIN is in a sour frenzy of glee.

IRWIN
How do you like that? How do--

LOUIS pushes the old man with both hands.

INT. IRWIN GOLDMAN

He goes stumbling and flailing backwards...strikes the coffin... knocks it off its bier. A SCREAM goes up from the mourners.

INT. RACHEL AND DORY

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

INT. ANGLE ON MOURNERS, WITH MARCY AND STEVE

MARCY
Stop them. Right now.

STEVE gets up and goes toward:

INT. THE FRONT OF THE CHAPEL, WITH IRWIN

He's picking himself out of a tangled mess of coffin and overturned floral tributes. His suit is wet from spilled water. He's weeping.

LOUIS has just reached him, and that stunned look is gone. I think he intends to do the Cool Jerk all over IRWIN GOLDMAN'S puny little body. IRWIN strikes a Gentleman Jim Corbett pugilistic pose.

IRWIN
Come on! I'm ready for ya! I'll
take y'apart!

As LOUIS wades in, STEVE MASTERTON gets between them...at the last possible moment.

STEVE
Stop it!

LOUIS swings. STEVE manages to block the punch with his body.

STEVE
Stop it! Jesus, what's wrong with you, Louis? It's your son's funeral, not a boxing match!

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

INT. LOUIS

PASCOW (voice)
The soil of a man's heart is stonier,
doc--

LOUIS turns toward:

INT. THE FRONT PEW, WITH PASCOW AND CHURCH

PASCOW, bloody and ruined in his jogging shorts and muscle shirt, has the pew to himself...except for CHURCH, who is sitting on his lap and PURRING.

PASCOW
A man grows what he can...and tends it.

INT. LOUIS, CU

A sense of horrible awareness comes into his face...and then he covers it with his hands and begins to SOB.

SOUND, COMING UP: A TRUCK MOTOR.

INT. THE CAB OF THE TANKER

The trucker is singing along with the radio.

INT. THE GAS PEDAL

It's closer to the floorboards than ever.

EXT. LOUIS AND GAGE WITH THE KITE, IN THE FIELD

We are at some distance--far enough to see that the two of them have moved quite close to the road.

EXT. LOUIS AND GAGE, A NEW ANGLE (KITE'S POV)

We can see their faces upturned to us--we can hear the AMPLIFIED RATTLING SOUND of the kite itself.

THE CAMERA PANS TO THE LEFT--to the road. And we can see the truck, fairly close by now, and coming closer.

EXT. THE PICNIC TABLE, WITH RACHEL, ELLIE, AND JUD

JUD'S lighting a cigarette. His Walkman 'phones are around his neck.

ELLIE

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

RACHEL

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

EXT. LOUIS AND GAGE

This is the last moment of happiness in this man's life--so let's make it very happy. As he and GAGE stare up at the kite:

IRWIN (voice)

Jesus. Louis. I'm sorry--

INT. THE FUNERAL CHAPEL

The fight has gone out of IRWIN and STEVE has backed away--but cautiously. He's ready to jump back in if one or the other goes mad again. But IRWIN is shuffling toward LOUIS, hands out--everyone else has gathered in a knot near the front of the chapel. Among them is RACHEL and her mother, weeping in each others' arms.

IRWIN

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

LOUIS brushes by him with no acknowledgement that IRWIN even exists. He kneels down slowly by the coffin and puts his head against it.

LOUIS (weeping)

I'm sorry, Gage--I'm so sorry,
little hero.

EXT. LOUIS AND GAGE, IN THE FIELD

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

EXT. THE KITE, BLOWING AWAY

EXT. THE PICNIC TABLE

ELLIE

It got away from him! That numb shit!

RACHEL (outraged)

Ellen Creed!

EXT. THE BALL OF KITE TWINE

It is bouncing and unraveling. More importantly, it is being carried directly toward the highway.

EXT. GAGE

He takes off after the ball of twine.

GAGE

Kite fline too fast!

SOUND: The oncoming truck.

EXT. THE TRUCK

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

EXT. LOUIS

He's looking--looking toward his people at the picnic table.

LOUIS (shrugs, good-humored)

What can you d-

TRUCK SOUND CONTINUES.

EXT. THE PICNIC TABLE

TRUCK SOUND LOUDER.

Alarm hits JUD'S face. He rises.

JUD

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

RACHEL looks; registers terrible alarm.

RACHEL (screams)

Get him, Louis!

EXT. GAGE

He's still scampering after the bouncing ball of kite-twine, which has now almost reached the road.

TRUCK SOUND LOUDER.

EXT. LOUIS

The SOUND is loud enough so he's having trouble hearing.

LOUIS (cups his ear)

What?

EXT. THE PICNIC TABLE

RACHEL (shrieks)

GET THE BABY!!

JUD is running toward the road, although he'll never get to GAGE in time; only LOUIS has a chance.

EXT. LOUIS

Horrible understanding dawns on his face. He whips around and sees:

EXT. GAGE, LOUIS'S POV

The kid's almost in the road; the ball of twine is in it.

RISING DRONE OF THE TRUCK.

EXT. THE ONCOMING TRUCK

EXT. GAGE, RUNNING INTO THE ROAD

GAGE (cheerful)

Geddit-geddit-geddit!

EXT. EVERYONE, KITE'S POV

GAGE reaches the middle of the road as the truck comes around the

corner. LOUIS is running across the field, getting close to the side of the road. RACHEL is clutching ELLIE by the picnic table. JUD is helplessly trying to wave the truck down as it passes him.

EXT. GAGE, IN THE ROAD

As he reaches the broken white line he grabs the ball of string.

SOUND OF THE ONCOMING TRUCK.

GAGE turns his head.

GAGE (not afraid)
Druck!

EXT. THE ONCOMING TRUCK AND THE DRIVER, GAGE'S POV

Suddenly THE DRIVER'S face turns into a Halloween mask of horror. He BLASTS THE AIR-HORN.

EXT. LOUIS, ON THE VERGE OF THE ROAD

LOUIS (shrieks)
NO!!

EXT. GAGE

BLARE OF THE AIR-HORN. A shadow falls over his face. There is an audible CLICK! and we FREEZE FRAME. What we have now is a tremendously winning photograph of a little boy, not quite two, with a ball of string in his hand...and a shadow lying across his face.

EXT. PHOTO MONTAGE

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

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

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

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

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

GAGE looks c. but c.

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

g.) The Orinco tanker, overturned on the far side of Route 9.

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

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

j.) Here is a full-face studio portrait of GAGE. He is smiling at us, heartbreakingly lovely. CAMERA HOLDS ON THIS while:

JUD (voice)

Sedative finally took hold. She's asleep.

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE, WITH LOUIS

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

LOUIS puts the photo down as JUD comes in and crosses to the fridge. LOUIS'S nose is badly swelled. He also has a black eye.

JUD gets a couple of beers and comes back toward the table.

JUD

Your father-in-law packs a wallop,
for an old guy. He and his wife gone
back to Chicago?

LOUIS

No...squatting out there at the
Holiday Inn like a couple of vultures.
He really thinks Rachel's going to go
back with them. Her and Ellie.

JUD

Louis--

The swing door opens. They look toward:

INT. ELLIE

She looks dazed and shocked. There are brown circles under her eyes, but otherwise her complexion is much too white. She's wearing fuzzy pj's. She's carrying the picture of her pulling GAGE on the sled.

INT. JUD AND LOUIS, AT THE TABLE

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

JUD
What you got there, Ellie?

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

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

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

ELLIE (crying)
I used to pull 'im a lot.

LOUIS, looking down at his hands, nods.

ELLIE
I'm going to carry this picture,
Mr. Crandall, until God lets Gage
come back.

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

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

ELLIE
He can if He wants to. He can do
anything, just like Inspector Gadget
on TV. But I have to keep things ready
for him, that's what I think. I've got

his picture and I'm going to sit in his chair--

LOUIS
Ellie--

ELLIE
And I'm going to eat his breakfast cereal, too, even though it tastes like boogers. And...and...

She bursts into tears.

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

INT. LOUIS, CU

His face is stricken.

INT. ELLIE'S BEDROOM NIGHT

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

LOUIS (kisses her)
Good night, Ellie.

ELLIE
G'night daddy.

He starts for the door.

INT. ELLIE, CU

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

INT. LOUIS, AT THE DOOR

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

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

He steps out, closing the door.

