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## Hunter: redneck Hamlet

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*Hunter: Redneck Hamlet*

Ewan Whaley

Honors Thesis

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Honors College

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# HUNTER

Redneck Hamlet

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# Characters:

Hunter McCoy, Jr.- Son to the late Hunter Sr. and nephew/stepson to Cletus HAMLET  
Cletus McCoy- Current Man of the McCoy House CLAUDIUS  
Gladys McCoy- Mother of Hunter Jr. and new wife to Cletus GERTRUDE  
Hunter McCoy Sr.- Recently Deceased Father of Hunter Jr. HAMLET SR  
Preston Cox- Close Friend to Cletus POLONIUS  
Lee Cox- Son of Preston LAERTES  
Olivia Cox- Daughter of Cletus and Girlfriend of Hunter Jr. OPHELIA  
Harrison Weaver- Friend to Hunter HORATIO  
Ryker Smith- Friend to Hunter ROSENCRANTZ  
Gunner Jackson- Friend to Hunter GUILDENSTERN  
Vincent Sims- Close Friend to the McCoys VOLTEMAND  
Clarence Sanders- Close Friend to the McCoys CORNELIUS  
Raymond Stallings- Close Friend to Preston REYNALDO  
Frederick Jennings- Deceased Rival to Hunter Sr. Frequently fought each other FORTINBRAS  
Freddy Jennings- Son to Frederick FORTINBRAS  
Otis Franklin- Drug Dealer OSRIC  
Marshall Knight- Teen Who Lives Near the McCoys MARCELLUS  
Billy Clements- Teen Who Lives Near the McCoys BERNARDO  
Forrest McElhaney- Teen Who Lives Near the McCoys FRANCISCO  
Actors- Jedediah (Main Character of Cowboy show)  
Callum Rogers- Teen Who Lives Near the McCoys  
Gentleman  
Priest

Setting: Fort Payne, Alabama

# Costumes

Hunter McCoy Jr.- Jeans, boots, a red and black flannel, and a white t-shirt that becomes black after the end of Act 3

Cletus McCoy- Green and Brown Camo

Gladys McCoy- Jeans, sandals, and a brown shirt

Hunter McCoy Sr.- Camo dyed all yellow

Preston Cox- Jeans, sneakers, and a yellow and white button down

Lee Cox- Jeans, boots, and a green and white flannel that becomes green and black after Olivia's death

Olivia Cox- Comfy boots, white jean shorts, and a pink floral blouse

Harrison Weaver- Sandals, jeans, and a gray t-shirt

Ryker Smith- Jeans, sneakers, and a yellow hoodie

Gunner Jackson- Jeans, sneakers, and a yellow hoodie

Vincent Sims- Brown work pants, boots, blue work shirt

Clarence Sanders- Boots, brown work pants, red shirt, blue jacket

Raymond Stallings- Boots, blue jeans, yellow shirt, black jacket

Frederick Jennings- N/A

Freddy Jennings- Jeans, boots, and a red and yellow flannel

Otis Franklin- Boots, Jeans, and a Black Hoodie

Marshall Knight- Boots, Jeans, White Shirt, and a Yellow Jacket

Billy Clements- Boots, Jeans, Yellow Shirt, and a White Jacket

Forrest McElhaney- Boots, Jeans, and an Orange Work Shirt

Jedediah - Cowboy Outfit

Callum Rogers- Boots, Jeans, Orange shirt, Green Jacket

Gentleman

Priest

## ACT I

### SCENE I. Fort Payne. Near the woods

*FORREST hanging out outside, Billy enters the space.*

**BILLY**

Who's there?

**FORREST**

Don't worry now man it's jus' me Forrest

**BILLY**

Jesus man... scurd me

**FORREST**

Sorry

**BILLY**

Aight

**FORREST**

What're ya doin' out 'ere this late man

**BILLY**

You know me man I'm jus' out 'ere chillin'

**FORREST**

Damn right it's chillin', fuck man it's cold'r than cold out 'ere.

**BILLY**

Well y'ain't gotta jacket

**FORREST**

I was boutta go sleep

**BILLY**

Suit yerself man,

I guess I'll jus' 'ang out out 'ere then, if ya see Callum an' Marshall tell 'em hi

**FORREST**

Speakin'a which I think that's them right there

*Enter CALLUM and MARSHALL*

**CALLUM**

'Ey what's up fuck'rs

**MARSHALL**

'Ow y'all doin' guys?

**FORREST**

I'm getting' shuteye

**MARSHALL**

Aw shit night then man,

What 'bout you Billy

**FORREST**

See y'all tomorr'a

Don't stay up too late

*Exit*

**MARSHALL**

What's up Billy?

**BILLY**

Not much, not much, jus' 'angin' out out 'ere

**CALLUM**

Did y'all 'ear what 'appen'd?

**BILLY**

O' wit Hunter?

**MARSHALL**

I ain't think I 'ave, what ya talkin' 'bout?

**BILLY**

Man shit is crazy

**CALLUM**

Pretty much, e'er

since Hunter's daddy died awhile back

'e been on some crazy shit, rumor says

'e was out smokin' wit Harrison an'

'e saw 'is daddy's ghost floatin' aroun'

an' told Harrison 'e could talk ta it

an' shit, boy is losin' 'is got damn mind.

**MARSHALL**

Man yer full'a shit Callum

**BILLY**

Nah man 'e's

tellin' the truth, Hunter been actin' like



'e belong inna damn 'ospital man.  
Shit is fuckin' wild

**CALLUM**

Feel kinda bad man,  
Hunter used'ta be such a good ass kid.

**BILLY**

I mean shit 'appens,  
it ain't 'elpin' that Harrison jus' sits  
there an'a two'a them jus' smoke their damn  
lives away, I mean jus' think 'bout 'is poor  
momma Gladys man.

**MARSHALL**

Well it's 'is life an' 'e can fuck it up

**BILLY**

'E can do what 'e want, ain't my problem

**MARSHALL**

Jus' think, the rest'a us got futures man

**BILLY**

I'm gettin' my pa's shop I ain't need 'im

**CALLUM**

I jus' wish there was summin we could do

**BILLY**

Well there ain't Callum

**MARSHALL**

Ya should stay outta it man, ain't yer mess

**CALLUM**

I mean there's gotta be summin, someone  
should be able ta 'elp, if Harrison  
ain't gon be any 'elp, maybe we could  
git Ryker an' Gunner ta ask Cletus.

**MARSHALL**

If that's what ya want

**BILLY**

I ain't gon stop ya

**CALLUM**

Them two're friends wit 'im I'm sure they'll 'elp

**MARSHALL**

I jus' can't believe this boy saw'a ghost

**BILLY**

I can, ya know what that meth shit does ta  
ya man, shit killin' 'im from the inside  
out.

**CALLUM**

I get it though, 'e like really really  
lov'd 'is daddy an' fer 'im ta jus' die  
like that? Shit 'urts man.

**MARSHALL**

Still shouldn't smoke meth

**CALLUM**

Ev'rybody gotta diff'rent way'a  
dealin' wit their pain man, imagine if  
yer daddy died right 'ere right now wit no  
warnin'! Shit would 'urt worse than a gunshot  
straight ta the chest man, I can't e'en try  
ta imagine.

**MARSHALL**

If my daddy died right  
'ere an' now I'd jus' be sad an' move on

**CALLUM**

Y'ain't think ya would find some way ta escape  
yer pain? Not e'en through like sex're some  
shit like that? Y'ain't gon' do nothin' at all?

**MARSHALL**

Look Callum I'm jus' tellin' ya like it  
is, that boy could'a done a million  
oth'r thangs that would'a 'elp'd 'im run from  
the pain'a losin' 'is daddy but 'e  
chose ta smoke fuckin' meth'a all things. That  
ain't the kinda shit normal people jus'  
do man 'e's gotta be fuckin' crazy.  
Cletus an' Gladys gotta lotta shit  
ta deal wit' already man they don't need  
some drug addict son.

## **CALLUM**

'Ear me out,  
Hunter's daddy ain't jus' some guy, that man  
was one'a the best men in all'a Fort  
Payne. I mean y'all remember when ole Fred  
Jennings tried ta take the McCoy land from  
'em cause they said that that land belong'd ta  
their fam'ly all 'em years ago, but old  
Mr. McCoy 'ad a fam'ly ta take  
care of so 'im an' Cletus an' Raymond  
plann'd ta take 'im out since 'e said 'e was  
gon' kill anybody that liv'd on that  
land. Mr. McCoy shot that bastard in  
the damn 'ead an' ain't e'en git taken  
away by no damn coppers're nothin'.  
Wit'out ole man Hunter we would'a 'ad  
ta deal wit' a lot more bullshit from them  
asshole Jennings. All'a that is ta say  
that Mr. McCoy was a good man an'  
I understan' why Hunter is so damn  
'urt an' upset 'bout it man. Like 'is pa  
was 'is 'ero an' shit man 'e ain't jus'  
gon' git o'er it like it was nothin'.  
Now I'm not sayin' that usin' drugs ta  
deal wit' all'at pain is 'ealthy're good  
or anythin' like that, all I'm sayin'  
is that 'e's jus' a 'urt kid that needs some  
'elp that 'e really ain't gettin' right now.  
Cletus needs ta send that boy ta rehab  
or at least jus' keep a good watch on 'im.

## **BILLY**

I ain't sayin' that 'e ain't  
allow'd'a be sad 'bout the fact that 'is  
daddy died, I'm sure that shit 'urts like 'ell,  
But there's bett'r shit 'e could do ta 'eal.

## **CALLUM**

I jus' worry 'bout the guy an' I ain't  
sayin' it's the best way ta cope but we  
should at least be prayin' fer 'im. I'll keep  
'im in my pray'rs 'til 'e gits bett'r. I  
jus' wish I was bett'r friends wit' 'im so

I could actually do summin 'bout it.  
Plus I mean most'a us got jobs ta do,  
Hunter ain't 'ad a job since 'e was young  
while most'a us got work we gotta do.  
Rumor 'round town is that Hunter jus' takes  
money from 'is momma an' 'is uncle  
an' 'is ma jus' lets it 'app'n cause she  
so damn worried 'bout 'er son an' don' want  
ta make 'im more mad're sad than 'e is  
already. I know what 'e's doin' is  
real stupid but y'all gotta admit it's  
a real tragedy man, I'm sure 'e'll git  
on bett'r as time goes on but it's sad  
that yet anoth'r person in Fort Payne  
'as gott'n trapp'd in the damn meth cycle.  
This shit jus' keeps 'appenin' 'round 'ere an'  
the government ain't doin' jack're shit  
'bout it but watchin' an' laughin'. Them damn  
city kids jus' think we all hicks that ain't  
goin' nowhere in life but it's jus' bull  
shit man, makes me fuckin' angry an' shit.

**MARSHALL**

Yea but it ain't like we can do nothin'

**CALLUM**

We should.

**BILLY**

If we could.

**CALLUM**

Well one'a these days...

**MARSHALL**

'Ere's the thing man, all'a that government  
shit's rigg'd anyways, no matt'r what we  
do 'ere we can't change a damn thing, all the  
votes don't mean shit we jus' gotta make do.

**BILLY**

Yea Callum that's jus' the way it is man.

**CALLUM**

It's so fuckin' frustratin' man, I'm sick  
o' ev'rybody thinkin' we're jus' some

dumbass country folk jus' cause we live out in'a woods an' not in some big city like Birmingham'r Huntsville'r some place like that. I know we're more'n that an' I know that if we liv'd in some big ass place then people would give more'a a shit 'bout people like Hunter an' oth'r addicts.

**MARSHALL**

I mean if ya care that much man why ain't ya go run fer office'r summin? It's 'bout time someone from our town 'ad some damn power fer once. They ain't nev'r fix the fuckin' roads out 'ere or anythin' else that needs ta be done. All the government cares about is our fuckin' money an' our labor, but not 'bout our 'ealth an' lives.

**CALLUM**

See that's what I'm sayin' man, they ain't give a single shit 'bout us country folk, that's why people like Hunter git addict'd in the first fuckin' place. All I'm sayin' is one'a y'all should go talk ta Hunter or 'is mamma or e'en 'is uncle. If the government ain't gon do nothin' ta 'elp wit' the drug problem out 'ere then somebody gotta step up an' do it.

**MARSHALL**

Like I said 'fore man, whatev'r ya do man is up ta you, I might 'elp someday

*Exeunt*

## SCENE II. The Living Room of the McCoy Household

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, HUNTER, PRESTON, LEE, VINCENT, and CLARENCE.*

### CLETUS

While yea the death of my broth'r still 'urts,  
an' the memory'a 'im is still 'ere,  
an' we all need'a 'ave our thoughts an' pray'rs,  
we should jus' celebrate that we still live  
an' live all'a our lives ta the fullest.  
Togeth'r we stand e'en wit' our loss.  
An' so I will be marryin' Gladys,  
the form'r wife'a my dear, dead broth'r  
I do this wit' sadness in my 'eart, but  
also am willin' ta 'appily do  
what my broth'r ask'd'a me when 'e pass'd.  
His son Hunter needs 'imself a daddy  
an' I 'ave taken it upon myself  
ta do what needs ta be done fer fam'ly,  
I jus' 'ope I can be as good'a dad.  
Thanks ta y'all fer takin' time ta show up.  
Now back ta more troublin' issues now,  
I worry that now that my broth'r is  
no long'r wit' us that the Jennings will  
find out an' take their chance ta try an' take  
the McCoy land yet again. Wit'out my  
broth'r 'ere ta scare them boys off I think  
they could sneak on out 'ere an' try ta 'arm  
me'r Gladys'r e'en Hunter. That  
ain't summin I wanna let 'appen 'round  
'ere so if any'a y'all see Freddy  
junior'r any oth'r Jennings any  
where near us please lemme know alright y'all?  
We got these lands fair an' square, an' while 'is  
daddy may 'ave died durin' that it's 'is  
fault. In bett'r news, I got some money  
fer y'all two, Vincent an' Clarence, ta go  
pick up some beer an' wine an' whatev'r  
else y'all can find at the grocery store  
so we can throw a lil party in me  
an' Gladys's honor, we'll wait 'till y'all  
git back from the store 'fore we can party.

Oh an' git a cake too, jus' vanilla.  
Do y'all two think ya can do that fer me?

**CLARENCE VINCENT**

Aight Cletus, yea I think we can do it.

**CLETUS**

Drive safe y'all, we'll see y'all two inna bit.

*Exeunt VINCENT and CLARENCE*

Now Lee what was it ya want'd ta talk  
about? Ya said 'fore the ceremony  
that ya 'ad some kinda favor ta ask.  
As a good friend'a yer dad I'm sure I  
can find a way ta 'elp ya out wit what  
e'er it is ya need. An' if I can't  
then I prolly know somebody that can  
figger out'a way ta git ya what ya  
need, so what is it?

**LEE**

Well Mister McCoy,  
as ya know I came back 'ere so I could  
see you an' Gladys git married back 'ome,  
But ya know the drive from Birmingham ta  
Fort Payne is real long an' my truck is'a  
real gas guzzler, so I was wond'rin' if  
I could maybe borrow some gas money?