INT. ELLIE, IN BED

In some sense comforted--it may be a poison comfort but she surely doesn't know this--she turns over on her side to go to sleep. We can see the picture of GAGE under her arm.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL, WITH LOUIS

The light here is fairly dim. LOUIS goes down and opens another door. He pokes his head in.

INT. THE MASTER BEDROOM, WITH LOUIS

He reacts first with surprise, then a species of horrified disgust.

INT. LOUIS AND RACHEL'S BED, LOUIS'S POV

CHURCH is crouched on RACHEL'S sleeping form.

INT. THE BED, A NEW ANGLE

LOUIS comes in and swats the cat a damned good one.

LOUIS (low snarl)
Fuck off, hairball!!

INT. CHURCH, CU

It hisses at him through a mouthful of fangs, its eyes big green balls...and then it flees. CAMERA FOLLOWS IT out the door.

INT. LOUIS, BY THE BED

RACHEL stirs and mutters thickly, then lies still again...she's doped to the gills. LOUIS bends over and kisses her gently.

He leaves the room and closes the door behind him.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL, WITH LOUIS

He tries the door a couple of times to make sure it's firmly on the latch (his face wears an expression of "How'd he get in there in the first place?"). Then he walks down the hall to the stairs.

INT. ON THE STAIRS, CU

The cat is on one of the risers. LOUIS trips over it.

EXT. ON THE STAIRS WITH LOUIS, WIDER

For a moment he's pinwheeling madly for balance, on the verge of falling. He regains his balance as the cat goes shooting across the dining room toward the kitchen.

LOUIS regains his equilibrium after a bit and continues on down.

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH JUD AND LOUIS AND CHURCH

As LOUIS enters through the swing door from the dining room, JUD is just letting CHURCH out the back door. As JUD closes the door:

LOUIS (slightly antagonistic)
I thought you'd be gone by now.

JUD
I got you a fresh beer out of the fridge, Louis.

He indicates the table, where there is indeed a fresh beer.

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

JUD
You're thinking of things best not thought of, Louis.

LOUIS
I'm thinking about going to bed.

But he begins pouring the beer into a glass.

JUD
You never asked me if anyone had buried a person up there in the Micmac burying ground--

LOUIS'S hand jerks. Beer goes foaming across the kitchen table.

JUD
--but I think the thought has crossed your mind.

LOUIS
Shit! Look at this mess!

JUD
Ayuh--it's a mess, all right.

As LOUIS goes to get a cloth to wipe up the mess:

JUD

I know the Micmacs thought it was a holy place...and then they thought it was a cursed place. That's why they moved on.

LOUIS

Because something called a wendigo soured the ground.

JUD

And because the dead walked.

LOUIS stops sopping and looks at him.

INT. JUD, CU

JUD

Oh, ayuh. It's been done. What you've been thinking of has been done.

EXT. A COUNTRY RAILROAD STATION/SEPIA DAY

The time is the late summer of 1944, although I don't believe we need to know that specifically. The sign on the station reads LUDLOW. There are a few 40s cars parked near the station--they have gas-ration coupons on the windshields. And a hearse.

A train is coming.

EXT. THE HEARSE, WITH UNDERTAKER AND BILL BATERMAN/SEPIA

We can see the UNDERTAKER is trying to talk to BILL BATERMAN, a man in his forties who periodically wipes his brow with a bandana. BILL walks away. He doesn't want to talk; he doesn't want comfort. He's a grief-stricken, bitter man.

JUD (voice over)

Timmy Baterman was on his way home from the war with his Purple Heart when he got killed in some stupid car accident down in Georgia.

EXT. THE TRAIN, IN FRONT OF THE DEPOT/SEPIA

The door of the mail-car is open. The UNDERTAKER and three trainmen are unloading TIMMY BATERMAN'S coffin, which is draped in a 48-star flag. BILL BATERMAN stands by, watching balefully as

they carry his son's final apartment to the back of the hearse and load it in.

JUD (v-o continues)

Bill was bitter--his son had been in the thick of it two years and then got shot in the leg--a clean flesh-wound. He was supposed to be coming home safe and sound. Instead, he come home in a box after all.

EXT. THE REAR OF THE HEARSE/SEPIA

The doors close. The hearse pulls away. THE CAMERA PANS TO BILL BATERMAN, who stands staring balefully after it and mopping his brow.

JUD (v-o continues)

He wasn't able to get to the bottom of the truth, Louis.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS AND JUD NIGHT

LOUIS is now sitting down, drinking a beer, staring at JUD.

LOUIS

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

JUD

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

LOUIS (bitter)

Tell that to my wife and little girl.

JUD

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

EXT. THE LUDLOW CEMETARY/SEPIA DUSK

We're featuring a fresh grave...that of TIMMY BATERMAN. A truck, showing only parking lights, turns into the graveyard and drives slowly up to it. It stops, and BILL BATERMAN gets out. HE looks at the grave and then goes to the back of his truck.

JUD (voice-over)

Timmy was buried on July 22nd, as I remember.

EXT. BILL BATERMAN AT THE BACK OF HIS TRUCK/SEPIA DUSK

He reaches in...and brings out a pick and shovel.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MARGIE WASHBURN, ON HER PORCH/SEPIA DAY

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

JUD (v-o continues)

It was four or five days later when...

EXT. A COUNTRY DIRT ROAD, WITH TIMMY BATERMAN/SEPIA DAY

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

JUD (v-o continues)

...Margie Washburn seen him walking up the road toward Yorkie's Livery.

EXT. MARGIE/SEPIA

She's screaming--we hear her faintly.

EXT. TIMMY/SEPIA

He turns toward her and we see a green light like the St. Elmo's fire in the Little God Swamp glow dimly deep in his eyes. He grins at MARGIE.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE LUDLOW TOWN OFFICES, WITH MARGIE/SEPIA

She hesitates for a moment or two and then walks up toward the door.

JUD (v.o.)

Lots of people saw Timmy Baterman walking back and forth between the home place and the town line. But it was Margie...

INT. THE TOWN OFFICES, WITH MARGIE/SEPIA

She's in a hallway in front of a door with LUDLOW SELECTMEN

printed on the frosted glass. After a moment she opens it and goes in.

JUD (v.o. continues)

...who finally got up enough guts to talk to the town fathers about it. She knew it had to be stopped, Louis.

INT. THE SELECTMEN'S OFFICE/SEPIA

MARGIE and four men are grouped around a desk. She's talking; they're listening. THE CAMERA LAZILY PANS the four men--one, of course, is JUD as a YOUNG MAN.

JUD (v.o. continues)

She knew it was an abomination. George Anderson, the town postmaster, was there...and Alan Purinton...Hannibal Benson...and me. I was there.

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE/SEPIA SUNSET

It's a ramshackle old farm which looks remarkably like the estate of that gentleman farmer Jordy Verrill.

An old Ford pulls into the driveway, and the four men get out.

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

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

SOUND: Crazy laughter.

BILL BATERMAN (voice)

Stop that, Timmy!

The four men look at each other.

JUD

Come on.

They start around to the back.

EXT. THE BACK YARD, WITH BILL AND TIMMY/SEPIA

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

EXT. THE BACK YARD, A NEW ANGLE/SEPIA

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

ALAN

Oh holy Jesus lookit that.

BILL whirls around and sees them.

BILL

You men get out of here!

JUD

I heard your boy was killed down Georgia.

BILL (agitated)

That was a mistake!

HANNIBAL

Was it?

BILL

You see him standing there, don't you? Now get out! Get the Christ off my land!

Now TIMMY turns around and comes shambling forward.

TIMMY (laughing)

Ge ow! Ge Cwise off eye an!

GEORGE (revolted)

Oh Jesus, Jud! He's dead! I can smell him!

BILL

He ain't dead! Give him a day or two and he'll be fine! Don't you say that!

JUD

Bill, this ain't right--you can see that yourself--

BILL (screaming)

GET OUT! YOU HEAR? GET OUT!!!

EXT. TIMMY BATERMAN/SEPIA

TIMMY (laughing)

Dead! We love dead! Hate living!

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

EXT. THE ENTIRE GROUP/SEPIA

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

BILL (over his shoulder)
You want to get out of here before I get my shotgun! You boys are trespassing!

EXT. THE FOUR MEN/SEPIA

JUD
God help you, Bill.

EXT. BILL AND TIMMY BATERMAN/SEPIA

BILL (snarls)
God never helped me. I helped myself.

EXT. TIMMY BATERMAN, CU/SEPIA

Staring directly into the setting sun and laughing wildly, mindlessly.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS AND JUD

LOUIS
What happened?

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE--MONTAGE NIGHT

a.) A car pulls up with its lights off and stops.

JUD (v.o.)
There was a fire.

b.) We see legs as people get out of the car, and hands holding tin cans of gasoline.

c.) Hands splash gasoline from the cans along the sides of the house.

EXT. THE BATERMAN PORCH NIGHT

JUD (as a young man) rings the bell--an old-fashioned twist type.

BILL (voice)
Who's there?

TIMMY (laughing, screeching voice)
Ooo air? Ooo air?

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

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

BILL
I seen you! I seen you, Jud Crandall!

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE--MONTAGE NIGHT

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

b.) The other side of the house: The same.

c.) In the back yard, JUD lights a torch and heaves it through the kitchen windows. Ka-PLOOM!

d.) The men draw away toward the front, their faces grim and judgmental.

EXT. THE BATERMAN PLACE NIGHT

Burning. Going up fast.

EXT. THE MEN

ALAN
You think Bill's gonna get out, Jud?

JUD (stony)
If he don't, he don't.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR

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

BILL (struggling)
No! No, Timmy! Let me go!

TIMME (laughing)
Love dead! Hate living!

He sinks his teeth into his father's arm. BILL screams.

A beam falls on TIMMY, lighting him afire. BILL breaks free and runs down the porch steps.

INT. THE FRONT HALL, WITH TIMMY

He's burning and laughing.

TIMMY
LOVE DEAD! HATE LIVING!

And into the fire he goes, still shrieking and laughing.

EXT. THE FRONT YARD NIGHT

BILL BATERMAN is collapsed on the lawn as sparks drift down around him, his face hidden against his thighs, weeping.

CAMERA MOVES SLOWLY IN on the four men, who are grouped at the end of the driveway by the road and staring with awe at:

EXT. THE BLAZING FARMHOUSE NIGHT

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS AND JUD

JUD (softly)
Sometimes dead is better, Louis.

BLACK. And on it, a sixth title card: THE DEAD WALK.

SOUND BLEEDS IN: JET ENGINES.

EXT. BANGOR INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL DAY

A jet plane rises into the sky from behind the building.

GATE AGENT'S VOICE
This is the final call for United's
flight 61 to Chicago...

INT. A BOARDING GATE, WITH LOUIS AND RACHEL

In the b.g. we can see IRWIN and DORY GOLDMAN waiting by the jetway with ELLIE as the last few passengers board. RACHEL looks confused and grief-stricken. She also looks punchy, doped up. I imagine she's floating on a sea of Valium, and that makes her easier to deal with. LOUIS'S battle-scars are fading a little.

The GATE AGENT is standing by the jetway with a mike in one hand and a bunch of boarding passes in the other.

GATE AGENT (concludes)

All passengers should now be aboard.

LOUIS

You better get going, hon.

RACHEL

Oh Louis, I just don't know about this--

LOUIS

I told you last night--this can be the start of patching things up with your folks. If something good doesn't come of Gage's death, I think I'll go crazy.

RACHEL

Louis, are you sure?

LOUIS

I'm sure.

INT. THE GOLDMANS, WITH ELLIE

ELLIE

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

DORY

Why not, darling?

ELLIE

I had a bad dream last night. A nightmare.

IRWIN (kindly)

About what?

ELLIE

About Daddy. (Pause) And Gage.

DORY and IRWIN exchange a knowing, sad glance over the child's

head.

ELLIE

And someone named Paxcow.

INT. RACHEL AND LOUIS

LOUIS guides her to the jetway.

LOUIS

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

He kisses DORY. IRWIN hugs him.

IRWIN

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

LOUIS (hugs him back)

We all lost our minds, Irwin.

LOUIS kisses RACHEL. Then he kneels and hugs ELLIE.

LOUIS

Be good to your mother, darlin'.
She needs you.

ELLIE

Come with us, daddy. Please come
with us!

LOUIS

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

INT. ELLIE, CU

ELLIE (crying)

Please, daddy! I'm scared!

INT. LOUIS AND ELLIE

LOUIS

Of what?

ELLIE (crying harder)

I don't know.

LOUIS (great emphasis)
Everything's going to be all right,
Ellie. Now go on--get aboard.

ELLIE
Do you swear?

LOUIS
I swear.

The Voice of Authority has spoken. We can tell by ELLIE'S face that while things are still not all right, they are a little better. She joins her mother.

The four of them--RACHEL, ELLIE, and THE GOLDMANS--start down the jetway. ELLIE looks back once, as if begging him to come...and then they're gone.

INT. LOUIS, CU

LOUIS'S face changes. Now it is a stony and contemplative face. Not, when you get right down to it, a very nice face.

He turns and strides away.

INT. THE AIRPORT PARKING LOT, WITH LOUIS

The family station wagon is in the f.g. We hear the SOUND OF JET ENGINES, and as LOUIS reaches the wagon he turns and watches:

EXT. THE TERMINAL,, LOUIS'S POV

From behind it a United Airlines jet lifts into view and banks away.

EXT. LOUIS, IN THE PARKING LOT

Face set, he gets into the wagon and drives away.

EXT. ROUTE 15 IN BREWER

The CREEDmobile pulls up across from the Brewer Tru-Value Hardware and LOUIS crosses to it.

INT. THE HARDWARE STORE COUNTER, CU

On it: A six-cell flashlight, Duracell D-batteries, a pick, a shovel, and a nylon drop-sheet in cellophane packaging. Now the CLERK'S hands come into the frame and drop a pair of heavy work-

gloves into the pile.

INT. LOUIS AND CLERK (SMALL PUN, HEE-HEE)

CLERK

Anything else for you today?

LOUIS (after a look)

I think we got it all.

The CLERK starts to ring things up.

CLERK

Looks like heavy work.

LOUIS

It could be.

The quality of LOUIS'S reply is somehow unnatural. The CLERK looks at him, momentarily unsure and uncertain. Then he starts ringing things up again.

INT. A UNITED JETLINER, WITH ELLIE AND RACHEL

ELLIE is in the window-seat, asleep. RACHEL is holding a paperback but not reading it. Her eyes are red. She's looking into space.

CAMERA DRIFTS TO ELLIE. Her sleep is not easy. Her head turns from side to side, as if in negation. She becomes steadily more upset. She's starting to mutter. Suddenly her eyes flare open and she screams.

INT. JETLINER, SLIGHTLY WIDER

We can see the GOLDMANS in the seats behind the CREEDS. They are startled. So are other passengers. A stewardess comes running.

ELLIE

Paxcow says it's almost too late!

RACHEL

Ellie...Ellie...what...

ELLIE

Paxcow says it's almost too late!

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

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETARY DAY

The CREED wagon turns in and drives up one of the lanes. It stops

and LOUIS gets out.

EXT. LOUIS

He walks to a fresh grave on which the first flowers are already starting to wilt. He sits down and takes a flower. He plucks it, looking at the grave steadily. He says nothing for a long time.

LOUIS

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

EXT. GAGE, IN THE FIELD

He runs toward THE CAMERA, happy and laughing, in SLOW MOTION.

EXT. LOUIS, BY GAGE'S GRAVE

LOUIS is now weeping, but he seems calm just the same.

PASCOW (voice)

Remember, doc.

LOUIS looks at:

EXT. A TOMB, LOUIS'S POV

PASCOW, bloody and mutilated, is standing by it.

PASCOW

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

EXT. LOUIS, BY GAGE'S GRAVE

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

LOUIS

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

EXT. PASCOW

PASCOW

Timmy Baterman. That was wrong.

EXT. LOUIS, BY GAGE'S GRAVE

LOUIS

Don't talk like an asshole even if you are just a bit of underdone potato or a blot of mustard.

EXT. PASCOW, BY THE TOMB

He stands mute, just looking.

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS (weeping)

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

EXT. THE TOMB, SANS PASCOW

VIC has put on his boogie shoes.

EXT. LOUIS, BY GAGE'S GRAVE

He's crying harder. Abruptly he reaches out at the floral tributes and knocks a bunch of them over.