**CLETUS**

'Ave ya ask'd Preston yet? What did 'e say?

**PRESTON**

Well Cletus I paid fer 'im ta git 'ere,  
an' 'e pays 'is own? rent in the city,  
so we was 'opin' ya could spare some cash.  
'E came 'ere ta see yer weddin' aft'r all.

**CLETUS**

Alright I git what y'all two're sayin',  
'ere's fifteen dollars that should getcha there.  
Now about Hunter, my nephew an' son...

**HUNTER**

[Aside] God dammit this fuck'r's talkin' ta me.

**CLETUS**

Hunter are ya still feelin' sad 'bout pa?

**HUNTER**

I ain't sad uncle I'm much too 'appy.

**GLADYS**

Hunter if yer good then please stop lookin' so sad. An' ya should git yousta callin' Cletus daddy. Ya can't spend the rest'a yer life pretendin' that yer daddy is still 'ere. It's really sad but we all end up in'a ground someday, we gotta cope.

**HUNTER**

Yea mamma o' course I know all'a that.

**GLADYS**

Ya know I'm jus' worried ya won't be fine.

**HUNTER**

Ya don't gotta worry 'bout me mamma, 'ere aft'r we finish 'ere I'll go change inta summin a lil less sad lookin', But none'a the things I been doin' can show y'all 'ow I feel inside. Y'all can't see anythin' inside my 'eart'r up in my brain'r none'a that. Anyone can fake bein' sad'r jus' act sad but this is the real deal. The color'a my clothes is jus' a lil bit'a what I feel but y'all ain't need'a worry 'bout me at all.

**CLETUS**

It is sweet 'ow much ya miss yer daddy, but ya know yer daddy lost 'is daddy, an' our daddy lost 'is daddy as well. An' it's okay ta be sad fer awhile, but if yer mournin' ferever ya won't be able ta jus' move on wit yer life. Yer god damned stubborn, that ain't a man's way. It ain't manly'r what our lord does want, if all ya do is git sad you'll git weak. We all know we'll be six feet und'r. We also know that we go ta Heaven. Why mourn a man that's up in God's kingdom?



Yer ignorin' nature an' the bible.  
Ya jus' need'a accept it an' move on,  
cause ev'ryone will end up losin' some  
body at some point in their life, 'ell we  
lost yer daddy too. But sometimes ya jus'  
gotta grow up an' man up at some point.  
I know it's 'ard not 'avin' yer daddy  
'round 'ere anymore but I promise ta  
do as good'a job as I can ta raise  
ya an' take good care'a you an' yer ma.  
Cause I promis'd yer daddy I would, an'  
if we ain't got nothin' else in this world  
we 'ave our word an' we 'ave our honor.  
Ya should spend more time wit' yer friends, go an'  
do shit outside ya know? Maybe ya should  
take some time away from school ta git yer  
'ead on straight an' learn 'ow ta deal wit loss.  
Yer ma an' I jus want ya ta be fine,  
do ya think ya could do all'a that son?

**GLADYS**

Please do what me an' Cletus want Hunter,  
stay 'ere wit us, take some time off from school.

**HUNTER**

I guess I can stay 'ome fer awhile now.

**CLETUS**

Thank ya Hunter, I think it's fer the best,  
it shows yer love that ya stay 'ere wit' us.  
Let's 'ead out Gladys an' leave 'im alone.  
Hunter stayin' wit' us makes me 'appy,  
let's go outside an' wait fer Clarence an'  
Vincent ta git back wit my beer an' yer  
wine. Hunter feel free ta join ev'ryone  
in the front yard when ya finish changin'.

*Exeunt all but HUNTER*

**HUNTER**

Man sometimes I wish I could melt away.  
Or that the lord ain't make killin' yerself  
summin that would send me straight down ta 'ell!

Life kinda jus' seems borin' an' pointless,  
like I got no reason ta live at all!  
The fuck do I e'en 'ave anymore?  
Dammit! Like a gard'n that keep growin',  
all cover'd in weeds an' mushrooms an' shit,  
I can't believe my life 'as come ta this!  
My daddy's been gone two months so far...  
'e was the best father a man could want.  
So much bett'r than Cletus in all ways,  
like God ta critt'r, my dad is ta 'im.  
In life an' in death 'e lov'd my momma!  
I rememb'r 'ow she'd jus' 'ang on 'im,  
like she couldn't git enough'a the guy,  
like she would nev'r git tired'a 'im  
But look at 'er now! The unloyal bitch!  
It ain't e'en been a whole damn month yet,  
she ain't e'en go ta bury the man  
'fore she jus' married my no good uncle.  
Well 'ell, e'en a squirrel would'a wait'd  
long'r ta move onto'a new partn'r!  
My daddy's broth'r, but 'e's 'bout as close  
ta my pa as I am ta superman!  
The tears on 'er cheeks ain't e'en dry 'fore  
she start'd mackin' on my damn uncle!  
My bastard uncle cucked my dad so fast,  
sleepin' wit' 'is wife weeks aft'r 'e died...  
It ain't good an' it won't nev'r be good.  
Aw shit people're 'ere I bett'r stop...

*Enter CALLUM, MARSHALL, and BILLY*

**CALLUM**

'Ow ya doin' man?

**HUNTER**

O' uh, 'ey there guys,  
Y'all're Billy, Marshall, an' Callum right?

**CALLUM**

Yea I'm Callum, it's been awhile ain't it?

**HUNTER**

Yea I ain't really seen y'all in awhile,  
what y'all doin' 'ere, do y'all need summin'?

**MARSHALL**

Callum was thinkin' -

**HUNTER**

Y'all do know I'm jus' tryna be alone  
right now right? I got a lot on my mind.

**CALLUM**

That's what we're 'ere fer, ta check up on ya

**HUNTER**

I don't need all'at,  
what're y'all actually o'er 'ere fer?  
I ain't a dumbass, people don't jus' show  
up jus' ta show up they always need some  
thin'r some kinda fav'r. So tell me,  
what're y'all really at my house ta do?

**CALLUM**

We were down 'ere ta see the funeral-

**HUNTER**

Yea I git that but why're y'all in 'ere  
now? An' y'all bett'r not jus' lie ta me.

**CALLUM**

Look Hunter it ain't nothin' like all'at

**HUNTER**

Look y'all jus' tell me what ya want so y'all  
can git outta my 'ouse an' I can git  
back ta what I was doin'. An' take some  
o' the food on yer way out my mom bought  
food fer the funeral an' the weddin'.

**CALLUM**

Jus' talk ta us man,

**HUNTER**

Talk ta y'all 'bout what?

**CALLUM**

'Bout what's goin' on man ya don't seem fine

**HUNTER**

Well my fuckin' dad died an' my ma went  
an' married 'is broth'r so yea I'm good.

**CALLUM**

Well 'ow're ya dealin' wit all'a that?

**HUNTER**

Fuck do ya mean

**CALLUM**

Wit' all'a the grief man?

**HUNTER**

I don't git what ya mean

**CALLUM**

Well a lotta shit 'as 'appen'd ta ya  
lately an' I 'eard ya were 'avin' a  
'ard time dealin' wit all'a it. So is  
ev'rythin' good?

**HUNTER**

Oh Jesus what is all'a this e'en 'bout?

**CALLUM**

Well Marshall an' Billy an' I 'eard 'bout  
ya seein' the ghost'a yer daddy the  
oth'r night an' I was jus' checkin' up  
on ya cause that sounds like a lot ta take  
in an' I was wonderin' if ya might  
know why ya saw summin like that, Like that  
don't sound like summin ya jus' start seein'  
outta the blue ya know? An' I was jus'  
gon' see if ya need'd 'elp'r summin  
cause I'm assumin' yer parents 'ave been  
too busy settin' up the weddin' an'  
the funeral an' all'a that. If ya  
need summin' ta do ta keep yer mind off  
ev'rythin' that's been goin' on I can  
ask my boss if we need an' extra 'and  
'round the shop, could e'en be a good job  
fer ya to do aft'r ya graduate.

**HUNTER**

What're ya getting' at?

**MARSHALL**

'E's sayin' 'e wants ta 'elp ya out man.

**HUNTER**

I don't yer 'elp...

**CALLUM**

I ain't sayin' ya need it, I'm jus' gon'  
let ya know that it's alright ta ask fer  
'elp when shit gits rough. I know what it's like,  
I been through some rough times an' I seen some  
real 'eartbreakin' shit in my life an' I  
was jus' gon see if there was anythin'  
ya need'd from us.

**HUNTER**

Is that ev'rythin'?

**CALLUM**

Well I mean whaddya think 'bout what I'm  
sayin' man would ya be willin' ta do  
any'a that stuff?

**HUNTER**

No, not really man,  
I ain't really wanna do anythin'

**MARSHALL BILLY**

Well that settles that

**HUNTER**

Whatev'r, git out

**MARSHALL BILLY**

Come on now Callum

**HUNTER**

Jus' leave me alone

**MARSHALL BILLY**

We're ready ta leave

**HUNTER**

Ya gon' git outta my house now Callum?

**CALLUM**

I ain't done talkin' ta ya yet Hunter...

**HUNTER**

What else do we gotta talk about man

**CALLUM**

I jus' think ya need ta talk ta someone

**HUNTER**

Who? You?

**CALLUM**

If it 'elps

**HUNTER**

Well I mean it ain't

**CALLUM**

Tell us what's up.

**HUNTER**

Nothin' is up man, damn

**CALLUM**

Ya expect me ta jus' believe that man?

**HUNTER**

Believe what ya want jus' leave me alone

**CALLUM**

We're jus' tryna 'elp ya out man

**MARSHALL BILLY**

Let's go

**CALLUM**

Nah man not yet

**HUNTER**

Dude can you jus' git out

**CALLUM**

Why won't ya jus' let someone 'elp ya out,  
why're ya stubborn!

**HUNTER**

I ain't stubborn, jus' want alone time

**CALLUM**

Jus' let us 'elp ya

**HUNTER**

Look buddy I'm jus' gon' tell it ta ya  
straight, I don't want'r need yer fuckin' 'elp  
an' I can 'andle my own damn shit. It  
ain't yer bus'ness what I do an' I don'  
know where the 'ell ya 'eard shit 'bout me but

whatev'r ya 'eard ain't true at all. An'  
don't ya dare talk ta my uncle neith'r.  
I don't know who ya think ya are Callum  
but I nev'r wanna see yer ugly  
mug again asshole.

**All**

Alright we'll leave then

**HUNTER**

Jus' go 'ead an' git the 'ell outta 'ere

*Exeunt all but HUNTER*

Shit I think people'r startin' ta learn  
'bout me an' Harrison smokin' an' shit.  
Got fuckin' dammit why can't people jus'  
let me fuckin' be. I'm goin' ta bed.

*Exit*

**SCENE III. A room in Preston's house.**

*Enter LEE and OLIVIA*

**LEE**

Alright sis I pack'd all my shit away  
in my truck, it's 'bout time I make my way  
up ta Birmingham fer weldin' school, ya  
bett'r keep me in'a loop.

**OLIVIA**

I will Lee

**LEE**

O' yea 'bout you an' that lil McCoy boy,  
I think 'e jus' wants inside yer pants sis,  
ya know 'ow all the boys 'round these parts are.  
All'a them 'orny boys jus' tryna 'it  
it an' quit it, ya should watch out fer 'im.

**OLIVIA**

Ya really think so?

**LEE**

Nah sis I know so,  
Be careful 'round that boy 'e is jus'a  
speed addict that ain't goin' anywhere.  
That boy will jus' knock ya up an' leave ya  
I guaran-fuckin'-ty it. I seen it  
plenty'a times wit' the girls 'round these parts.  
Or you'll end up 'avin' ta git married  
jus' so people don't see ya as some whore.  
Ya don' wanna git trapp'd in the cycle  
that all'a us country folk seem ta 'ave.  
I'm tryna go an' git me a real ass  
job that'll 'ave some actual pay an'  
move ta the big city rath'r'n jus'  
wastin' my life away in this hovel.  
An' I think ya should be marryin' rich  
so ya can live in some nice 'ouse someday.  
So if Hunter McCoy says 'e loves ya  
ya should be smart 'nough not ta fall fer it.  
Don't listen ta 'is smooth words'r git lost  
in some teenage girl movie love story.  
This ain't some chick flick this is some real shit.



'E ain't some Prince Charmin' 'ere ta lift ya  
off yer heels an' ont'a the back'a a  
'orse, 'e's a bumpkin through an' through who jus'  
gon' end up on the jus' bust'd paper  
that I'm gon' see in some gas station some  
day. Don't end up like Hunter's momma did  
an' jus' marry the first boy that put'a  
baby in ya. I know ya can do some  
great things someday, I jus' worry 'bout ya.  
Watch out Olivia, keep yerself safe.  
Do not be the object'a this boy's lust,  
an' don' let 'im see ya wit'out yer clothes.  
Ya wanna 'ave a good reputation.  
Reputation is the most important.

### **OLIVIA**

I'll list'n ta yer advice Lee but I  
think yer wrong 'bout 'im, Hunter's a good guy.  
Ya can't tell me what ta do, I'm my own  
woman an' I can make my choices.  
An' y'aint any bett'r eith'r, I know  
'bout all'em hoochies ya brought ta yer room.  
Walls ain't very thick 'tween yer room an' mine.

### **LEE**

Fine then, don't blame me  
ah shit dad's comin' we bett'r 'ush up.

*Enter PRESTON*

Well pa looks like ya git ta give me two  
g'byes 'stead'a one.

### **PRESTON**

What're ya still doin' 'ere son git gone!  
Ya got a lotta stuff in that truck ta  
unpack an' move inta that apartment  
down in Birmhingham. I jus' can't believe  
yer already off ta go git start'd  
on yer career. It really is quite the  
sight ta see, Olivia ya should take  
aft'r yer brother 'ere an' start thinkin'  
'bout findin' you a man ta protect ya.

'Ere Lee I brought ya some spendin' money,  
an' 'ow could ya leave without some advice?  
Do not let anyone know what's on yer  
mind, ya can't trust them city folk like ya  
can trust the kindly folk out 'ere. Ya should  
try an' not act on yer impulses but  
ya should always trust yer gut. If it think  
summin's wrong then summin's probably wrong.  
Ya should be real kind ta the people 'round  
ya but not too kind, folks will abuse that.  
Be careful wit' who yer friends with, try an'  
see who's worth their salt an' who's not worth yer  
time. Ya should try yer best ta not git in  
any fights, but if ya do end up in  
a fight ya bett'r win an' it bett'r  
be fer a good reason, I ain't got the  
kind'a money ta bail ya outta jail.  
Good bye son, an' good luck in'a city.

**LEE**

Alright pa, I'm 'eadin' out now, good bye

**PRESTON**

Drive careful, an' don't git robb'd when yer there

**LEE**

Bye Olivia, remember what I  
told ya an' be careful out there now sis.

**OLIVIA**

Yea yea Lee I git it, I git it, I'll  
keep an' eye out but no promises...