LOUIS

If it doesn't work--if he comes back like Timmy Baterman--I'll put him to sleep. But I'm going to try. (Pause) And if it doesn't work...they don't ever need to know.

EXT. THE GOLDMAN HOUSE IN LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS NIGHT

INT. UPSTAIRS HALL NIGHT

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

RACHEL (voice)

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

ELLIE (voice)

It wasn't a dream. It was Paxcow.

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

ELLIE

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

RACHEL

Who is this Paxcow? Is he like the boogeyman?

ELLIE

He's a ghost. But he's a good ghost.

RACHEL turns off the bed-lamp.

RACHEL

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

ELLIE

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

RACHEL

Of course I will.

She kisses ELLIE.

RACHEL

Now will you try to go to sleep?

ELLIE (turns over on her side)

Yes, Mom.

RACHEL gets up and leaves the room.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

PASCOW is here, halfway down the hall to the stairs, bloody as ever. RACHEL doesn't see him. She looks perplexed, a woman trying to think of something. She stops very near him.

RACHEL (to herself)

Paxcow, why do I know that name?

PASCOW

Pascow.

RACHEL suddenly straightens. She looks startled and afraid.

RACHEL

Pascow? Was she saying Pascow?

She suddenly heads for the stairs, fast.

EXT. THE CREED HOME IN LUDLOW NIGHT

SOUND: A car starting up.

The station wagon backs out and heads down the driveway. As it passes THE CAMERA, we see LOUIS driving. The wagon turns onto Route 9 and heads off.

CAMERA HOLDS ON THE HOUSE. A beat of silence. Then: the telephone starts ringing.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM NIGHT

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

RACHEL

He's not home.

DORY

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

Good old IRWIN'S face says that maybe LOUIS went out for a couple of grams of coke and a whore in Nazi SS boots.

RACHEL is dialing another number.

EXT. THE CRANDALL HOUSE NIGHT

SOUND: Phone starts to ring.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN, WITH JUD

He shuffles to the telephone. His Walkman 'phones are around his neck. He's got a bottle of beer in one hand.

JUD (picks up)

Hello--you got Judson.

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM, WITH RACHEL

RACHEL

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

JUD (surprised voice)

Chicago! Is Louis with you?

RACHEL

No...we're going to be here awhile, and he wanted a few days to wind up our affairs there. I just wondered if he was with you.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN, WITH JUD

His face says this is very serious.

JUD

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

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM

RACHEL

Jud, do you remember the name of the student that died on Louis's first day at work? The one that was hit by a car?

JUD (voice)

I don't--

RACHEL

Was it Pascow?

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN, WITH JUD

JUD

Ayuh, I think 'twas. If I see Louis come home before I go to bed, I'll tell him to--

INT. THE GOLDMAN LIVING ROOM, WITH RACHEL

RACHEL

Don't bother. I'm coming home.

JUD (alarmed voice)

Rachel!

RACHEL

Thank you, Jud. Goodbye.

She hangs up.

INT. THE CRANDALL KITCHEN, WITH JUD

JUD

No! Rachel! Don't do that!

Rachel--!

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

INT. THE FRONT HALL OF THE GOLDMAN HOUSE

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

DORY

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

RACHEL

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

IRWIN

You know something's wrong, don't you?
You know. And Ellie does, too.

RACHEL

Yes.

IRWIN

I'll drive you.

ELLIE (voice)

Mommy?

They all turn to:

INT. ELLIE, ON THE STAIRS

ELLIE

Please hurry.

INT. RACHEL AND THE GOLDMANS

RACHEL

I will. Come and kiss me.

ELLIE races into her arms.

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETERY NIGHT

SOUND Of a car engine, THROBBING AND LOW. It cuts off.

CAMERA MOVES IN on the low stone wall between the cemetery and the road. Beyond it we can see the roof of the CREED station wagon.

LOUIS appears, dressed in dark clothes. He looks both ways, then tosses a big duffle bag over the wall. Stuff clanks inside.

LOUIS climbs over the wall, grabs his bag, and checks out the scene.

EXT. LUDLOW CEMETERY, LOUIS'S POV

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

EXT. LOUIS

He heads for GAGE'S grave.

INT. THE GOLDMAN CAR, WITH RACHEL AND IRWIN

IRWIN

I'll come with you if you want,
honey.

RACHEL (shakes her head)

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

EXT. O'HARE UNITED AIRLINES TERMINAL, WITH IRWIN'S CAR

IRWIN'S car heads for it.

EXT. THE GRAVE OF GAGE CREED

LOUIS approaches it slowly and sets down his bag of grave-robbing equipment. He sets aside the remaining floral tributes and then opens the bag and takes out the spade. He looks down at the grave for a long second.

LOUIS (low)

Gonna bust you out, son.

He starts to shovel.

EXT. THE SHOVEL, CU

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

EXT. JETLINER, IN A LINE-UP OF JETLINERS

INT. JETLINER, WITH RACHEL

Everyone looks impatient, but RACHEL looks half crazy.

PILOT (voice)

This is the Captain speaking.
I'm sorry about this delay, folks,
but we've got a real low ceiling
tonight and air traffic control's
playing it safe. Looks like it's
going to be about half an hour before
we get on a roll, so I'm turning off
the NO SMOKING sign.

SOUND: Bing!

There's a general groan. CAMERA MOVES IN ON RACHEL, who has closed her eyes. I think she's praying.

EXT. GAGE'S GRAVE NIGHT

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

EXT. LOUIS NIGHT

He's sweating and dirt-streaked. He's tossing dirt on a big pile. Suddenly, as he takes another shovelful, we hear a SCRAPING SOUND. He tosses the shovel aside and squats.

EXT. IN THE GRAVE, WITH LOUIS

There's a white streak on the bottom of the grave--the top of GAGE'S coffin. LOUIS swipes his hand through the loose dirt, uncovering more, and then he begins to sweep off the top of the coffin with his hands.

EXT. THE CRANDALL PORCH

JUD comes out. He's wearing a light jacket. His Walkman 'phones are around his neck. He's got a six-pack. He looks at:

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE, JUD'S POV

It's dark.

EXT. THE CRANDALL PORCH, WITH JUD

He sits down.

JUD

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

He puts his earphones on. Cracks a beer. Lights a cigarette. Pushes the PLAY button on the deck. Faint SOUNDS of The Clash buzz-sawing "Rock The Casbah."

JUD begins to watch.

EXT. LOUIS

He climbs out of the grave and opens his duffle bag. He starts to pull out the pick.

SOUND of an approaching car.

LOUIS freezes.

EXT. THE ROAD OUTSIDE OF THE CEMETERY

A police car comes cruising slowly along. The spotlight on the driver's side comes on and runs along the graveyard's stone wall.

EXT. LOUIS

Watching. Waiting. Hardly breathing.

EXT. THE POLICE CAR

It reaches the end of the wall. Everything looks jake. The spotlight goes out and the police car speeds up.

EXT. LOUIS

He relaxes perceptibly. He gets the pick and drops back into the grave.

EXT. THE TOP OF THE COFFIN, CU

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

EXT. LOUIS, CU

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

EXT. JETLINER LIFTING OFF FROM O'HARE

INT. RACHEL AND HER SEATMATE

SEATMATE

Think you'll make your connection
in Boston?

RACHEL

I have to.

EXT. LOUIS, BY GAGE'S GRAVE

He's lying on his stomach, reaching in. We hear the SOUND of dirt grating in hinges again.

EXT. LOUIS, CU

We're looking up into his face. If GAGE had a POV, this would be it. LOUIS'S face fills with a terrible grief.

LOUIS

Oh, Gage--oh, honey.

EXT. JUD CRANDALL, ON HIS PORCH

His chin slips to his chest, even though we hear Creedence on his 'phones and to him the sound must be at blastoff levels. There's a long round ash on his cigarette in the tray. A couple of empty beer cans on the table beside him.

A truck blasts by, startling him out of his doze. He jerks his head up suddenly...and slaps himself. He's okay...for now.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD, WITH LOUIS

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

LOUIS

It's going to be all right...I

swear it's going to be all right...

The canvas tarp has been spread open to the right. LOUIS begins to lay his son down on it.

EXT. THE GROUND BESIDE THE TARP, CU

It's littered with flower petals. One limp hand appears among them.

EXT. LOUIS

He closes the tarp over GAGE, making a roll. He then produces rope from the duffle bag. He cuts the rope and begins to tie one piece around one end of the canvas roll containing the corpse of his son.

EXT. JETLINER IN THE NIGHT SKY

PILOT (voice)

Good evening again, ladies and gentlemen...

INT. THE JETLINER, WITH RACHEL

Her seatmate is knitting something. Across the aisle sits VICTOR PASCOW, bloody but serene, hands clasped in his lap, looking straight ahead. RACHEL looks around tensely.

PILOT (continues)

I'm delighted to tell you that we've got a strong tail-wind tonight and we expect to arrive at Boston's Logan Airport almost on time.

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

RACHEL (softly)

Thank God.

Her SEATMATE looks at her a bit strangely.

EXT. THE GRAVEYARD, WITH LOUIS

He's got the bundle containing his son and the duffle-bag with the tools. He runs bent over. He reaches the wall and there's the SOUND of another motor. He crouches at the base of the wall.

EXT. THE ROAD

Here comes that same police car. The spotlight runs along the

wall.

EXT. LOUIS

Crouching against his side of the wall and sweating.

EXT. THE POLICE CAR

It stops. The COP gets out. He walks slowly toward the wall.

EXT. LOUIS

Crouched. Now we see the COP looking over the top. If he looks down...but he doesn't. Instead he turns around so we see his back. LOUIS looks up, miserably scared, pouring sweat.

Silence. Then: SOUND of the cop taking a whiz.

EXT. THE COP

Ah! Relief. SOUND of his fly being zipped. He looks back at the cemetery for a moment.

COP

I ain't afraid of no ghost.

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

EXT. LOUIS, BEHIND THE WALL

He collapses with relief. Then he gets up and looks cautiously over the wall. Nothing there but his car, parked a little way down on the other side of the road.

He tosses the duffle bag over the top of the wall. He puts the canvas roll containing GAGE on top of the wall. Then he vaults over.

EXT. THE STREET SIDE OF THE WALL, WITH LOUIS

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

EXT. THE REAR OF THE WAGON, WITH LOUIS

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

SOUND: An approaching car.

EXT. PASSING CAR

A civilian--not the ubiquitous cop.

EXT. LOUIS

He turns his pockets out, spilling change everywhere. Nothing. Suddenly a little light goes on in his eyes. He goes to the driver's side of the car and looks in at:

INT. IGNITION, LOUIS'S POV

The keys are in the switch.

EXT. LOUIS

He snatches the keys and returns to the back of the wagon. He uses the key to open the doorgate. He puts GAGE'S body in gently, then the duffle bag. He closes the doorgate and returns to the front of the car. He opens the driver's door and freezes.

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

INT. A JETWAY AT LOGAN INTERNATIONAL

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

PASCOW

There's just time. If you run.

Without looking at PASCOW, RACHEL takes off her shoes and runs.

INT. THE CONCOURSE, WITH RACHEL

She's sprinting down the concourse--look out, Joanie Benoit!

INT. GATE 27, WITH FEMALE GATE AGENT AND PASCOW

The FEMALE GATE AGENT is starting to close the jetway door.

PASCOW

Don't do that, babe.

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

INT./EXT. THE JET PLANE, THROUGH THE GATE WINDOWS

It is just starting to swing ponderously away from the jetway.

INT. RACHEL AND FEMALE GATE AGENT (PASCOW IS GONE)

RACHEL

Make it come back!

FEMALE GATE AGENT

I can't--

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

EXT. THE JETWAY NIGHT

RACHEL stands all alone at the end of it.

AMPLIFIED SOUNDS OF JET ENGINES.

RACHEL (screams)

COME BACK, MOTHERFUCKER!!

EXT. THE JET, RACHEL'S POV

It starts to swing back to pick her up.

EXT. RACHEL

PASCOW appears behind her and puts a hand on her shoulder.

PASCOW

You're doing just fine.

EXT. JUD CRANDALL, ON HIS PORCH

He's fast asleep with the tinny sound of Graham Parker coming out of his Walkman 'phones.

SOUND: An approaching car.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE

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

EXT. THE PATH TO THE PET SEMATARY, LOUIS'S POV

Off it goes, glimmering in the dark.

EXT. LOUIS

He holds the corpse of his little boy to him.

LOUIS

Please God--let this work.

He sets off.

EXT. JUD, ON HIS PORCH

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

EXT. OUTSIDE THE ARCH TO THE PET SEMATARY, WITH LOUIS

Louis passes under like a ghost.

EXT. THE PET SEMATARY, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS is crying. He crosses to the deadfall.

LOUIS

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

He begins to mount the deadfall.

EXT. LOUIS, A NEW ANGLE

He reaches the top. And woven into the deadfall, behind him,
facing the Pet Sematary, is that snarling face.

LOUIS descends the other side.

EXT. THE FOOT OF THE DEDFALL, WOODS SIDE

LOUIS reaches the bottom and looks at:

EXT. THE WOODS, LOUIS'S POV

The path winds onward through those gigantic trees--it glows
slightly.

EXT. LOUIS, MOVING UP THE PATH

EXT. LOUIS, AT THE EDGE OF LITTLE GOD SWAMP

That phosphorescent glow is a lot more pronounced. SOUNDS of CRICKETS and FROGS. The water is mucky and still. Hummocks stick up like knobs on the back of a creature best not seen. Fog drifts through the dead trees. LOUIS doesn't want to go in there. Smart man. I wouldn't either.

But he does.

INT. THE HERTZ DESK, AT BIA WITH RACHEL AND CLERK--AND PASCOW

PASCOW is lounging back against the rack of folders--and getting some of them bloody.

HERTZ CLERK

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

PASCOW

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

The CLERK starts looking through her papers.

CLERK

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

RACHEL

I'll take it.

EXT. LOUIS, IN LITTLE GOD SWAMP

He comes walking toward THE CAMERA with GAGE in his arms and the duffle bag over his shoulder. Mist swirls around him. The landscape is weird, surreal. CRICKET SOUNDS, AMPLIFIED. In fact there are a lot of swampy, marshy SOUNDS--too many. It sounds almost prehistoric.

SOUND: HARSH, SCREAMING LAUGHTER

LOUIS stops. He looks slowly around at:

EXT. MIST-FACE, LOUIS'S POV

A demonic face takes shape in the mist and FLOATS SLOWLY TOWARD THE CAMERA. It runs out a tongue that's about nine feet long.

Its eyes blow out. Blood and thick, gooey stuff runs from the sockets.

EXT. LOUIS

He closes his eyes. After a moment he opens them.

EXT. LITTLE GOD SWAMP, LOUIS'S POV

Nothing there.

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS

See? Just imagination. Just--

EXT. LOUIS'S FEET

We can barely see them because they are thick in mist, but he is standing on a couple of low, marshy tussocks. Suddenly a thick tentacle slimes its way out of the standing water and slithers around his ankle.

EXT. LOUIS, LOOKING DOWN

LOUIS

Nothing...there.

He turns around and begins to walk again.

EXT. LOUIS'S FEET

The tentacle falls away.

EXT. LOUIS, IN LITTLE GOD SWAMP

MYRIAD SOUNDS, none of them pleasant--laughter, gobbling howls, screams. Sounds like the swamp has been invaded by a pack of escaped lunatics. LOUIS continues on regardless.

EXT. WOODS

LOUIS comes into the frame. He's obviously tiring now, but he keeps moving along.

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

SOUND: A falling tree.

EXT. WOODS, LOUIS'S POV

Those SOUNDS keep getting closer and closer. Another tree falls--we see this one. And now we see a SHAPE--just a SHAPE.

EXT. LOUIS

He's scared almost to death. His face turns up...up...up.

EXT. THE WOODS--AND THE SHAPE, LOUIS'S POV

It is vaguely manlike: perhaps sixty feet tall, perhaps eighty. We don't see it very well, nor do we have to--I'm not even sure it's flesh and blood. But there is a clear suggestion of a head. Now it turns and looks down...looks at LOUIS CREED. We see great yellow eyes the size of lighthouse lamps.

It makes a huge GRUNTING SOUND...and then walks on.

EXT. LOUIS

The SOUND OF FOOTFALLS is slowly diminishing.