**LEE**

Bye

*Exit*

**PRESTON**

What did yer broth'r say ta ya sweetie?

**OLIVIA**

If ya gots ta know it is 'bout Hunter

**PRESTON**

Well that makes me glad,  
I swear ta the lord up above 'imself,  
if that boy 'as ya on any kind'a  
drug, e'en weed, I'll kill the little fuck.  
An' if that boy 'as ya bumpin' uglies  
then I ain't know what the 'ell I will do.  
No daughter'a mine will whore 'erself out  
ta 'er 'igh school sweetheart 'fore she's married.  
Now tell me yerself 'ave y'all two 'ad sex?

**OLIVIA**

No daddy! 'E's jus' a really lonely  
soul but makes me 'appy!

**PRESTON**

I jus' worry that 'e's aft'r ya fer  
yer body, Olivia ya got ta  
be careful ya know 'ow boys be actin'.

**OLIVIA**

O' daddy I don' know what I should think!

**PRESTON**

Then I'll tell ya what ta think dear daughter,  
be careful wit' that boy, ya don't want ta  
git yer 'eart brok'n by some kid who jus'  
wants ta use ya fer sex an' then leave ya.  
If 'e does I got a buckshot fer 'im.

**OLIVIA**

Daddy Hunter ain't like that I promise!  
'E's a good guy!

**PRESTON**

Ev'ry boy wants ya ta think they're good guys.

**OLIVIA**

'E said we'll be togeth'r ferev'r!  
An' that I'm the only girl that 'e wants!

**PRESTON**

All teenag'rs 'ave is their words 'oney,  
when a boy's in trouble 'e'll say  
whatev'r the 'ell 'e can think of ta  
try an' save 'is skin an' git away wit'  
what 'e's doin', 'e will make any kind

o' promise ya need ta 'ear ta try an'  
keep ya no matt'r what it takes sweetheart.  
Don't think that an empty lie means true love,  
ya need'a spend less time aroun' that boy.  
Yer lettin' 'im 'ave ev'rythin' way too  
easy, ya gotta make 'im earn all yer  
affection, 'specially cause 'e ain't done  
nothin' ta deserve all'a yer love, at  
least nothin' that I seen myself, Hunter  
is young an' young boys ain't know what ta do  
when it comes ta takin' care'a 'is girl  
an' bein' a good an' strong man. Don't ya  
list'n ta all'a 'is sweet words wit'out  
'im provin' ta ya that 'e deserve ya.  
Don't waste yer time wit' 'orny lil addicts.  
Jus' trust my judgement, ya understan' me?

**OLIVIA**

Okay daddy, I'll try ta do all'at.

*Exeunt*

## SCENE IV. The Woods

*Enter HUNTER, HARRISON, and MARSHALL*

**HUNTER**

It's cold'r'n snowman peck'r out 'ere

**HARRISON**

Yea man I should'a brought'a jacket man

**HUNTER**

What time is it man?

**HARRISON**

Uhh, jus' 'bout midnight

**HUNTER**

Okay good, perfect

**HARRISON**

So why're we out 'ere in'a woods at night? I thought we was gonna be smokin'?

Why we gotta be 'ere?

**HUNTER**

Ev'ry night my daddy would come out 'ere ta piss aft'r 'e finish'd drinkin', 'e'd be 'ere fer hours an' I'm tryna see 'is ghost again, but I need'a be high fer this so pass the pipe

**HARRISON**

'Ere ya go man

**HUNTER**

Thank ya Harrison,  
Ya may think 'e was a bad dad cause 'e was always drinkin' but no, 'e took care o' me an' my momma despite it all. But I won't be doin' the same shit when I become the 'ead'a my family. I'm gon' be a good dad an' a bett'r husband, an' e'en if I smoke some meth ev'ry once in awhile ta relax, I will still take care'a my wife an' my kids an' provide fer my fam'ly, unlike my piece'a shit fuckin' asshole uncle.

City folks always talk down on us when they 'ear 'bout us drinkin' an' what we do in our free time like 'untin' an' fishin'. It's fuckin' bullshit man, all'a it. We do so much fer the rest'a our fuckin' country an' we ain't git no thank yous'r gratitude, they jus' make fun'a us cause they think we're stupid'r unciviliz'd. We can't 'elp where the fuck we were born man. Jus' cause I ain't born in some big city like New York don't mean I ain't worth a damn. It's jus' all'a load'a bullshit, jus' a way fer them ta keep us from movin' up inta some real money.

**HARRISON**

Yea I 'ear ya

*Enter Ghost*

**HUNTER**

Daddy yer back! I knew it, I knew if I came ta yer spot an' open'd up my mind ya would come visit again. Please pa tell me what ya want! Last time I saw ya y'ain't e'en speak ta me. All ya did was float 'round an' look all ghostlike. Speak ta me! I've miss'd ya so damn much, shit is so 'ard 'ere in Fort Payne wit'out yer kindness an' yer love ta protect me. Mothe'rfuck'rs won't jus' leave me the fuck alone! I'm sick an' tir'd'a listenin' ta what people feel like they need'a say ta me. All'a these apologies, condolences, an' people tellin' me what they think is best fer me e'en though you an' Harrison are the only folks who e'er got me. 'Ow did ya git 'ere from 'eav'n? Shouldn't ya be up in God's kingdom right now? Please tell me pa, what're ya doin' out 'ere?

*Ghost beckons HUNTER*

**HARRISON**

Hunter who the 'ell're ya talkin' ta?  
I'm lookin' 'round an' I ain't see yer pa  
anywhere?

**HUNTER**

Don't worry Harrison, maybe 'e's jus'  
showin' 'imself ta me an' no one else.  
I should follow 'im

**HARRISON**

I don't know 'bout that

**HUNTER**

If'e won't talk ta me 'ere I'll follow

**HARRISON**

Follow 'im man

**HUNTER**

Yes, yer right Harrison, I need'a go  
an' follow my 'eart, maybe I can git  
some answ'rs an' 'e can 'elp me find'a  
purpose in life. An' I still ain't fully  
git what the 'ell 'appen'd ta 'im, it's weird.

**HARRISON**

Yea man follow yer 'eart man, drugs 'elp ya  
see what ya need ta see man. Follow yer  
pa an' see what it is 'e needs from ya.  
One time I got real high an' I got ta  
talk ta Jesus while I was lookin' fer  
a snack in'a kitchen at night, shit was  
crazy man. 'E told me ta keep up the  
good work an' look at me now, 'elpin' out  
a good friend'a mine ta open up yer  
mind ta the universe.

**HUNTER**

Thanks Harrison,  
I do not know what I'd do wit'out ya.

**HARRISON**

Prolly git less high

**HUNTER**

Ain't that the damn truth

**HARRISON**

So whatcha gon' do?

**HUNTER**

I think I'll follow,  
E'en if this is the last time I see  
my daddy, I ain't nev'r e'en got  
ta say goodbye. 'E jus' went out huntin'  
an' by the time 'e mad it back 'e was  
dead. Ah shit, there's 'is ghost! It's leavin' now!

*Exeunt Ghost*

**HARRISON**

Wait 'is ghost jus' left? That ain't very cool.

**HUNTER**

Nah man, 'e's takin' me somewhere secret.

**HARRISON**

O' shit that's cool, ya should go follow 'im.

**HUNTER**

Watch my shit while I'm gone, shouldn't take long.

**HARRISON**

Aight man ya got snacks?

**HUNTER**

Yea man in my bag

*Exeunt*



## **SCENE V. Deeper in the Woods**

*Enter GHOST and HUNTER.*

**HUNTER**

Where the fuck're we goin' pa?

**Ghost**

Trust me

**HUNTER**

I will.

**Ghost**

We need'a go somewhere private,  
ya need ta git away yer fam'ly.

**HUNTER**

But why daddy?

**Ghost**

Ya can't trust anyone,  
listen ta me son, they're out ta git ya.

**HUNTER**

I fuckin' knew it.

**Ghost**

Ev'ryone ya know wants ta take ya down

**HUNTER**

Are ya serious?

**Ghost**

I am the ghost'a  
yer daddy, an' I'm 'ere ta tell ya what  
ya need'a know. I can't go up ta the  
gates an' meet Saint Peter an' God until  
ya git revenge fer me Junior. I can't  
visit durin' the day an' I can't come  
ta ya when yer sober, yer brain won't let  
ya see the truth when y'ain't got nothin' in  
yer system. God 'imself told me ta git  
yer attention an' tell ya 'ow ta fix  
what's 'appenin'. Yer an agent'a God  
now, an' I'm 'ere ta tell ya 'ow I died  
an' settle the score. Ya already knew

that summin ain't right 'bout 'ow I died. Are ya ready ta 'ear the truth now?

**HUNTER**

Yes pa

**Ghost**

Do ya promise ta do what I need?

**HUNTER**

Yes!

**Ghost**

Yer gon' be in charge'a gettin' revenge fer a murd'r, I know ya got it son.

**HUNTER**

A murd'r? Somebody murder'd ya pa? Tell me! Tell me who kill'd ya so I can start goin' aft'r 'im.

**Ghost**

Yes I will son,  
I know y'ain't stupid, an' ya can do what needs ta be done, now listen up Hunter. Y'already know that yer uncle told ya an' yer momma that while we were out in the woods 'untin' that I was in'a bush an' ain't tell'im where I was an' when 'e shot at'a deer I end'd up behind it an' took the shot instead. Do ya know what I'm talkin' 'bout?

**HUNTER**

Yea I remember.

**Ghost**

Yea, that sunnuva bitch lied ta ya son! I ain't in no damn bush, I was next ta the bastard an' 'e shot me in'a chest! 'E took my life an' then 'e took my wife. 'E seduc'd 'er! That bitch an' 'er damn lust. Y'already ain't like yer uncle an' now 'e's tryna be yer daddy, that ain't fair ta ya Hunter. Ya know it ain't fair son. Ya want'd 'er ta be a widow then she went an' married yer bastard uncle.

Ya know I lov'd ya an' yer momma more  
than anythin' in'a world, e'en if  
I was an alcoholic, ya know in  
yer 'eart Hunter. Ya know I did what I  
could ta take care'a yer momma an' ya.  
But let me tell ya the full story'a  
what 'appen'd ta me the day that I died.  
We was 'untin' out in this 'ere forest,  
as we did ev'ry Sunday aft'r Church.  
But when we was out 'ere deep in'a woods,  
yer uncle turn'd ta me wit' 'is shotgun,  
'e point'd it right at my 'ead an' said  
that my life an' all'a my land'r 'is  
before 'e put a bullet through my 'ead.  
Boy did 'e blast the brains outta my 'ead.  
'Fore long I 'ad already kick'd the can,  
an' that sunnuva bitch dragg'd my body  
all'a way back ta Fort Payne an' 'e told  
all'a y'all that there'd been an accident.  
'E told y'all that 'e ain't mean ta shoot me  
an' did that lil song an' dance ta make y'all  
think that 'e ain't mean ta do it an' that  
'e can nev'r fergive 'imself an' all  
that oth'r bullshit so that 'e could git  
away wit' the murd'r'a 'is broth'r.  
Ya know ya nev'r lik'd the guy, an' that  
'e ain't someone ya could trust. I know ya  
know 'e needs ta die so I can git in  
'eav'n, I can't go up there 'til Cletus  
dies at yer 'and Hunter. Yer the chosen  
one Hunter, a soldier'a God that 'e  
pick'd out cause yer the only man that 'as  
the power ta kill Cletus an' avenge  
me. If ya kill yer uncle then me an'  
yer momma an' yerself can all go ta  
'eav'n when we're all dead an' then we can  
be a fam'ly again Hunter. Now I  
gotta go, ya know what ya need'a do...

*Exit*

**HUNTER**

O' all'a ya up in 'eav'n an' Earth  
an' e'en 'ell! Dammit! Dammit! Dammit!  
I guess I gotta start gittin ready  
ta do what my daddy needs me ta do  
so my fam'ly can all make it inta  
God's kingdom. I need'a break inta my  
uncle's room an' steal my daddy's ole guns  
so I can shoot my uncle an' send my  
daddy's soul inta 'eav'n an' send my  
uncle's soul straight down ta 'ell! I might need  
ta borrow more money from 'is wallet  
too, I can't talk ta my daddy if I  
ain't got any drug money cause God knows  
Harrison ain't got any money, all  
'e does is go buy the shit. But that's'a  
problem fer lat'r, fer now I need ta  
focus on figgerin' out 'ow I can  
go 'bout what I need ta do ta git rid  
O' Cletus an' take back my cheatin' bitch  
of'a momma, I can't believe it, I  
was right 'bout Cletus.

**HARRISON**

[Within] Hunter! 'Ey Hunter!  
Hunter where the fuck did ya go my man?

**HUNTER**

Harrison! I'm 'ere!

**HARRISON**

[Within] What the 'ell? O' 'ey

**HUNTER**

I see ya jus' make yer way o'er 'ere.

*Enter HARRISON*

Fuck're ya doin'?

**HARRISON**

I'on' know, got bor'd

**HUNTER**

I got some good news

**HARRISON**

O' yea? What is it?

**HUNTER**

My daddy was kill'd.

**HARRISON**

Aw shit for real man? Damn that sucks Hunter.

**HUNTER**

Well yea it does suck but there's a good side!  
I know who kill'd 'im...

**HARRISON**

Damn man who was it?

**HUNTER**

I knew summin ain't seem right 'round Fort Payne,  
there's a kill'r 'ere.

**HARRISON**

Wait does this got summin ta do wit' that  
ghost'r whatev'r?

**HUNTER**

Yes Harrison, it was the ghost'a my  
daddy an' 'e told me that Cletus lied  
when 'e was tellin' ev'ryone 'bout 'ow  
my daddy died. My daddy's death ain't no  
fuckin' accident, Cletus fuckin' shot  
the poor bastard in'a middle'a the  
woods an' lied 'bout it.

**HARRISON**

Damn man that's crazy, so ya got answ'rs?

**HUNTER**

Yes Harrison, I got all'a that an'  
more, I got purpose.

**HARRISON**

Jus' like me an' Jesus

**HUNTER**

Now I need'a start preparin' fer my  
revenge, I need'a git ready ta kill  
Cletus ta avenge my pa, so me an'  
my daddy an' my momma can all git  
inta 'eav'n. Harrison, God chose me

as one'a 'is personal soldiers ta  
kill my uncle.

**HARRISON**

Damn bro God 'imself?

**HUNTER**

Yes Harrison, my daddy told me so.

**HARRISON**

Holy shit Hunter.

**HUNTER**

Now I need'a do what God wants me to.

**HARRISON**

That's intense,  
Jesus an' me ain't talk 'bout all'a that

**HUNTER**

Yaw anna 'elp me?

**HARRISON**

I mean if ya can buy shit

**HUNTER**

Yea I'll jus' take some

**Ghost**

[Beneath] Do it

**HUNTER**

Ah my daddy speaks! 'E wants us  
ta take money from Cletus, thank you pa,  
an' thanks ta you God.

**HARRISON**

Wait is 'e still 'ere?

**HUNTER**

'E's speakin' ta me from the shadows, we  
'ave ta do this shit.

**Ghost**

[Beneath] Do it

**HUNTER**

Now Harrison, ya need'a swear  
ta me ya won't tell nobody what we  
'eard tonight, I can't 'ave anybody  
stoppin' me, ev'rybody's against me

**Ghost**

[Beneath] Do it

**HUNTER**

Yes daddy I understand! I'll  
do whatever it takes for ya daddy!

**HARRISON**

Uh yea man sure, I won't tell nobody.

**HUNTER**

As God's chosen soldier, I will do what  
ever I need to do for the sake of  
God, and Harrison, if ya wanna go  
to 'eaven wit' me and my momma and  
my daddy yer gonna 'ave to keep all  
of this a secret, ya can't tell no one  
nothin', and ya 'ave to 'elp me any  
way ya can, y'ain't gotta shoot nobody  
or nothin', but I can't talk to my pa  
when I'm sober 'e told me 'imself, ya  
were right Harrison, ya can't talk to the  
universe wit'out drugs, God 'imself told  
me so, we were right 'bout ev'rythin', we  
are the smartest men in Fort Payne, ain't a  
single soul in town that we can trust man.

**Ghost**

[Beneath] Do it

**HUNTER**

Yes daddy! Yes I will daddy!  
There is nothin' on this fuckin' planet  
that can stop me now, I'm invincible,  
nobody can do a fuckin' thing to  
me, I'm immortal, I'm God's soldier, I  
can talk to ghosts, I am connect'd to  
'eaven itself, now let's go Harrison.  
We 'ave a lotta work to do, and we  
ain't got enough time, let's git goin' man.

*Exeunt*

## ACT II

### SCENE I. A room in PRESTON'S house.

*Enter PRESTON and RAYMOND*

**PRESTON**

Give 'im this 'ere cash and this letter, Raymond.

**RAYMOND**

Ye I'll do it.

**PRESTON**

Befer' ya go out 'n' harass my Lee

Make damn sure ya know what 'e's been up to

**RAYMOND**

Yeah, yeah, Preston, I'll ask around Fort Payne

**PRESTON**

Go 'ave a look around the town an' see

If any of those city folk are here

Try an' see what they're 'ere for an' their names

If yer able to find this here info

Ask 'em if they know Lee an' how they do

Don't press it too hard an' scare em off though

Just tell 'em yer a friend of Lee's father

Any o' that make sense to ya Raymond?

**RAYMOND**

Yessir I understand

**PRESTON**

Ya should tell 'em ya know 'im but not well

Ask if it's the Lee who is always out

Throwin' parties in the city with friends

Try an' make up stories 'bout my dear son

But don't make up anythin' bad 'bout 'im

Make 'im sound like any other teen boy

And the troubles that their kind get into

**RAYMOND**

Like Gamblin' Preston?

**PRESTON**

Ye or drinkin' er smokin' er fuckin',

All o the shit them youngins git up ta.

**RAYMOND**



But wouldn't all o that make 'im look bad?

**PRESTON**

I'm not tellin' ya ta make 'im look bad  
Don't make 'im seem like some kinda Devil,  
Jus make 'im seem like a normal teen boy;  
Don't talk bad on 'im jus try ta find 'im  
I know my boy is up there somewhere now,  
I just gots ta find 'im he's missin' stuff,  
That boy done missed Cletus's funeral,  
He needs ta come down now.

**RAYMOND**

But, ole Preston--

**PRESTON**

And why should ya do this?

**RAYMOND**

Ye Preston,  
I like ta know.

**PRESTON**

Yea son, 'ere's ma plan;  
And dare I say it is real kinda smart:  
You go round talkin' smack about my son,  
As if there aint a damn good thing ta say,  
Make it sound like yer one of 'is kinfolk  
Part of 'is rambuncion and partyin'  
A normal ole youth jus' tryna 'ave fun  
An' see how all the locals talk ta ya  
"my boy" er "my man" er "bro" an' so on  
An' see if ya can fin' wot e's up ta

**RAYMOND**

Sounds good, Preston

**PRESTON**

An' then when ya find 'im, er when he does  
Aw shit I lost it, what was I sayin'?  
somethin' about Lee an' what he's up ta?

**RAYMOND**

You were sayin' sumthin' bout them greetings

**PRESTON**

Oh yea oh yea an' when ya find someone  
That has met Lee an' knows where that boy is  
Either yesterday er the day fore that  
Keep talkin' bout the shit y'all get up to  
Till they can't tell that yer bullshittin' them  
An' they say what they get up ta with Lee  
'I saw 'im walkin' into a strip club'  
'I wen' wit that boy to the casino:  
Like all that;  
Use yer lies to track down where my boy is  
That boy don' know how wise 'is daddy is  
I was young an' stupid once just like 'im  
Well hell thas why that boy even exists  
Whelp Raymond, did ya git all o' the plan?  
Or do I still gots ta run it by ya?

**RAYMOND**

I think I do

**PRESTON**

Whelp then, God be with ya

**RAYMOND**

You too man

**PRESTON**

Jus folla 'is lead an' see what happens

**RAYMOND**

I'll try my best.

**PRESTON**

An' see what the hell that boy gets up ta

**RAYMOND**

Done and done

**PRESTON**

G'bye

*Exit RAYMOND*

*Enter OLIVIA*

Hey now sweetie tell me the hell happened?

**OLIVIA**

Oh daddy, daddy, somethin' done scurd me!

**PRESTON**

Well now well now tell me what frightened ya

**OLIVIA**

Well daddy I was jus' sittin' inside  
When I done saw Hunter in the doorway!  
He aint have on no shirt or no pants too  
He aint even 'ave on no underwear!  
Alla 'is skin was white as a damn sheet!  
An' the look on 'is face was terrified  
Like 'e done seen one o' them ghosts again  
An' 'e told me 'ow scurd 'e really was

**PRESTON**

Scared o' y'all's love?

**OLIVIA**

Oh daddy I don' know;  
But it really scurd me.

**PRESTON**

What he say?

**OLIVIA**

'E grabbed on my wrists an' held them real hard;  
But 'e kept me at an arm's length aways  
An' 'ad one o' 'is hands on 'is forehead  
'E jus' stared at me wit' them big ole eyes  
Like 'e was getting' ready ta draw me  
After awhile 'e stopped starin' at me  
An' started shakin' 'is 'ead up an' down,  
An' then 'e started lettin' out a sigh  
Before 'e started shakin' even more!  
An' then after all o' that he left me  
Hunter aint even say a single word  
'Fore 'e left me all alone in my room  
Oh daddy I'm so worried bout Hunter  
What if that boy overdoses on me?

**PRESTON**

Come sweetie les go an' see ole Cletus  
That boy aint got any smart bones in 'im  
An' if 'e don' stop that boy will kill ya

Either from stress or sumn else stupid  
Ya know I do love ya Olivia  
But ya shouldn't be messin' 'round wit' 'im  
I told ya I know that boy is trouble

**OLIVIA**

Oh but daddy I love 'im wit my heart!  
We aint messin' 'round, 'e really love me!

**PRESTON**

Oh sweetheart ya shouldn't be wit' that boy  
'E's jus' a daddy's boy wit' drug problems  
An' ya better not start doin' them too!  
If 'e 'as ya on any o' that shit  
I swear by my honor I'll shoot 'im dead  
An' if he shows up naked one more time  
Then I'll sic yer brother Lee onta 'im  
An' lord knows that boy don' need two o' us  
Huntin' 'im down fer messin' wit my kin.

*Exeunt*

## SCENE II. A room in the McCoy Home

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, RYKER, GUNNER*

### **CLETUS**

Welcome back 'ome ole Ryker an' Gunner!  
Now I do say we missed the two o' ya,  
An' I'm sorry ta bring y'all back so soon  
But I'm sure y'all 'ave heard about Hunter  
An' what that dam-ned son o' mine's up ta  
While 'e may seem like the same boy at first  
Don' be fooled, that boy ain't right in the 'ead  
Somethin' about the death of my brotha  
Musta really messed up that boy's thinkin'  
He jus' ain't been the same boy since that day  
That bein' said, I need y'all ta watch 'im  
Go an' be a friend ta 'im durin' this  
Y'all can stay 'ere as long as ya need ta  
I know y'all are real worried about 'im  
But I need y'all two ta find out what's wrong  
I gots a suspicion that boy's smokin'  
Not jus' weed, I think that boy is tweakin'  
Please git ta the bottom o' this fer me.

### **GLADYS**

Oh my boy has talked so much about y'all  
An' I know in my heart that there ain't no  
men on this Earth that that boy loves much more  
Than y'all two boys an' all of y'alls lil friends  
So y'all are welcome to stay in this house  
Till we can git Hunter back ta normal  
Cletus an' I send y'all our greatest thanks  
Fer carin' so much 'bout my dear Hunter

### **RYKER**

Why thank ya Mister and missus McCoy  
We swear ta y'all that we will try our best  
Ta git ta bis-ness and find out what's wrong  
Cuz I seen that Hunter ain't been 'imself

### **GUNNER**

Ye he ain't even wan' go out no more  
'E always wit' that girl er in the woods

We can fig-ger out what's wrong wit yer boy  
We can promise ta at least do that much

**CLETUS**

Thank ya two so much, Ryker and Gunner

**GLADYS**

Yea we are very grateful fer all this  
I think y'all should head over there right now  
See what is changin' my little Hunter  
Lord knows I jus' want my little boy back.

**GUNNER**

I swear ta the lord we can git there now  
C'mon Ryker let's git outta this place

**GLADYS**

Bye Y'all!

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

*Enter PRESTON*

**PRESTON**

Yer friends Vincent an' Clarence are 'ere now  
They outside the house waitin' fer y'all two.

**CLETUS**

Oh ain't ya just the mailman o' good news

**PRESTON**

Ya think? Even durin' these tryin' times?  
As one o' yer best friends I always try  
But on days like this ya would 'ave better luck  
Finding that lil needle in a haystack  
Than findin' good news ta give 'bout Hunter.  
But I think I figgered out the reason  
yer Son Hunter has been actin' so wild.

**CLETUS**

Ya think so? Go head an' tell us both then

**PRESTON**

Go 'head and welcome Vincent and Clarence  
After that I'll tell y'all what I'm thinkin'

**CLETUS**

Alright Preston go 'head an' bring 'em in

*Exit PRESTON*

O' sugar Preston thinks he know what's wrong  
The reason behind why Hunter all weird

**GLADYS**

I don' think is more than jus' 'is daddy  
'E was 'is daddy's son no doubt 'bout that

**CLETUS**

Well I guess we'll see what ole Preston thinks

*Re-enter PRESTON, with VINCENT and CLARENCE*

Well hell welcome to my humble abode  
Been 'while since I seen yer two ugly mugs.

**VINCENT**

Ah look at ya Cletus ya don' look a  
day o'er fifty, takin' care I see.  
Well we're 'ere cuz we got word 'bout Hunter  
an' came down ta pay our respects ta 'im.  
But I see ya wen' an' married his wife  
ya old dog! But we're happy ya moved on  
Ole Gladys, ya always were a good one  
Woulda been a damn shame to jus' widow  
an' waste away that good southern beauty.  
But we're 'ere fer more than jus' respects.  
Yer ole enemies the Jennings are back  
They 'eard that summin 'appen'd in Fort Payne  
that's been shakin' things up 'round these parts an'  
they're comin' ta try an' take revenge while  
there's commotion, it ain't seem like 'e know  
what's 'appenin' cause 'e gave me this 'ere  
letter that's got yer broth'r's name on it

*Giving a paper*

'E said it's a declaration o' war  
Between the Jennings an' all y'all McCoys  
The Jennings ain't got too many friends though  
So I wouldn't put the stress on yer mind

**CLETUS**

Well hell, nevah thought I'd 'ave ta deal wit'  
them got damn Jennings an' their horse shit again.  
I'll take some time an' think o' what ta do,  
In the meantime y'all make yerselves at home  
Y'all can go sit on the porch while Gladys  
starts preparin' our supper fer tonight

*Exeunt VINCENT and CORNELIUS*

**PRESTON**

Whelp looks like we gots plenty on our plate  
ta deal wit' in the next couple o' weeks  
Those damn Jennings are back fer yer damn land  
the same as those fuckers always 'ave been.  
Whelp Cletus, we ain't gots no time ta waste  
Dealin' wit' the Jennings an' wit' yer son  
There ain't no easy way ta tell ya this  
but yer son's crazier than a cat in  
a dog factory, that boy 'as gone mad  
But ya may be won'drin why 'es gone mad  
An' I'll tell ya

**GLADYS**

Can ya put it in simpler terms Preston?

**PRESTON**

Yes ma'am now that is sumn I can do  
Now I won't lie Hunter 'as gone cuckoo  
An' part of me really feels bad for 'im  
But I'll tell y'all what I think got 'im nuts.  
I'm sure y'all two already know but yer  
son 'as been smokin' reefer as of late  
Ev'ry day that boy comes into my home  
high as the stars lookin' fer my daughter  
'E's crazy 'bout my lil Olivia  
An' I mean no offense to y'all but I  
Don' want my lil girl hooked on no reefer  
But yer Hunter did write her this letter

*Reads*



Ye are the bright sun to my sad ole moon  
we are like Romeo and Juliet  
An' I love you way more than love itself  
Fer you are all that I 'ave left right now

**GLADYS**

An' yer sayin' Hunter wrote this to her?

**PRESTON**

Yea I found it on 'er bed, but there's more

*Reads*

As sure as a fly loves a pile o' shit  
As sure as the rooster crows in the morn'  
As sure as the sun rises in the East  
I am sure that ye are my honey pie  
I know that I been a mess as o' late  
An I know that yer daddy don' like me  
But that won' stop me or our love sweetheart  
I will love you ferever, Love, Hunter  
Now I will admit this is a cute note  
An' yer son sure 'as a gift with his words  
But boy's getting' crazier by the day  
An' it ain't good fer 'im or my daughter

**CLETUS**

But what does she  
think 'bout 'is love?

**PRESTON**

My daughter is 'ead over heels for 'im

**CLETUS**

Come on now tell us more about those two

**PRESTON**

All right all right I'll keep it on goin'  
When I first saw 'em getting' togetha  
I won't lie to y'all, I gots kinda scurd  
I don' want my Olivia ta end  
up like 'er ma and I an' 'ave a kid  
Not that I ain't thought Hunter would be a  
good daddy or nothin' they just too young

But I saw 'er lil starstruck eyes when she  
looked at Hunter with this love in 'er heart  
An' so I sat 'er down an' had a talk  
'Look darlin' I know you love that Hunter  
but I don't think ya should be with that boy'  
but of course teenagers don' listen ta  
any damn thing their paren's gots ta say  
But I let 'er keep seein' yer Hunter  
An' she been happy fer a good while now  
But Hunter started scarin' 'er last week  
An' she got scurd an' threatened to break up  
Not only did that not fix 'is problem  
but it made 'is drug problems e'en worse  
But she en'ed up takin' 'is ass back

**CLETUS**

Ya think that that's why?