LOUIS

It was the Wendigo. Dear God, I think the Wendigo just passed within sixty feet of me.

Slowly he begins to walk again.

EXT. LOUIS, A NEW ANGLE

In the extreme f.g. is a tree which has just fallen--it is no small tree, either, but a great big old fir.

LOUIS approaches it. Stops. Looks at the tree. Looks down at:

EXT. THE FOREST FLOOR, LOUIS'S POV

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

EXT. LOUIS

Looks up again. His face is set and hard.

LOUIS

It doesn't matter. Come on, Gage.

He starts to walk again.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND

SOUND: The wind, lonesome and keening.

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

SOUND: Tortured breathing. Panting.

LOUIS toils his way into view, carrying his bundle. He reaches the top. He makes his way slowly into the burying ground. He stumbles over a rock. Falls down. Slowly gathers his things together and gets up again. He goes a little further and then stops and looks at:

EXT. A BROKEN CAIRN AND THE GRAVE BENEATH, LOUIS'S POV

We can also see the shredded remains of a green garbage bag.

EXT. LOUIS

He slowly kneels down. He puts the canvas tarp to one side and slowly takes the pick and shovel from the duffle bag. By now he is clearly a man approaching total exhaustion.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD, WITH AN ARIES K

It tracks past THE CAMERA.

INT. THE ARIES K WITH RACHEL AND PASCOW

Both of them look tense. RACHEL is bolt upright behind the wheel. Suddenly, BANG! as one of the tires blow.

EXT. THE ARIES K

It goes skidding and slueing across the road, the rear tire half off the rim. IT climbs the curb and hits a tree.

INT. RACHEL

She lurches forward, but she's wearing her seat-belt--good girl! She unbuckles it and gets out.

EXT. RACHEL

She looks at the car, which now has quite a bit more wrong with it than just a scratch up the side.

RACHEL slumps, near tears. LOUIS isn't the only one who's been through a lot tonight.

RACHEL

Now what?

PASCOW comes from around the tree as RACHEL walks to the road, looking for cars, or something. He looks urgent and upset.

PASCOW

It's trying to stop you. Do you hear me? It's trying to stop you.

RACHEL looks around uncertainly...a little afraid. As she scans the scene she looks at--and through--PASCOW.

RACHEL

Is anyone there?

After a moment of silence she turns back to the road. Lights appear and brighten as a car approaches. RACHEL steps to the shoulder and after a moment she sticks out her thumb, surely for the first time in her life.

The car sweeps by her without slowing.

EXT. GAGE'S CAIRN, CU

LOUIS'S hands enter the shot and put a few more rocks on it. THE CAMERA PULLS BACK and we see him surveying his work. Beside him is the canvas tarp, now open and empty.

Absently, LOUIS stuffs the tarp into the duffle bag (where his tools have also been replaced) and stands up with a wince. One hand goes to his lower back. He looks down at the cairn.

LOUIS

Come back to me, Gage. Come back to us.

He turns away toward the stairs.

EXT. RACHEL, ON ROUTE 9

She's walking down the shoulder with her high heels in one hand. Lights. An approaching car. She turns, thumb out. The car blasts by.

RACHEL (shouts)

MAY THE SEWERS OF RANGOON BACK UP
IN YOUR BEDROOM, ASSHOLE!

She starts walking again.

EXT. THE FIELD BESIDE LOUIS'S HOUSE

LOUIS is moving down the path. As he passes the tire swing he pushes it, setting it in motion.

INT. THE GARAGE

LOUIS slings the duffle bag wearily to one side and goes into the kitchen. CHURCH is under the table but LOUIS Doesn't see him.

INT. THE UPSTAIRS HALL

SOUND of LOUIS slowly plodding up the stairs. He comes into view, dirty and exhausted, his hair hanging in his face. He walks down the hall toward the master bedroom.

INT. THE BEDROOM

The clock on the bedtable reads 2:17 A.M. LOUIS falls face-first on the immaculate bedspread and lies still.

In this shot we should note the closet door is standing open.

EXT. THE MICMAC BURYING GROUND, FEATURING GAGE'S CAIRN

THE CAMERA MOVES IN SLOWLY. Holds. Nothing for a beat. Then:

A small white hand slams up through the rocks, hopefully scaring the living shit out of us.

CAMERA MOVES CLOSER as the hand begins to feel around. It takes one of the rocks and pushes it aside. Another. Another. Another.

The SOUNDS are not encouraging. It is GRUNTING and GROWLING. There is nothing human here.

Rocks begin to tumble as GAGE starts to come out of his grave.

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM, WITH LOUIS

Fast asleep on the coverlet in his dirty jeans and black sweater.

EXT. RACHEL

My babe is still takin' a hike. But here comes another vehicle.

EXT. THE DEADFALL IN THE PET SEMATARY

THE CAMERA MOVES IN on that snarling face.

SOUNDS: GAGE coming. Dead dry breath. Low snarling noises.

Now we see small feet in dirty black shoes walking down the deadfall.

EXT. RACHEL

Suddenly, as the lights appear, she does a Claudette Colbert, pulling her skirt up and exhibiting a very lovely leg.

Lights--it's an Orinco truck, naturally--spotlight her. The truck stops.

EXT. RACHEL AND THE TRUCK

The driver leans over and opens the door.

DRIVER

Hop in, baby.

RACHEL

Thank you.

She does.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN, WITH CHURCH

He's under the kitchen table, green eyes gleaming. I think he loves dead, hates living.

SOUND: The doorlatch. CHURCH MIAOWS.

INT. THE KITCHEN, A NEW (LOW) ANGLE

GAGE'S shoes grit slowly across the linoleum, leaving dirty tracks. CHURCH turns to watch GAGE'S passage, and then follows.

INT. THE BEDROOM, WITH LOUIS

CAMERA HOLDS ON LOUIS as those gritting footsteps approach. Then we pan to the closet. On the floor is LOUIS'S little black bag. We hold on this as the footfalls near. A small white hand enters the frame and pulls the doctor-bag out of the closet. Now another hand enters the frame and opens the bag. The hands search around inside and bring out a scalpel.

They hold it up. The GAGE-THING makes a contented SOUND.

EXT. THE ORINCO TRUCK, ON ROUTE 9 NIGHT

It sweeps past THE CAMERA

INT. THE CAB, WITH RACHEL AND DRIVER

RACHEL

Can't you go any faster?

TRUCKER

Lady, I got nine points on my license right now.

RACHEL

I understand. It's just that--

She looks at him, pleading. The TRUCKER speeds up.

RACHEL

Thank you. If you only understood how important this is--

TRUCKER

That's all right, babe. Only if we get stopped, next time I'll be the one hitchin' and you can give me a ride.

EXT. JUD, ON HIS PORCH

More deeply asleep than ever. Suddenly, from inside, comes the sound of Quiet Riot singing/screaming "Bang Your Head." It's the stereo, and boy, is it cranked.

JUD straightens up so suddenly he almost falls off his chair. His hands go first to his earphones--his first thought on waking is that it's coming from there--and then he hurries inside.

CAMERA PANS DOWN to small muddy tracks on the porch floor.

INT. THE LIVING ROOM, WITH JUD

He hurries in, turns on the light, and rushes across to his stereo system, which is state-of-the-art digital--it looks like a flying saucer among the more traditional furnishings of the room. He shuts it off and looks around, frowning.

SOUND: Todd Rundgren, singing "Bang on the Drum All Day" at the top of his voice.

JUD'S head snaps toward the SOUND.

INT. A SONY RADIO, CU

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK as JUD hurries across the kitchen to the counter, where the radio is. He turns it off, looking around, more bewildered than ever.

JUD (sharply)
Who's here?

He walks toward the door which gives on the hall.

INT. THE HALL, WITH JUD

It's dimly lit by light-spill from the living room and kitchen.

JUD
Come on, stop playing games!

SOUND: Molly Hatchet, "Flirtin' with Disaster," being played top end, from upstairs.

JUD hurries up. Let me suggest that there is a certain psychology at work here--for the moment he's more concerned about waking the neighborhood with all this high-decible rock and roll than with the prowler...and he would certainly know who--or what--that prowler was, if he had time to think.

INT. JUD'S BEDROOM

He enters and turns on the light. We see a portable phonograph with the record, turning. JUD rushes over and turns it off.

He looks around, and we see by his face that he knows.