**GLADYS**

I mean it could be

**PRESTON**

I mean y'all known me fer a long ass time  
I ain't never wrong about anythin'  
In my whole damn entire life ever

**CLETUS**

Not that I know.

**PRESTON**

[Pointing to his head and shoulder]  
Ya know there's a good 'ead on these shoulders  
If I ever wanna find out summin  
Ye know that I'll figger it out real quick  
Imma Detective

**CLETUS**

Well what should we do?

**PRESTON**

Ya know yer boy likes to walk aroun' 'ere  
In the livin' room

**GLADYS**

Yup 'e really does

**PRESTON**

Next time 'e's pacin' 'round the livin' room  
I'll 'ave Olivia come in an' talk  
An' we'll hide down the hall an' listen in  
An' see if Hunter really does love 'er  
An' get ahold o' what that boy's thinkin'  
An' how we can help 'im

**CLETUS**

We will try it.

**GLADYS**

Aw shit y'all quit yer yammerin' 'e's 'ere

**PRESTON**

Alrighty y'all needa get outta 'ere  
I'll take care a Hunter

*Exeunt CLETUS, GLADYS, and Attendants*

*Enter HUNTER*

Aight git along  
Well hello there Hunter how 'ave ya been?

**HUNTER**

Good, God be willin'

**PRESTON**

Do ya remember who I am Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Well yea o' course, yer that local mailman

**PRESTON**

Nah that ain't me

**HUNTER**

Well then if ya were 'onest I'd know ya

**PRESTON**

Honest, young man!

**HUNTER**

Yes sir, to be honest on this good Earth  
is real real rare, like one inna thousand

**PRESTON**

Ye make a good point

**HUNTER**

Well if maggots show up inna dead deer  
an' eat it all up--You gotta daughter?

**PRESTON**

Well ye I do

**HUNTER**

Don' let 'er walk aroun' in the harsh sun  
Cause givin' birth is a blessin' an' all  
Look inta that

**PRESTON**

[Aside] What in the damn hell is this boy sayin'?  
He keeps talkin' 'bout my Olivia  
But 'e said that 'e don' know who I am  
Oh lord it might be too late for that boy  
I guess I'll keep talkin' to 'im an' see  
Wot're ya readin' Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Words, words, words.

**PRESTON**

What is the problem Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Between who?

**PRESTON**

Nah nah in that story yer readin' son

**HUNTER**

The bullfrog in the story is a drunk  
But also somehow the voice of our lord  
But the man can't understan' wot 'e says  
But says that 'im an' the bullfrog are friends  
An' honest ta God I jus' don' get it  
Why is a bullfrog the voice of our lord?  
If ya wanna borrow the book ya can  
See if ya git to the bottom of it

**PRESTON**

[Aside] Wot the hell is this boy talkin' about?  
You gonna git yer 'ead out the clouds boy?

**HUNTER**

Inta ma grave.

**PRESTON**

Well that is out the clouds...

*Aside*

Man that Hunter says the wildest damn shit  
But 'e's sure gotta weird kinda crazy  
Like 'e's not even that crazy. I will  
leave 'im, an' go get Olivia now  
So she can talk ta Hunter.—Well Hunter  
I'll let ya get back ta it then, Bye now

**HUNTER**

Mister ye cannot take anythin' from  
me that I won' let go: except my life,  
except my life, except my life, my life

**PRESTON**

Well uh, see ya then.

**HUNTER**

Annoyin' ole fool!

*Enter RYKER and GUNNER*

**PRESTON**

If yer lookin' fer Hunter 'e's in there

**RYKER**

[To PRESTON] Thank ya sir

*Exit PRESTON*

**GUNNER**

Hello there Hunter

**RYKER**

'Ow's it goin' Bo?

**HUNTER**

Oh hello there Ryker, hey there Gunner.  
'Ow the hell 'ave you two boys been doin'?

**RYKER**

I mean not too good, not too bad, really

**GUNNER**

But I'd rather be bored than unhappy  
We're quite lucky to be so damn happy

**HUNTER**

I mean, speak fer yerselves

**RYKER**

Wuss that Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Life 'as juss been complicated lately  
wit' my dad an' all

**GUNNER**

Aw shit my bad man

**HUNTER**

It's alright man it ain't y'all's fault, it's my  
no good uncle Cletus an' 'is bullshit

**RYKER**

Well hell man what's you gots on yer mind man?

**HUNTER**

It just feels like the day o' reckonin'  
is upon us an' I can't do Jack Shit.  
But what brings the two o' ya down ta this  
stoney ole lonesome I get ta call home?

**GUNNER**

Prison, Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Fort Payne is a prison.

**RYKER**

Well man is the whole damn world a Prison?

**HUNTER**

Ye man they got us trapped in this damn place,  
Everywhere is, Fort Payne is jus' the worst.

**RYKER**

I thought ya always liked Fort Payne Hunter?

**HUNTER**

I mean it ain't a prison fer y'all two  
But y'all two's uncles ain't kill yer daddies  
so life is peachy.

**RYKER**

I mean shit that's fair  
But it don't gotta be a prison man

**HUNTER**

I could be in an endless field stretchin'  
fer miles an' miles an' still feel like I got  
no where I can be safe from my Uncle

**GUNNER**

I mean do ya think 'e's out ta get ya?  
It all kinda sounds like a real bad dream

**HUNTER**

It ain't no dream, Cletus killed my daddy

**RYKER**

Look man I think ya been smokin' too much  
Ya can't e'en tell what is real no more

**HUNTER**

I seen what I seen an' 'eard what I 'eard  
an' nothin' that y'all say can change my mind  
my 'ead hurts do y'all wanna go inside?

**RYKER GUNNER**

I mean sure we're always down fer a beer

**HUNTER**

Yeah I can git each o' y'all a good beer  
but first ya gotta tell me why yer 'ere.  
Y'all don't seem ta believe me 'bout Cletus  
Did he send y'all two? Are you two with 'im?

**RYKER**

Nah man we jus' came down ta check on ya

**HUNTER**

I'd thank y'all but I don' know if I should  
I mean if yer really my bestest friends  
then why the hell don' y'all believe me then?  
I mean y'all gotta admit it's sketchy  
how my dad died an' 'e married my mom.

**GUNNER**

I mean what do ya want us ta say, man?

**HUNTER**

I don't want y'all ta say anythin' man  
besides the real reason y'all two are 'ere.  
I gotta gut feelin' that y'all are lyin'  
an' that my momma an' uncle sent ya

**RYKER**

Where the hell are ya even getting' this?

**HUNTER**

Look I jus' want you two ta be honest  
I mean we known each other our whole lives  
I jus' wanna know if y'all are gonna  
throw it away fer my no good uncle?  
So I need both o' y'all ta tell me now  
if Cletus sent ya

**RYKER**

[Aside to GUNNER] What do we do man?

**GUNNER**

[Aside to RYKER] I don' know man 'e's off 'is damn rocker

**HUNTER**

[Aside] I'm gonna have ta keep an eye on them  
if they loved me they'd tell me the damn truth

**GUNNER**

Whelp, ya got us man, 'e sent us ta check

**HUNTER**

An' I know exactly why 'e sent ya  
'e knows that I'm onta 'is murderin'  
an' 'e wants ta see 'ow much I do know  
'fore 'e makes a move an' tries ta kill me.  
My paren's 'ave noticed that I'm diff'rent  
I don' go outside or go huntin' now  
an' they wanna dictate 'ow I wanna  
live my life, so what if I smoke reefer?  
So what if I jus' 'ang out in ma room?  
Why would I wanna 'ang wit' my uncle?  
The one who shot my daddy dead last month  
Why would I wanna 'ang out wit' my ma?  
The one who left my daddy in the dust  
Right now it's me against the whole, wide, world  
Against my uncle, against my momma



against everybody too blind ta see  
the murders they done did in my own home  
So are y'all two wit' me, or against me?  
It is up to y'all.

**RYKER**

Hunter, we ain't thinkin' 'bout none of that

**HUNTER**

Then why do y'all laugh when I talk 'bout 'im?

**RYKER**

Man Hunter, yer goin' bonkers we ain't  
say nothin' or laugh nothin' 'bout Cletus.  
We feel fer ya man we jus' wanna help,  
Let us help ya man.

**HUNTER**

Look, Cletus plays the part o' criminal  
an' right now 'e's getting' away wit' it.  
My momma is playin' the accomplice  
helpin' this sick man in 'is cruel murders.  
Me? I'm the detective figgerin' this  
all out an' solvin' the case o' the crime.  
So do y'all wanna help me solve this shit?  
Or are y'all gonna jus' let 'im do this?

**RYKER**

Criminals? Detectives? Hunter, this ain't  
no damn tv show

**HUNTER**

No it ain't, this is real life, wit' real shit  
an' all we can do is try an' fix it

**RYKER**

Man why do ya think yer daddy was shot  
by yer uncle?

**HUNTER**

Coz my daddy's ghost told me that 'e did.  
The damn bastard done shot 'im in the 'ead

**RYKER**

When did 'e do that?

**HUNTER**

When they went huntin'

**RYKER**

Yer tellin' me that ya believe in ghosts  
an' that ya saw the ghost of yer daddy?  
I mean why would Cletus kill 'is brother?  
What do 'e got ta gain from it Hunter?  
Family is everythin' 'round these parts  
an' killin' yer own just don' make no sense,  
'specially when they grew up togeth'r.

**HUNTER**

The bastard already got so much man,  
the man took 'is house, the man took 'is wife,  
took everythin' my daddy ever 'ad.  
An' I hate that 'e keep pretendin' ta  
give even half a damn about me man,  
shit makes me more pissed off than anythin'  
So yeah 'e 'ad a lot ta gain from it

**RYKER**

I think both of us are bringin' up some  
points but ya got no proof that 'e did it.  
If ya shoot Cletus an' kill 'im right dead,  
what're ya gon' tell the cops then Hunter?  
Ya can't tell 'em ghosts

**HUNTER**

Well why the hell not?

**GUNNER**

Man they're gon' think yer jus' some crazed druggie

**HUNTER**

Maybe I am one, maybe I ain't one

**RYKER**

Ya get caught doin' this yull go ta jail!

**HUNTER**

If that's what I gots ta do ta avenge  
my dear daddy then I'd spend a thousan'  
years rottin' in the big house jus' for 'im.  
I'm startin' ta git tired'a talkin'  
bout Cletus an' my daddy let's jus' watch  
somethin' on the tv and chill fer now.

**GUNNER**

What should we turn on?

**HUNTER**

Shit jus' turn it ta a random channel,  
I'm really not all that picky at all.  
Maybe jus' turn on one'a them cowboy  
shows that's always playin' on the rerun.  
Aw got dammit 'ere comes my girlfriend's dad,  
don' say a single word 'bout my plan an'  
shit. 'E don' even know 'e bein' trick'd.

**GUNNER**

What do ya mean trick'd?

**HUNTER**

Preston an' my uncle think I gone mad,  
but really it's all part'a my big plan.

*Enter PRESTON*

**PRESTON**

Well hey there fellers!

**HUNTER**

Listen 'ere y'all two, open yer ea-rs,  
that man right there is a great big baby,  
I'd bet 'e's wearin' a diaper down there.

**RYKER**

I don' know about all o' that Hunter,  
'e don' seem all that young at heart for real.

**HUNTER**

I would bet money that 'e's gon' ask 'bout  
what we're watchin' on the tv an' shit.  
The man can't stay outta my business.

**PRESTON**

What're you boys up ta? What y'all watchin'?

**HUNTER**

What're you boys up ta? What y'all watchin'?  
When the great lord did begin 'is power

**PRESTON**

I'm jus' tryna see what y'all are watchin'

**HUNTER**

Buz, buz!

**PRESTON**

What the hell are ya talkin' bout?

**HUNTER**

Then all the actors came into the show--

**PRESTON**

Oh shit I love this show I seen all o'it!

I think these fellers are the best actors  
on all'a tv I truly do think.

They can do anythin': action, romance,  
showdowns, duels, shoot-outs, hell, even church stuff.  
Y'all mind if I sit down an' watch wit' y'all?  
Y'all jus' happened ta turn on my fav'rite.

**HUNTER**

Oh Jedediah got quite a treasure!

**PRESTON**

I don' recall 'im 'avin' a treasure?

**HUNTER**

Well Jedediah 'as a pretty wife,  
an' a smokin' hot daughter ta 'is name.

**PRESTON**

[Aside] Looks like 'e's still got the hots fer my girl.

**HUNTER**

I might as well call you Jedediah

**PRESTON**

If ya call me Jedediah, that means  
ya think I 'ave a smokin' hot daughter

**HUNTER**

That don't make no sense

**PRESTON**

Then what do make sense?

**HUNTER**

Well,

'Now y'all listen 'ere an' listen good,'

I know how all this gon' end, so don' try'--

Ta know what I'm sayin', ya gots ta 'ear  
what me an' Jedediah're sayin'

*Hunter turns the volume up*

See yer jus' scratchin' the surface of'it.  
This show is 'bout more than jus' cowboys  
an' the fights that they 'ave wit' each other.  
Jedediah's more than jus' a cowboy  
'e's a man's kinda man, one wit' revenge  
on 'is mind that won' quit till 'e get it.  
It's a dedication that jus' won' quit  
that's the kinda shit I can git behind.  
No one wants ta be the guy that don' do  
what 'e's gotta do fer 'is family.  
If anybody kills yer family,  
it is yer God given right ta fight back.

### **JEDEDIAH**

Listen here, it's time to pull in your horns--

### **HUNTER**

Man there's this one speech Jedediah gives,  
where 'e talks 'bout 'is honor an' why 'e  
is so dedicated ta getting' 'is  
revenge on the people who kil-led 'is  
family an' left 'im on 'is lonesome.  
I think 'e said summin along the lines  
a 'no matter what it is I 'ave ta  
do, or who it is I 'ave ta kill, I  
will bring the hammer'a justice and the  
hammer'a my revolver on whoever  
dares ta stand in the way'a my revenge,"  
I mean it don' git more badass than that,  
'e's a man that don' take shit from no one,  
an' gives shit ta anyone that tries.  
I wanna be jus' like Jedediah,  
a gun totin' badass that don' take shit.  
I'm sick an' tired'a takin' shit from  
people that think they know what's best fer me,  
I'm sick an' tired'a takin' shit from  
people who wanna control me an' shit.  
I'm sick an' tired'a takin' shit from  
people that don' even know the real me.  
I jus' wanna live my life my own way,  
no more'a my momma an' my uncle  
tellin' me what I'm doin' wrong in life.  
I can't be shackled by other people,

no one will let me jus' live my damn life.  
Even cowboys git sad when their fam'ly  
is taken away from them unfairly.  
I don' know man I gots lots'a'pinions  
bout this show, I watch it every week.

### **PRESTON**

Well ya're right, Jedediah is the best  
but the people 'e's fightin're good too,  
Jus' misunderstood.

### **Jedediah**

And here they find me,  
lost out here all alone, airin' the lungs,  
I've been cornered, and I don't see a way  
out of this shithole that I've put myself  
in. Do I give in to the people who  
took everything away from me? Or do  
I just keep on fighting until the end?  
I got what I wanted, I killed the men  
that took my family away from me.  
But it seems that I'm stuck dealing with the  
repercussions of my quest for revenge.  
I'm out of water, out of tobacco,  
and surely out of anything to eat.  
Maybe I should just give up, let it end.  
I have hurt too many innocent folks  
just for some petty self satisfaction.  
I pushed away what little friends I had  
left in this world, but they were all I had.  
There's no one left coming to save me now.  
I was just angry, felt the need to get  
back at the people who killed my loved ones.  
Life is kinda funny like that, my quest  
against the people that made me alone  
has only made me more isolated.  
Is it really my fault? I'm just human,  
I acted based on how I felt, but it  
didn't make me nearly as satisfied  
as I thought getting revenge would have done.

**PRESTON**

Why would ya want be like 'im? 'e's depressed!

**HUNTER**

What do ya mean? That's why I feel for 'im,  
I mean, 'ow could 'e not be sad when they  
kill'd the people that 'e 'ad loved the most.

**JEDEDIAH**

'Why is victory so damn bittersweet?'

**HUNTER**

I disagree

**PRESTON**

But 'e did lose evry'thin'?

**JEDEDIAH**

'I beg and plead to you God, please just let  
let me do it over again, I fucked  
up and let revenge have its grip on me.  
But then again, I don't regret nothing.  
Send me straight down to Hell if you so please,  
but I did what I had to do for my  
family and for my own peace of mind.  
Was it the wisest thing? I don't think so,  
but if I make it through this then so what?  
If I make it outta here alive then  
what I've done doesn't matter anymore.  
You know what God? I'm not going to  
sit here and accept some kind of penance  
for doing what needed to be done to  
Avenge my family.'

**PRESTON**

I think the worst part 'bout it is knowin'  
'e dies after.

**HUNTER**

I mean sure 'e dies at the end'a the  
story but 'e don' regret what 'e did.  
If somebody kills someone ya really  
love it's in yer rights ta do somethin' 'bout

it an' take matters inta yer own hands,  
even if it means killin' somebody.

**PRESTON**

Maybe back in the wild west, not these days.

**HUNTER**

I mean why the hell not? People jus' don'  
get revenge no more. The law 'as ruined  
any sense'a justice in this country.  
There's nothin' better than good ole fashion'd  
Justice.

**PRESTON**

On that note, I gots ta go now

**HUNTER**

See ya, I'm gonna keep watchin' the show

*Exit PRESTON*

That's it, tomorr'a I'm gon' play the  
episode where Jedediah's brother  
Betrays 'im an' sells 'im out ta the gang.  
I think it'll make my message very  
obvious ta that piece'a shit Cletus.

**JEDEDIAH**

It's time to act.

**HUNTER**

Yer right Jedediah

*Hunter turns the TV off*

Whelp Ryker an' Gunner, I'll see y'all soon.  
Have fun huntin'.

**RYKER**

We will Hunter, see ya.

**HUNTER**

Yea I'll see y'all 'round.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*



Whelp I'm on my own.  
Got dammit! How do these actors do it?  
Playin' someone they ain't never met 'fore  
I gots ta pretend I ain't gon' kill 'im  
e'en though I hate ev'ry inch of 'im.  
I gots ta play all this off real damn smart,  
but fer whatev'r reason they think I'm crazy  
an' actin' like some kinda mental kid!  
It jus' ain't fair, they judge ev'rythin' I  
do jus' cause they don' like my damn lifestyle.  
Actin' like my daddy's death ain't some big  
deal, when 'e's the fucker that kill'd the man!  
My life is jus' like Jedediah's life,  
a man betrayed by 'is own family,  
who 'as lost the people 'e loves the most,  
an' 'as sworn revenge on 'is betrayers...  
That show jus' knows 'ow ta grab my atten-shin,  
the story'a Jedediah fills me wit'  
this prime vengeance that I need ta do ta  
ma uncle Cletus to get sweet revenge.  
Does it make me a scurdy cat? Ta 'ide  
an' wait rather than killin' 'im 'ere an'  
now? No, No, I can't be a coward, no.  
I'm jus' waitin' fer the right time fer it.  
Well who's out 'ere callin' me a coward?  
Who's out 'ere tellin' lies behind my back?  
Well whoever it is is prolly right,  
what 'ave I even done fer my daddy?  
All I done is run away from what I  
gots ta do, cause fer now imma pussy.  
I gots ta plan my revenge as soon as  
I can, no more wastin' time smokin' meth!  
Oh, revenge!  
Got dammit! I'm such a fuckin' dumbass!  
'Ere I am, a son without a father,  
getting' messages from God an' my pop,  
an' all I can do is bitch about it!  
Doin' nothin' but smokin' an' drinkin'!  
Got dammit!  
I got it! I got a plan ta weed 'im  
out, if I play episodes 'bout the way

Jedediah was betrayed by 'is kin,  
it'll push Cletus ta confess 'is sins!  
While I don' wanna spend time wit' Cletus,  
I can see 'ow 'e looks watchin' the show,  
iffy looks nervous when Jedediah  
is betrayed by the people that 'e trusts,  
then I'll know fer sure that 'e kill'd my pop.  
But at the same time, what if the ghost I  
seent was jus' the devil inna disguise?  
That damn devil could be abusin' the  
fact that I'm doin' so terrible right  
now. I don' e'en know what is real no  
more, ev'rythin' is so fuckin' foggy.  
But no matter what, I will avenge my  
daddy, no matter what I got ta do.  
I'll catch that bastard sometime real real soon...

*Exit*

## ACT III

### SCENE I. Cletus's Bedroom.

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, PRESTON, OLIVIA, RYKER, and GUNNER*

#### **CLETUS**

So y'all ain't figger out shit 'bout why 'e's  
been actin' so got damn fuckin' crazy?  
Literally all y'all two 'ad ta do,  
was find out the method ta 'is madness.

#### **RYKER**

I mean 'e did say 'e gotta lotta  
shit on 'is mind but we ain't sure what.

#### **GUNNER**

'E didn't seem ta 'preciate bein'  
Question'd 'bout 'ow 'e's livin' 'is life now.  
'E started actin' crazy ta dodge our  
questions an' shit.

#### **GLADYS**

Was 'e polite ta y'all?

#### **RYKER**

Well 'e wasn't actin' like an asshole.

#### **GUNNER**

Think 'e was forcin' 'imself ta be nice.

#### **RYKER**

'E ain't really ask us any questions,  
But gave'us answers.

#### **GLADYS**

Did y'all try ta get 'im ta do somethin'  
fun?

#### **RYKER**

Well we tried ta get 'im ta go out  
on a huntin' trip wit' us but he ain't  
really in the mood to go shoot no deer.  
But then that cowboy show 'e likes a lot  
came on the T.V. an' 'e started ta  
talk about 'ow much 'e loves that show so...

**PRESTON**

That is true, 'e told me 'e wanted us  
ta watch it wit' 'im.

**CLETUS**

Well hell it fills ma heart wit' so much joy  
Ta 'ear 'im say that.  
Whelp boys, can you two go git my Hunter  
an' tell my son that we'll watch it wit' 'im.

**RYKER**

Well that we can do.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

**CLETUS**

You leave too Gladys,  
Fer we got Hunter on 'is way o'er,  
an' 'e will run into Olivia  
as'if it were a complete accident.  
Her daddy Preston an' I will be 'ere,  
hidin' inna room close ta both of 'em  
an' listenin' ta whatev'r they say.  
Maybe that way we can figger out if  
that boy's crazy outta love or if 'e's  
jus' startin' ta go mad.

**GLADYS**

I'll git gone then,  
An' fer you Olivia, I really  
'ope that it's yer beauty an' yer love that's  
been drivin' that boy buck wild an' not them  
drugs'r the death of 'is dear ole daddy.  
Now good luck y'all.

**OLIVIA**

I 'ope so Mrs. McCoy.

*Exit GLADYS*

**PRESTON**

Alright Olivia, come on o'er,  
I gots somethin' fer ya

*To OLIVIA*

Ta read wit' 'im.  
If he finds ya readin' this 'ere Bible  
then 'e'll assume that whatever yer up  
ta couldn't possibly be any lie.  
Act real Godly ta 'im an' see what 'e's  
really out ta do.

**CLETUS**

[Aside] Man I hate this shit,  
usin' the word of the lord to git my  
drug addict son ta explain 'imself an'  
'is actions like we don' already know  
why he's been actin' so got damn crazy.

**PRESTON**

I 'ear 'im comin', let's git outta 'ere!

*Exeunt CLETUS and PRESTON*

*Enter HUNTER*

**HUNTER**

Ta live a sad life, or die a good death,  
is it better fer me ta live on an'  
let my shit uncle git away wit' it,  
or ta die takin' on that piece'a shit  
ta defend my pop's honor? Dyin', sleepin'  
what's the real diff'rence at all anyway?  
Whether I'm sleepin' or six feet under,  
either way it'll stop all my suff'rin,  
or at least I 'ope so. Dyin', sleepin',  
sleepin', maybe e'en dreamin', that's it,  
but if I die an' go ta 'eaven who  
knows what kinda dreams I'll 'ave there wit' God.  
How do I e'en know if my pain ends?  
That keeps ev'ryone from endin' it all.  
Why else would we keep on goin' knowin'  
the pain'a losin' love, 'a losin' life,  
the pain'a sickness, the pain'a yerself,  
the government tellin' us what ta do,  
we jus' keep takin' it an' takin it,

when it's so damn simple ta jus' take'a  
shotgun an' blow yer brains outside yer 'ead?  
We keep on suff'rin our shitty lives,  
cause we fear that our God is a cruel God,  
an' those pearly gates an' cloudy buildin's  
Are all jus' a lie. Noone's ev'r been ta  
the gates'a Heaven an' back 'ere again,  
so 'ow do we e'en know that it's real?  
Our own thoughts an' our minds make us pussies,  
too scared ta do the only thing that'll  
finally end all the pain we go through.  
Ev'rybody's brave 'till they gots ta think  
'bout what happens after it's all o'er  
an' lose their damn backbone.—O hey baby!  
My beautiful Olivia! Sweet girl,  
Know me fer who I am, e'en my sins.

**OLIVIA**

Hey Hunter,  
'Ow ya been doin' since I last seen ya?

**HUNTER**

I been good baby; well, well, well.

**OLIVIA**

Well Hunter, I got some gifts ya gave me,  
That I been meanin' ta give back ta ya;  
'ere take 'em from me.

**HUNTER**

Nah I ain't do that,  
I don' remember givin' ya nothin'.

**OLIVIA**

Hunter ya know damn well ya gave me shit,  
An' ya said jus' the sweetest things then too,  
but since yer bein' an asshole I don'  
want 'em anymore. These were only as good  
as ya were ta me, but that's all gone now.  
'ere Hunter.

**HUNTER**

Ha, ha! Are ya a good person?

**OLIVIA**

Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Are ya pretty?

**OLIVIA**

What does that mean Hunter?

**HUNTER**

That if yer good an' pretty, then yer heart shouldn't take nothin' away from yer face.

**OLIVIA**

What does my pretty face got ta do wit' my heart or my values?

**HUNTER**

It's ev'rythin',  
The goodness in yer heart an' the beauty o' yer face can really fuck it all up.  
The beauty o' yer face is messin' wit' the way ya think. Ya know I did love ya.

**OLIVIA**

I mean ya really made me believe it.

**HUNTER**

Ya never should'a trusted me, cuz no matter what I do I can't fight my bad nature. I did not love ya.

**OLIVIA**

You didn't?

**HUNTER**

Never get married: why would ya bring more suff'rin' an' more bad people ta this world?  
I think Imma good guy but I done so much bad that it would'a been better if momma 'ad never given birth ta me.  
I've got so many horrible thoughts in ma 'ead an' want ta do terrible things.  
The things I think 'bout doin' are beyond a normal evil. We are the evil that we think about. Escape alla it.  
Where's yer daddy?

**OLIVIA**

My daddy's back at home.

**HUNTER**

Lock that dumb bastard inside 'is own home,  
so 'is dumbassery don' go nowhere.

**OLIVIA**

O' lord in Heaven please help my Hunter!

**HUNTER**

If ya do get married, 'e're's some advice,  
no matter 'ow good ya are er try ta  
be, you'll always end up hurtin' someone.  
so don' e'en try, an' if ya do try,  
marry a dumbass cuz good an' smart men  
know what you'll do to 'em. So git outta  
'ere an' fast, goodbye.

**OLIVIA**

O' God please 'elp 'im!

**HUNTER**

An' I know all 'bout makeup an' filters,  
always findin' new ways ta make yerself look better,  
ya dance on me, use a cute voice, call me  
lil nicknames, but pretend that it's alright  
cuz ya read the bible an' go ta Church.  
Shit pisses me off, no getting' married.  
I'll end 'em all, but there's one marriage I  
'ave in mind, but don' ya get married now.  
Goodbye now...

*Exit*

**OLIVIA**

O' where 'as my wonderful Hunter gone!  
'E was smart, 'e was tough, 'e was so kind,  
'E was the best man I 'ad ever met.  
Ev'ryone wanted ta be jus' like 'im!  
Why, why 'as my Hunter fallen so far!  
It makes me so got damn sad ta see 'im  
filled head ta toe with hatred and anger,  
after alla the promises 'e made.  
Them damn drugs're fryin' 'is fuckin' brain,  
now my sweet Hunter can't e'en think straight.



Oh my heart 'as been completely shattered!  
Seein' who 'e was an' who 'e is now!

*Re-enter CLETUS and PRESTON*

**CLETUS**

From what I can tell 'is problem ain't love,  
while that boy was jus' kinda yammerin',  
'e wa'n't jus' crazy there was summin  
'e was tryna say deep down in 'is soul.  
There's summin deep down in that boy causin'  
that boy ta act as crazy as'e 'as  
been, summin more'an jus' 'is drug problem.  
I think that boy needs a vacation, like  
ta rehab or summin, somewhere he won'  
be able ta smoke an' won' hurt no one.  
Maybe it'll do 'im some good ta git  
away from Fort Payne fer a bit, 'eal 'is  
heart from the grief an' keep 'im away from  
meth so 'e can git on back ta workin'.

**PRESTON**

I think that's a good idear but I don'  
think 'is daddy is why 'e's actin' so  
crazy, I think it could be my daughter.  
Speakin'a which, Olivia! Come in!  
Ya don' gots ta tell us what'e said, we  
heard it all from o'er 'ere. What we need  
ta do 'is get 'im ta talk ta 'is ma.  
That's 'is mama maybe she'll be able ta  
figger out why 'e's been actin' so sad.  
Make sure she don' beat 'round the bush, we need  
ta at least figger out what's wrong 'fore we  
send 'is ass off ta the rehab center.