JUD
Gage? (Pause) Are you the one
playing games?

He goes to the window and looks out at:

INT./EXT. THE CREED HOUSE, WITH THE STATION WAGON, JUD'S POV

INT. THE BEDROOM, WITH JUD

He turns slowly and walks toward the bed.

JUD
Gage? Come on out.

He reaches in his pocket and brings out a pocket-knife. He unfolds the blade.

JUD

I want to show you something.

SOUND: Miaow!

INT. THE DOORWAY, WITH CHURCH, JUD'S POV

INT. JUD, BY THE BED

JUD (to the cat)
How did you--?!

INT. JUD'S FEET

A small hand holding a scalpel shoots out from beneath the skirt of the coverlet and slashes JUD'S calf,

INT. JUD

He screams with pain and staggers backward.

INT. JUD'S FEET

The other hand shoots out. GAGE grabs one of JUD'S ankles and pulls.

INT. JUD

With a startled yell, he falls.

INT. JUD AND GAGE

This one's gotta be pretty rough. George will know what to do. We finally see GAGE, but it should be clear to us that it's not really GAGE at all. Some daemonic presence is riding inside the mouldering, disfigured shell of GAGE.

There is a struggle. JUD is repeatedly slashed with the scalpel. Perhaps he gets GAGE a time or two with the pocketknife.

GAGE screams and gibbers--nothing intelligible here; only sounds.

JUD expires.

GAGE sits on top of him...and then bites into his throat.

EXT. ROUTE 9, BETWEEN THE CRANDALL AND CREED HOUSES

Headlights. RACHEL'S truck has arrived. It pulls up.

RACHEL opens the passenger door, which is on JUD'S side.

EXT. ANGLE ON THE CAB

We can see PASCOW sitting in the passenger seat where RACHEL just was.

RACHEL

Thank you so much.

TRUCKER

I didn't get a ticket, so you're welcome, lady.

(And, more seriously)

Whatever your problems are, I hope they work out.

PASCOW

It's the end of the line for me, too--I'm not allowed any further.

RACHEL (to the trucker)

I'm sure things will be fine.

PASCOW

I'm not.

She closes the door and steps down.

The truck starts off with a HISS OF RELEASED AIRBRAKES. As it pulls past her, RACHEL starts across the road, when:

GAGE (soft voice)

Mummy!

She stops, startled. Her face wears a "did I hear that?" expression. She looks back toward JUD'S house.

GAGE (soft voice)

Mummy!

RACHEL walks halfway up JUD'S paved walk and looks at:

EXT. JUD'S HOUSE, RACHEL'S POV

The one place in the whole world we do not want RACHEL to go.

EXT. RACHEL

She goes. Up the steps to the porch. All through this she's been travelling with two bags: her handbag and a light tote with her initials on it. Now she sets the tote down on the top step and opens the porch door.

She looks very uncertain. This is the wee hours of the morning, and someone else's house. But...that voice...

GAGE (voice)

Mummy, I need you!

RACHEL looks stunned--rocked. She steps onto the porch.

RACHEL

Who--

The door to the house swings open. After a moment CHURCH comes into the doorway and sits down.

CHURCH

Miaow!

RACHEL

Church!

GAGE (voice)

Mummy, I need you!

She crosses to the open door.

RACHEL

Gage? Gage?

No answer. RACHEL steps in.

EXT. THE CREED HOUSE MORNING

INT. THE CREED BEDROOM, WITH LOUIS

He's restless, having a very bad dream, from the look. He rolls back and forth. Closer and closer to the edge. Finally, with a wild yell, he goes over onto the floor.

INT. LOUIS, ON THE FLOOR

He comes awake. Sits up. Ouch! He's aches from top to bottom and side to side...but his back is worst. His hands go to it.

LOUIS

Jesus!

He starts to get up very slowly, and this his eyes fix on:

INT. GAGE'S TRACKS ON THE BEDROOM FLOOR, LOUIS'S POV

They enter the house, go to the closet, then leave again.

INT. LOUIS

LOUIS
Gage--?

He scrambles for the closet, his aches and pains forgotten. He stares in wildly.

INT. THE DOCTOR-BAG

It's open.

INT. LOUIS

He pulls the doctor-bag out. His original hope is now tempered with the first signs of fear. He begins to go through the doctor-bag. Suddenly he brings out a case and opens it. The case is empty, but the indented shape is clear. There was a scalpel in this case...but not anymore.

LOUIS
Oh my God. (Pause) Gage!

INT. THE HALL, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS
Gage!

LOUIS stands there, tensely listening, for a moment or two, but there's only silence. He rushes down the hallway and opens the door to GAGE'S room.

INT. GAGE'S ROOM, LOUIS'S POV

Empty.

INT. LOUIS, ON THE STAIRS

He goes downstairs, yelling GAGE'S name.

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS

Nothing. The phone RINGS. LOUIS almost jumps out of his skin reaching for it.

LOUIS
Hello!

IRWIN (voice)

Hello, Louis--it's Irwin.
I just wanted to be sure Rachel
got back all right.

As IRWIN says this, LOUIS'S eyes fix upon something.

INT. THE FLOOR, WITH TWO SETS OF GAGE-TRACKS, LOUIS'S POV

One set comes in from the shed-garage and heads for the parlor and upstairs. The other comes out of the parlor and crosses to the kitchen door giving directly on the outside.

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS

In his eyes we suddenly see that he understands everything...or almost everything.

IRWIN (voice)
Louis...are you there?

LOUIS (slowly)
Yes--I'm here.

IRWIN (voice)
Did she get there all right?

LOUIS
Yes, she's fine.

IRWIN (voice)
Well, put her on at that end and
I'll put Ellie on at this one.
Ellie's very worried about her
mother. (Pause) She's almost
in hysterics.

LOUIS
She...Rachel's asleep.

IRWIN (an edge in his voice now)
Then I suggest you wake her up.
Ellie...I think she had a dream that
her mother was dead.

LOUIS
I'll call you right back.

IRWIN (voice)
Louis--!

But LOUIS, whose last few responses have been almost trancelike,

hangs up. He looks at the tracks, then goes into the parlor.

INT. THE CRANDALL LIVING ROOM, WITH THE PHONE

Tiny bloody hands lift it off the cradle. A tiny bloody finger dials.

INT. THE CREED KITCHEN

The phone starts to ring. After two or three ringy-dingys, LOUIS, looking extremely upset, comes out of the parlor and picks it up.

LOUIS

Irwin, you'll just have to--

GAGE (voice)

I'm at Jud's, daddy. Will you come over and play with me?

LOUIS is dumbfounded...slack-mouthed with terror.

LOUIS (a bare whisper)

Gage?

GAGE (voice)

Mommy already came. We played, daddy. First I played with Jud and then mommy came and I played with mommy. We had an awful good time. Now I want to play with you.

GAGE begins to giggle...a really awful sound.

LOUIS

What did you do? What did you--

CLICK! The GAGE-THING hangs up, still giggling.

INT. THE CREED BED, CU

He puts the doctor-bag down on the bed and roots through it. He comes up with three syringes, still wrapped in paper, and puts them aside. Then he roots around some more and comes up with several ampoules. He holds one up for inspection and we can read the word MORPHINE on it very clearly.

INT. THE BEDROOM, WITH LOUIS

He carries the syringes and ampoules of morphine over to the window. His hair has gone partially white.

He fills all three syringes with morphine (using two ampoules for each syringe--i.e., enough to kill a polar bear) and puts them in the left breast pocket of his shirt. He puts the spare ampoules in the right breast pocket of his shirt.

LOUIS is slowly going insane. What remains of his rationality is like a rapidly fraying rope.

LOUIS

What you buy is what you own, and sooner or later what you own comes home to you. Wasn't that what you said, Jud? Wasn't that pretty much it?

He leaves the room.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR OF THE CREED HOUSE

LOUIS comes out the door. In one hand he's got a raw pork chop. In the other he is carrying a pair of Playtex rubber gloves. He walks to the soft shoulder and waits for an Orinco truck to pass. Then he crosses.

EXT. THE CRANDALL WALK, WITH LOUIS

He walks most of the way to the house, then stops.

EXT. CHURCH, LOUIS'S POV

He gets up, humping his back warily.

EXT. LOUIS

LOUIS

Hi, Church. Want some grub?

He tosses the pork chop onto the grass.