**CLETUS**

Then that's what I'll do, we gotta keep an  
eye on 'im cuz God knows what 'e's up ta.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE II. The living room of the McCoy household.**

*Enter HUNTER and Players*

### **HUNTER**

Alright Jedediah, it's fuckin' time,  
I recorded the episode on the  
DVR an' I'm ready ta play it  
fer my no good uncle an' the rest'a  
the people that refuse ta understan'.  
Ev'rythin' 'as ta be done completely  
perfectly, not a single one can talk  
durin' the episode, Jedediah  
'as ta speak 'is truth about betrayal  
so that bastard Cletus can 'ear it all.  
Soon ev'ryone will know what Cletus did  
an' 'is life will soon start ta fall apart.  
A man as 'orrible as 'im should not  
'ave everything that 'e 'as. It is a  
damn shame that that bastard 'as a good life.

### **Jedediah**

You're a man with no honor.

### **HUNTER**

Not yet Jed.  
Looks like I'm gon' 'ave ta rewind the show,  
I gots ta make sure it don't play till they  
git in 'ere or they might miss the message  
an' then I gotts start all o'er from  
the start'a my plan, they cannot miss this.  
They 'ave ta watch, they 'ave ta watch, they 'ave  
ta watch, they 'ave ta watch, they 'ave ta watch.  
Jedediah's piece'a shit brother will  
make 'is debut in front'a ev'ryone,  
an' Cletus will 'ave that guilty look on  
'is ugly face an' ev'ryone will see.  
I need their belief, I need their belief.  
If my mamma ain't already know what  
my uncle Cletus did ta my daddy,  
then this should open 'er damn eyes ta what  
kinda horrors that bastard is doin'.  
I can't e'en tell if Olivia

is in onnit wit'em er jus' stupid,  
an' it seems I lost Ryker an' Gunner.

**Jedediah**

Who on this Earth do I even have left?  
Oh lonesome me...

**HUNTER**

Yer right Jedediah...  
O' ta be the only sane one out 'ere,  
it's like ev'ryone's eyes're real clouded,  
an' I'm the only person that sees through.  
They label me: crazy, a drug addict,  
as some confused teenager but I know...  
they're scared'a me cuz I'm the only one  
that can pull back the curtain an' see 'em.

*Exeunt Players*

*Enter PRESTON, RYKER, and GUNNER*

'Eya there Preston is Cletus comin'?

**PRESTON**

Yep, an' yer momma too

**HUNTER**

Go get'em please.

*Exit PRESTON*

Can y'all go make sure they get both of 'em?

**RYKER GUNNER**

Yeah we can do that.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

**HUNTER**

Hey there Harrison!

*Enter HARRISON*

**HARRISON**

Hey Hunter, how ya been doin'?

**HUNTER**

Bad man,  
Things 'ere 'ave jus' been gettin' worse an' worse...

**HARRISON**

What's goin' on man?

**HUNTER**

It's goin' ta shit.  
Ev'ryone is onta me an' my plan,  
an' I can tell they're plottin' against me.  
It feels like the whole world is crashin' down,  
an' I'm jus' about all alone right now,  
Ryker an' Gunner 'ave both turned on me,  
my ma ain't e'en know what's goin' on,  
Olivia don' fuck wit' me no more,  
'er daddy don' trust me wit' 'is daughter,  
I 'eard 'er brother's comin' back ta town,  
an' Cletus is getting' away wit' it.  
That's why I need ya right now Harrison,  
I never seen nothin' bring ya down man,  
I've seen all kinds'a shit 'appen ta ya  
an' none of it e'er weighs down on ya.  
I need that kinda energy right now,  
cuz I'm down shit creek without a paddle  
an' I really don' know if I can swim,  
an' alla them jus' criticize me fer  
ev'rythin' I like ta do it's awful.  
They get onta me fer bein' sad 'bout pa,  
they think I ain't a good man fer my girl,  
hell alla them think I'm jus' some methhead.  
I hate it all, I hate it all, I hate  
it all, I hate it all, I hate it all.  
But tonight I got alla'em comin'  
ta watch when Jedediah finds out 'bout  
'is brother's betrayal an' then they'll all  
ree-lize what Cletus did ta my daddy.  
'Is whole world will come crashin' down jus' like  
'e did ta me, then Cletus'll git it.  
There's no getting' away now...

**HARRISON**

Well Hunter,  
That sounds like a right shit situation,  
but if Imma watch Imma need 'a hit.

**HUNTER**

Well my pipes in my room ye can use it,  
Oh shit they're comin'!

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, PRESTON, OLIVIA, RYKER, GUNNER, and others*

**CLETUS**

How are ya Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Ta be honest I'm eatin' quite well man,  
but a stomach full on lies ain't that much.

**CLETUS**

Hunter what the 'ell're ya talkin' bout?  
Fuck does that mean?

**HUNTER**

What I ain't say nothin'

*To PRESTON*

'Ey Preston, this show's yer fav'rite one right?

**PRESTON**

I watch the new episodes ev'ry week

**HUNTER**

What's yer fav'rite one?

**PRESTON**

That's a hard question...  
Prolly when 'e kills the villain's best friend.

**HUNTER**

Oh yeah I love the sweet revenge 'e gits.  
Are all y'all ready?

**RYKER**

I'm ready Hunter.

**GLADYS**

Come'on now Hunter come sit wit' yer Ma

**HUNTER**

I'm good mama, I'd rather sit wit' her

**PRESTON**

[To CLETUS] 'Ey Cletus you hearin' this shit right now?

**HUNTER**

'Ey can I lie in yer lap?

*Lying down at OLIVIA's feet*

**OLIVIA**

No Hunter.

**HUNTER**

Nah like lay my 'ead down there

**OLIVIA**

Sure Hunter

**HUNTER**

Didya think I meant privates?

**OLIVIA**

Nah I ain't

**HUNTER**

Don' git me wrong, I like between yer legs.

**OLIVIA**

What did you say?

**HUNTER**

Nothin'.

**OLIVIA**

Are ya happy?

**HUNTER**

Who, me?

**OLIVIA**

Yes, Hunter.

**HUNTER**

I'm God's greatest clown.

I could be happy, look how fine Ma is,  
e'en though daddy died two days ago.

**OLIVIA**

Hunter 'e died like two months ago now.

**HUNTER**

Wow 'as it really been that long? Well good,  
maybe I can finally put on some  
clothes that ain't nearly as dark as these ones.  
Ya know, ya'd really think that ev'ryone  
would remember 'im a lot longer but  
I guess if y'ain't gotta statue then yer  
memory is as good as gone once ya  
start pushin' up daisies...

*Intro Song Plays.*

*Enter Jedediah into a Saloon packed with other cowboys. Jedediah puts a bounty onto the table and angrily stares at the other men in the room.*

*Exeunt*

**OLIVIA**

What's this show 'bout?

**HUNTER**

This show 'bout Jedediah the cowboy

**OLIVIA**

I mean duh canna tell me more than that?

**HUNTER**

That's all ya really need ta know ta git  
what's 'appenin' 'ere

**OLIVIA**

Don' I need details?

**HUNTER**

I mean I could explain it all ta ya,  
Er ye could jus' shut up an' spread yer legs...

**OLIVIA**

You nasty boy! Shut up I'm watchin' now

**Narrator**

Last week all of you tuned in to see our  
Hero Jedediah learn that he's been  
betrayed, tonight we will find out by who!

*Exit*

**HUNTER**

I forgot 'bout the preview, is it long?

**OLIVIA**

It seems short Hunter

**HUNTER**

Jus' like yer lovin'

*Enter two characters, Jedediah and his wife Alma*

**Jedediah**

Alma, my beloved wife and pardner...  
I'm afraid to say that despite being  
married for over twenty years by now,  
our time together seems to be coming  
to an abrupt end, cause it seems I have  
been betrayed by one of my closest friends.

**Alma**

Oh my! Oh Heavens! My Jedediah!  
This just can't be! You look alive and well.  
I haven't even seen you get a cold,  
much less any kind of life threatening  
illness! Are you in some kind of bad box?  
Oh please tell me what's wrong Jedediah!  
If you're going to die soon you have to  
tell me and especially tell your son.  
We are your family we deserve that.  
I can't live without you Jedediah,  
your son, Colt, can't live without you my love.  
Please tell me this is all some sick joke.

**Jedediah**

How I wish it was Alma, but I know  
that somebody close to me is planning  
to kill me, don't worry about Colt, him  
and I have already talked about what  
to do if I'm murdered.

**Alma**

Oh God save him!  
I swear to you my love that if something  
happens I will never love another.  
Remarrying's like killing you myself.



## **HUNTER**

[Aside] Ain't that the truth

### **Alma**

I will not have any other man raise  
our son but you. But you have to live for  
your family Jedediah, they are  
the most important thing in your whole life.

### **Jedediah**

Oh trust me, baby, I have no desire  
to just lay on my back and let them kill  
me without putting up some kind of fight.  
I intend to stand up tall and stand proud,  
and whoever is betraying me should  
get it over with before I find out,  
cause otherwise they are as good as dead.  
But if I am to die then little Colt  
knows to muster up whatever he can  
to avenge me and take good care of you.  
I have trained Colt very well and now he  
is a man in his own right, ready to  
take after his father and become the  
greatest cowboy to ever walk the roads.  
But all of that is just a precaution,  
and this traitor won't get the best of me.  
That being said, I don't even know who  
will stand side by side with me as brothers  
in arms against whoever this traitor  
is. For all I know my entire crew  
could be in on this plot against me but  
I will fight for as long as I hold breath.  
So Alma, don't you worry about me,  
even if I were to die tomorrow,  
Colt would take over as man of the house,  
and anyone loyal to me would strike  
down whatever bastard put my ass down.  
But if the worst comes to pass, just know that  
you have been the best part of my life since  
the day you entered it and I love you.

**Alma**

Jedediah stop saying stuff like that!  
Even if some varmint is after you,  
you're not going to die on me bastard!  
If you widow me I won't forgive you!  
I will never love or marry someone  
else if you go out and die on me Jed!  
You can't leave me and Cole alone on this  
God forsaken rock we call a planet!

**HUNTER**

Listen up mamma!

**Jedediah**

Wait a second honey shh shh shh... do  
you hear some kind of creaking? Like there is  
Someone outside the-

*Jedediah is shot*

**Alma**

Oh my goodness gracious! Jedediah!  
What happened? Who is there? Who shot my man?

*Exit*

**HUNTER**

What'ya think mamma?

**GLADYS**

Could she stop bitchin'?

**HUNTER**

At least she's loyal...

**CLETUS**

What you say Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Oh don' worry 'bout me uncle I ain't  
say nothin'

**CLETUS**

So why pick this episode?

**HUNTER**

Well I mean we gots folk that ain't never  
seen this show 'fore an' we gots ta show'em  
what this show got ta off'r, so why not  
the best episode in the whole damn show?  
An' I think this one's quite tellin' o' shit  
we all got goin' on in our own lives.  
At least I git it...

*Enter Morton*

Shit there's Morton, Jedediah's brother

**OLIVIA**

Wait 'is brother? Did 'is brother shoot 'im?

**HUNTER**

Ya could jus' keep watchin' an' find out, but  
yea it was Morton.

**OLIVIA**

What kinda sick bastard kills 'is own kin?

**HUNTER**

[Aside] I thinks I know'a couple'a bastards...

**OLIVIA**

What was that Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Don' worry 'bout it..  
Soon enuff ev'ryone will understan'  
the method behind all'a my madness...

**MORTON**

Well hello there Alma, fancy seein'  
you here! Well what happened to my brother?  
Old invincible Jedediah seems  
to be making his way over to the  
bone orchard. Well this is quite the problem,  
seems I'll have to be the man of the house...

*Morton puts his revolver back into its holster*

**HUNTER**

As ya can see 'ere, Morton 'as shot 'is own brother Jedediah cause 'e wants 'is house, 'is wife, 'is kid, an' all'a the power Jedediah 'ad fer 'imself.

**OLIVIA**

So 'e's their leader?

**HUNTER**

Cause 'e murdered 'im!

**GLADYS**

Is ev'rythin' good?

**PRESTON**

Turn off the TV.

**CLETUS**

Alright that's it I'm getting' outta 'ere!

*Exeunt all but HUNTER and HARRISON*

**HUNTER**

One brother dies out,  
An' one takes 'is place.  
An' I watch it all play out from the side-  
Cause I can't act yet,  
But I will act soon.  
God so help me I think ev'ryone done  
finally undersood my god damn point.  
Whaddy think Harrison?

**HARRISON**

Yea prob'ly

**HUNTER**

Yea I do think so  
Ya can tell Cletus is guilty cause 'e  
stormed out the room right after the murd'r  
cause 'e know that 'e did the same bullshit  
that Morton done did

**HARRISON**

Yea I saw 'im leave

**HUNTER**

Did ya see ‘im all nervous Harrison?  
That boy was sweatin’

**HARRISON**

Yea ‘e look’d sweaty

**HUNTER**

Was ‘e nervous when Morton shot ole Jed?

**HARRISON**

Uhh I guess so man

**HUNTER**

Ha ha I fuckin’ knew it! That bastard  
couldn’t pretend no more that ‘e didn’t  
kill my daddy an’ take ev’rythin’ that  
‘e built fer ‘imself!

*Re-enter RYKER and GUNNER*

**GUNNER**

Hey Hunter, can we talk about summin’?

**HUNTER**

Yea what’s goin’ on?

**GUNNER**

Well it’s bout Cletus...

**HUNTER**

O’ what did ‘e do?

**GUNNER**

Well ‘e’s kinda gon’ crazy in ‘is room.

**HUNTER**

Oh is ‘e drinkin’?

**GUNNER**

Nah ‘e’s piss’d as hell.

**HUNTER**

Well it ain’t my fault the bastard got some  
anger issues ‘e don’ know ‘ow ta git  
under control, does anyone know why  
‘e’s so damn mad?

**GUNNER**

We ain't quite sure 'e jus' kinda storm'd out,  
but 'e's been mutterin' sum...

**HUNTER**

Oh what's 'e out there mutterin' about?

**GUNNER**

We ain't sure but Gladys sent us 'ere ta  
git ya she's real mad.

**HUNTER**

Why's that my problem?

**GUNNER**

We ain't blamin' ya Hunter but Gladys  
says ya did summin ta make Cletus  
real upset, but she ain't say if she want  
ya ta come o'er there an' fix it or  
nothin' we jus' sayin'.

**HUNTER**

Not my problem.

**GUNNER**

'Ey man we ain't do nothin'

**HUNTER**

Oh I know,  
I ain't shootin' the messenger I'm jus'  
tellin' y'all that if'e piss'd off it ain't  
nobody's fault but 'is fer what 'e did.

**RYKER**

Well yer momma said that the way ya been  
actin' 'as amazed 'er

**HUNTER**

Well ain't that sweet!  
All any son e'er wan' do is make  
'is momma amaz'd at what 'e's doin'!

**RYKER**

Hunter I don' think ya git it, she's like  
amaz'd inna bad way.

**HUNTER**

Well that's just too  
fuckin' bad ain't it? Sounds like 'er problem.

**RYKER**

Hunter, what the 'ell is goin' on man?

**HUNTER**

Nothin' man I'm still the same ole Hunter!