EXT. CHURCH

He hurries down the steps, goes to the chop, sniffs it, and starts to chow up. He looks up at:

EXT. LOUIS

He is pulling on the rubber gloves.

LOUIS

Don't mind me. Eat it while you can.
Eat all you want.

EXT. CHURCH

He starts worrying the chop again. Smack-smack-smack.

EXT. ANGLE ON LOUIS AND CHURCH

LOUIS

Eat all you can...all you want...
that's right...today's Thanksgiving
day for cats, but only if they came
back from the dead...

He finishes with the gloves, gets one of the loaded syringes out of his breast pocket, holds it up, squirts a drop out of the tip, then moves toward CHURCH.

CHURCH looks up. LOUIS stops moving. CHURCH starts eating again, and LOUIS starts moving again as soon as he does. All the time he talks to the cat in that soothing voice. He bends down...and grabs him.

CHURCH begins to squall and fight. LOUIS holds onto him. He tries to get the syringe into the cat and CHURCH almost gets away.

LOUIS

No, you don't!

EXT. CHURCH, CU

The syringe plunges into his haunch.

EXT. CHURCH AND LOUIS

The needle is still dangling out of CHURCH'S haunch. The cat looks dazed. It tries to walk and falls over on its side. It tries to get up...and then falls over again.

LOUIS

Go on. Lie down. Play dead. Be dead.

He walks to the porch steps and picks up the tote-bag.

EXT. THE TOTE-BAG, LOUIS'S POV

Any doubt he might have allowed himself the luxury of having is erased by the initials--R.C., same as the cola.

EXT. LOUIS

Twang! One of the few remaining strands of sanity has now parted. He looks back at:

INT. CHURCH, ON THE PATH, LOUIS'S POV

Dead.

EXT. LOUIS

He climbs the steps and goes onto the porch.

EXT. LOUIS, ON THE PORCH

He strips off the rubber gloves. He tosses them onto the table beside JUD'S beer-cans as he goes inside.

INT. THE FOYER OF THE CRANDALL HOME, WITH LOUIS

It's dark in here, and spooky.

LOUIS

Rachel? (Pause) Jud? (Longer pause)
Gage?

No answer. He looks down and sees:

INT. A SHOE, LOUIS'S POV

One of RACHEL'S shoes. It lies by the foot of the stairs.

INT. LOUIS

He goes over and picks up the shoe. It's a three-quarter heel, and it's pretty badly scuffed. RACHEL, after all, did some pretty hard travelling to get here.

There's a spot of blood on it.

SOUND: A low giggle.

LOUIS looks up:

INT. THE STAIRS, LOUIS'S POV

Mighty dark. Mighty shadowy.

SOUND: Another giggle.

INT. LOUIS, AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS

LOUIS

Gage?

INT. THE STAIRS

GAGE (voice)

Let's play, daddy! Let's play hide
and go seek!

INT. LOUIS

He takes one of the loaded syringes from his pocket.

LOUIS

All right, Gage...let's.

He begins to climb the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS arrives on the landing. We begin the nerve-wracking business of checking rooms. First, the bathroom...and the shower curtain is of course pulled. LOUIS yanks it back. Nothing.

He checks the linen closet. Nothing. Goes back to the hall. Looks down it. He walks slowly along it. He checks one room. It's a guest room. Shadowy and empty.

Down the hall. A closet door. A bag falls off the top shelf, and a bunch of ceramics inside it SHATTER LOUDLY. LOUIS flinches back.

Down the hall. Now he's at JUD'S room. He goes in.

INT. JUD'S ROOM, WITH LOUIS

He checks the closet. No go. He steps around the bed and sees:

INT. THE FLOOR, LOUIS'S POV

A bloodstain.

INT. LOUIS

He gets down on his hands and knees and examines the bloodstain. He sees the skirt on the bedspread. He lifts it. He is nose to nose with JUD, who is dead with his eyes open, an expression of incredible horror on his face.

The DOOR SLAMS.

LOUIS bolts to his feet as GIGGLES fade down the hall.

Slowly, he kneels down and speaks to the skirt of the spread, which has mercifully fallen back into place.

LOUIS

I'm sorry, Jud. I'm so sorry. I'm--

There's a SQUEAKING, SQUEALING SOUND.

LOUIS turns around. He gets up again. He starts for the door. Then he turns back and speaks to JUD again.

LOUIS

I'm going to set things back in order. I...I know just what to do.

He goes out.

INT. THE HALLWAY, WITH LOUIS

He takes one of the two remaining loaded syringes from his breast pocket.

LOUIS

Gage?

Another SQUEAKING SOUND. And another GIGGLE.

LOUIS starts slowly forward. He gets about halfway down the hall--and our nerves are tuned to the breaking point--when there is a SQUEALING CREAK and a GRATING THUMP from overhead.

INT. CEILING TRAPDOOR

This happens fast. The trap--which presumably gives on the attic with a set of folding stairs--rises, and RACHEL'S body plunges down through and then hangs, swinging: she has been bound around the armpits and as become a grotesque parody of MISSY DANDRIDGE.

Half her face is gone. Eaten.

INT. LOUIS

He SCREAMS and backs against the wall. Twang! The last silver thread parts.

INT. THE TRAPDOOR, WITH GAGE

He leaps down, crashes on the floor, and then picks himself up. He is waving the scalpel.

GAGE (screeching)

Allee-allee-in-free! allee-allee-in-free! Allee-allee-in-free!

INT. LOUIS AND GAGE

I won't choreograph all the moves, but GAGE slashes his stunned father up pretty badly with the scalpel. He's screeching the whole time. LOUIS finally begins to react. He grapples with the little critter, and tries to get the syringe into him. No good. It's batted out of his hand just before he can do it. It breaks.

LOUIS and GAGE fall to the floor. LOUIS gets the other syringe out of his pocket, but it's also knocked out of his hand. Only consolation is this one isn't broken. It rolls off along the floor. LOUIS finally manages to get it again as the struggle goes on, and plunges it into GAGE'S neck.

GAGE

No fair! NO FAIR!

He gets to his feet, clawing for the needle lolling out of his neck. He's lost all interest in his father. He goes staggering away. He's slowing down. He goes to his knees...and falls on his face.

LOUIS watches this... and then his vacant, half-catatonic gaze goes to:

INT. RACHEL, LOUIS'S POV

She swings slowly back and forth.

EXT. THE BACK YARD OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE

Time has passed. It's late afternoon. LOUIS comes out with a sheet-wrapped form in his arms. RACHEL, of course.

He sets the body down and goes back inside.

INT. THE KITCHEN, WITH LOUIS

He's splashing around a can of coal-oil. When he's got the room wetted down to his satisfaction, he goes to the door, lights a match, and tosses it.

Flame runs across the floor. The fire is slow at first, but then it begins to gain rapidly.

LOUIS goes out.

EXT. THE BACK LAWN, WITH LOUIS

He picks up the sheet-wrapped form of his wife and walks around

the side of the house as flames shoot through the kitchen windows.

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE, FROM ACROSS THE ROAD

LOUIS appears with his shrouded burden and approaches the road.

PAGE 134 MISSING FROM HARD COPY

EXT. THE SMOULDERING RUINS OF THE CRANDALL HOUSE NIGHT

CAMERA HOLDS FOR A MOMENT, then rises and looks toward the CREED house. There's one light on--in the kitchen.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Three...four...five...

INT. THE KITCHEN TABLE, WITH LOUIS

LOUIS is filthy, covered with dried blood. He is playing at Patience. He holds a handful of cards.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Six...seven...

SOUND: The back door opens.

SOUND: Crickets from outside. Ree-ree-ree...

SOUND: Gritting footsteps.

LOUIS looks up. He doesn't look behind, at what's coming. He looks straight ahead.

LOUIS

And what you own always comes home
to you.

He flips up one card.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Eight...

INT. THE CARD

It's the Bitch, the Queen of Spades, she who supposedly poisoned the laddies in the Tower.

LOUIS'S hand falls upon it.

TOLLING CONTINUES: Nine...ten...

INT. LOUIS, CU

A hand clotted with grave-dirt falls on his shoulder. A woman's hand.

TOLLING CONCLUDES: Eleven...twelve...

RACHEL (voice)
Darling.

FADE OUT ON THE SOUND OF CRICKETS.