**RYKER**

Nah man ya been actin' all damn crazy!  
You don' do anythin' anymore man,  
unless it's meth'r some fuckin' revenge

**HUNTER**

I ain't need nothin' else

**RYKER**

Whaddya mean!  
Man ya got ev'rythin' git back on track

**HUNTER**

Trust me Ryker my life's onna good track,  
the track'a justice!  
The point'a my life is ta git revenge  
fer those that got murder'd fer reasons that  
ain't got nothin' ta do wit' them at all!

**GUNNER**

Man Hunter yer off yer fuckin' rocker,  
gettit togeth'r.

**HUNTER**

I'm togeth'r! Trust me, believe me man.  
Y'all wouldn't gettit

**GUNNER**

What wouldn't we git?

**HUNTER**

The truth man...

**GUNNER**

What truth're ya talkin' 'bout?

**HUNTER**

The truth'a what's goin' on!

**GUNNER**

What truth man?

**HUNTER**

Listen ta me man, this ain't yer shit ta worry 'bout, this is my fight an' my life. Y'all need ta jus' stay outta my way an' let me do what I gots ta do.

**GUNNER**

Nah man ya gotta stop smokin' that shit, it's messin' wit' yer head man yer crazy.

**HUNTER**

You walk 'round supportin' my uncle an' yer out 'ere callin' me fuckin' crazy? I don' think y'all really git 'ow fuck'd shit is right now man, it's like it's jus' me an' my daddy's mem'ry against the whole world! I'm the only person that can enact God's will an' fix ev'rythin' in Fort Payne! An' no I can't stop smokin' cause if I do I'll be lost, without it I won' 'ave guidance from God'r my daddy!

*Enter PRESTON*

Hello!

**PRESTON**

'Ey Hunter yer momma wants ta see ya real soon.

**HUNTER**

Oh okay sounds good Preston I'll do that

**PRESTON**

Okay good but be careful now she's mad

**HUNTER**

She can't be that mad

**PRESTON**

Hunter she's piss'd off

**HUNTER**

Why would she be mad?

**PRESTON**

You know why, Hunter



**HUNTER**

Whelp then I guess I bett'r git o'er  
ta my ma an' see what the 'ell she needs.

**PRESTON**

Well I'll see ya then

**HUNTER**

Alright bye Preston

*Exit PRESTON*

Y'all two outta 'ere

*Exeunt all but HUNTER*

It's almos' sundown...

When the lord's restless souls come out ta play,  
the ghost'a my daddy can't make 'is way  
ta the lord's golden gates an' ta see Saint  
Peter an' join the chorus'a angels  
'till I deal right justice ta that piece'a  
shit uncle o' mine. Now ta make my way  
on o'er ta my momma's room ta see  
what the 'ell 'as gotten 'er so fuckin' mad.  
I really don' git why she's mad at me,  
when 'er an' Cletus're the villains'a  
my fuckin' life! Oh well it's whatev'r.

*Exit*

### **SCENE III. The Hallway of the home.**

*Enter CLETUS, RYKER, and GUNNER*

#### **CLETUS**

Ya know I really do love Hunter  
like 'e's my own son but 'e's jus' gettin'  
way too dangerous ta keep aroun' the  
house, 'is delusions 'ave gone from'a bit  
worryin' ta full blown batshit crazy.  
Gladys won' like it but I think we gots  
ta send 'im ta rehab.

#### **GUNNER**

Yea probably,  
like I wanna let 'im live 'is life an'  
figger all 'is shit out 'imself but 'e  
could git 'imself or someone else kill'd

#### **RYKER**

Yea,  
'e really ain't 'ave that bad of'a meth  
problem 'fore 'is daddy died, but 'e could  
jus' talk about it wit' us instead'a  
smokin' that shit all the fuckin' time, why  
don' 'e jus' smoke weed like ev'ryone else?  
Don' git me wrong I do feel fer the guy,  
but it's already been two months since ole  
man Hunter kicked the bucket, 'e jus' need  
ta git o'er it an' move on wit' 'is  
life, no offense ta ya Mister Cletus,  
wit' ole Hunter bein' yer brother an'  
all, but Hunter's jus' usin' it ta smoke.

#### **CLETUS**

Nah yer all good Ryker, I agree wit'  
ya, that boy is usin' my brother's death  
as an excuse to git high an' act mad.

#### **RYKER GUNNER**

Well we gotta go now, g'bye Cletus.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

*Enter PRESTON*

## **PRESTON**

Well it looks like Hunter is actually gon' go an' talk ta 'is momma so that's good. Cletus, if ya wan' me ta, I can go an' listen in from outside'a 'er door ta see what she talks ta 'im about an' ta make sure 'e gits the message an' all that. After I listen ta 'im an' talk ta Gladys, I'll come an' tell ya what 'e says ta 'er, bye then.

## **CLETUS**

Thank ya lots Preston.

## *Exit PRESTON*

O' what the 'ell am I gon' do about Hunter? I can't quite be sure but it seems that 'e's convinc'd 'imself that fer some damn reason I'm the one that kill'd my brother! Why the fuck would I e'er do such a terrible thing ta my own damn brother! I've lov'd Hunter since we were jus' li'l boys goin' on huntin' trips wit' our dad! I e'en did what 'e ask'd an' married Gladys so that I could take care'a 'er an' 'elp raise 'is son into a strong man. It ain't my fault that my brother died in that huntin' accident, but I'm tryin' ta pick up the pieces o' 'is life an' make sure that Hunter junior an' Gladys git ta move forward an' act like nothin' chang'd. At least Gladys 'as taken up 'er new life but Hunter thinks I kill'd 'is pa. An' ta make things e'en worse 'is problem wit' meth 'as only gotten worse since 'is daddy pass'd. I don' e'en know what ta do wit' that boy anymore, I might jus' 'ave ta pray ta God ta fix this fer me. I mean would anyone really be mad if I jus' shipp'd 'im off ta the rehab? I know Gladys would be upset at me

at least fer a li'l bit but I jus'  
don' know if I gots the strength ta deal wit'  
'is drug addict, angry, batshit crazy  
bullshit fer any longer. That's it, I'm  
getting' Ryker an' Gunner ta fer sure  
drive 'im up ta the city an' put 'im  
in the center. Why ain't 'e jus' smoke pot  
like ev'ry other boy 'is age instead  
o' spendin' all 'is fuckin' money on  
fuckin' crystals ta make 'imself stupid.  
Well, looks like all I can do is pray...

*Retires and kneels*

*Enter HUNTER*

**HUNTER**

There!

I found the bastard all alone, should I  
go ahead an' kill 'im now? I gotta  
pistol on me, I could end it' all now!  
No, no, wait. 'E's prayin' ta the lord right  
now...

'Ow could I be the hero'a the  
story if I am willin' ta shoot a  
man while in pray'r? I mean if I shot 'im  
while 'e ain't e'en lookin' I'm jus' as  
bad as Cletus an' as Morton. No, I  
gots ta wait 'till I can face the bastard  
head on like a true 'ero! I'll be jus'  
like Jedediah! I will be the-  
No!

This ain't 'bout bein' some hero, is 'bout  
murderin' a piece'a shit villain an'  
lettin' my daddy's poor, poor ghost 'ave peace.  
But ev'ry day I seem ta 'ave less an'  
less friends I can trust wit' my plan, Ryker  
an' Gunner 'ave both let me down an' work  
fer the sick bastard now, 'ow could they do  
this shit ta me! But oh well, there ain't much  
I can do right now but go see my ma...

*Exit*

**CLETUS**

[Rising] So lord, if ya can spare some good fortune  
an' help Hunter git off meth, please do so...

*Exit*

#### **SCENE IV. Gladys' Room**

*Enter GLADYS and PRESTON*

**PRESTON**

Alright Gladys, Hunter is on 'is way,  
Cletus said ya need ta tell it ta 'im  
straight that the way 'e been actin' ain't cool,  
an' that 'e needs ta stop doin' meth, now  
I'm gon' hide in the closet an' listen...

**HUNTER**

[Within] Ma I'm comin'!

**GLADYS**

Alright I hear 'im now,  
If yer gon' hide do it quick 'fore 'e's 'ere.

*PRESTON hides in the closet*

*Enter HUNTER*

**HUNTER**

Tell me ma what's wrong?

**GLADYS**

Hunter ya hurt yer pa's feelin's

**HUNTER**

No ma you did that

**GLADYS**

What's that?

**HUNTER**

What was that ma? I didn't say nothin'

**GLADYS**

Do ya understand'?

**HUNTER**

Understand' what ma?

**GLADYS**

Do ya know who I am?

**HUNTER**

Why of course ma,  
Yer the woman that married yer husband's  
brother, an' unfortunately my ma

**GLADYS**

Hunter! That's it, I'm getting' yer daddy

**HUNTER**

No, no, no ma yer gonna stay right there!  
Yer gonna sit down now an' think 'bout what  
the fuck it is yer doin' wit' Cletus!

**GLADYS**

What the 'ell Hunter? Are ya gon' kill me?  
Help! Help!

**PRESTON**

[Closet] What the 'ell is 'appenin' now?

**HUNTER**

[Drawing] What the fuck? The ghost is in the closet!

*Shoots at the closet*

**PRESTON**

[Closet] God fuckin' dam-

*Falls and dies*

**GLADYS**

Hunter what did ya do!

**HUNTER**

Uh I'm not quite sure,  
was it not a ghost?

**GLADYS**

Hunter what in the fuck is wrong wit' ya!

**HUNTER**

What's wrong wit' me ma? Well what's wrong with you!  
Marryin' Cletus is like killin' pa!

**GLADYS**

O' my God!

**HUNTER**

God cannot 'elp 'im now ma...

*Opens the closet and finds PRESTON*

Oh it was you ya piece'a shit bastard!  
I ain't plan ta kill ya, I thought ya were  
Cletus, oh well, seems like ya been put down.  
Now you ma, sit down, stop messin' wit' 'im,  
listen ta me now an' listen up good!  
I need'a know if yer soul could still be  
saved wit' the grace'a God'r if yer heart  
'as been ruin'd by that bastard Cletus

**GLADYS**

Hunter what the fuck did I do ta ya  
ta deserve any'a this?

**HUNTER**

You. Know. What.  
The kinda shit the Devil 'imself would  
do, an act that kill'd my daddy not once,  
but two times! Somethin' so foul I would not  
expect my own momma ta e'en try...  
Ya made the promise'a marriage a sham!  
I jus' don' wanna e'en believe it...  
If God 'imself came down right now an' took  
a look at yer soul 'e'd see the darkness  
that ya let Cletus put down in yer heart.  
But yer still my momma, e'en if yer  
sins're unforgiveable...

**GLADYS**

Hunter, what  
could I 'ave e'en done ta deserve this?

**HUNTER**

Lookit this ma, this picture'a Cletus  
an' daddy, now jus' look o'er at pa,  
do ya see this man? A god down wit' us?  
'E was a man's man, an' a damn good dad,  
an' 'e built our fam'ly an' was the pride  
o' Fort Payne! There ain't'a better man in  
damn near a hundred miles'a our city!



'E could hunt, 'E could fish, 'e could fix cars,  
hell 'e could e'en protect our fam'ly!  
An' that's why I don' git why in the world  
ya would ruin 'is mem'ry so damn bad!  
This is yer new husband, a real piece'a  
shit that would do 'is own brother like that.  
Like ma are ya fuckin' blind'r summin?  
Ya mov'd from the top'a the husband peak  
ta the deepest hole where the worst men are!  
I know it ain't love, an' it sure ain't sex,  
so what the hell could it all be fer ma?  
What sense does it make ta go from daddy  
ta 'is brother? No sense in any world  
that I fuckin' live in at least! Like ma  
I ser'usly don' understan' the hell  
goin' through yer head. It jus' hurts me ma.  
I been grievin' fer pa ev'ry secon'  
of ev'ry day an' ya seem'd ta move on  
an' marry Cletus like nothin' happen'd...  
My 'ead is so foggy all the damn time,  
I don' e'en know what ta think no more.  
No! No! No!  
I don' wanna live this life.  
I can't trust nobody, I'm all alone  
There is no one on this earth that can git  
'ow I'm feelin' or know what'r why I  
am the way I am. Tryin' ta fix ya  
issa lost cause cause I can't e'en save  
myself no more.

### **GLADYS**

O' Hunter don't say no more!  
I ain't e'en know ya were feelin' all  
this sadness an' this hatred in yer heart.  
'Ow can I 'elp ya son?

### **HUNTER**

There ain' nothin,  
nothin' that anyone can do ta 'elp.  
But yer no better, yer a whore that slept  
wit' my daddy's own brother!

**GLADYS**

Stop Hunter!

'Ow can ya say such 'orrible things ta yer own momma son!

**HUNTER**

You bitch! Yer a bitch!

Ya married a fuckin' nobody that ain't e'en got nothin' ta offer ya!

'E's a murderer! An' a no good thief!

'E stole a fam'ly from 'is own brother!

An' I jus' can't stand the bastard!

**GLADYS**

No more!

**HUNTER**

A damn criminal...

*Enter Ghost*

O' God it's daddy!

Daddy, what is it ya wan' from me now?

**GLADYS**

Hunter who're ya talkin' to?

**HUNTER**

Father!

Dad are ya 'ere ta punish me fer not killin' yer brother when I 'ad the chance?

**Ghost**

Listen ta me now an' listen up good son, don' give up now when ya 'ave 'im on the ropes, ya mus' track the bastard down an' kill 'im the second ya 'ave a chance an' avenge me, but fer now talk ta yer ma Hunter

**HUNTER**

Are ya doin' alright momma?

**GLADYS**

'Ow am I doin'?' Hunter yer crazy!

Yer starin' at the wall an' talkin' ta nobody! Hunter ya gotta realize

that y'ain't sane no more son. We're all worried  
sick 'bout ya son! Yer eyes're damn bloodshot  
an' all the hairs on yer body're up  
straighter than blades'a grass! What is it ya  
see that's scarin' the daylights outta ya?  
Cause I literally ain't see nothin'.

**HUNTER**

Is 'im! Is 'im! Do ya not see daddy?  
I can see 'im clear as day, 'e e'en  
got the exact same 'at on as the day  
Cletus took 'im out huntin' an' kill'd 'im.  
'E's tellin' me that I need'a keep on  
huntin' down Cletus, daddy thirsts fer blood...

**GLADYS**

Hunter 'e ain't there!

**HUNTER**

Y'ain't seein' nothin'?

**GLADYS**

Nah Hunter there ain't nobody there son.

**HUNTER**

An' y'ain't 'ear nothin'?

**GLADYS**

I only 'ear ya.

**HUNTER**

Look 'e's leavin'! 'E's gittin' out the house!  
'E's livin' jus' like 'ow 'e used'a live!  
'E's e'en leavin' the house out the door!

*Exit Ghost*

**GLADYS**

That's what I'm sayin' Hunter! Yer crazy!  
All that shit yer smokin's  
fuckin' ya up!

**HUNTER**

Crazy!  
My heart beats jus' like yer own does!  
I 'aven't said a single crazy thing!  
Ev'rythin' I say is the whole truth ma!

Ya could say anythin' an' I could say  
it right back word fer word wit' no prolem!  
A crazy person could not say it back!  
Ma, please don' jus' write it off as crazy,  
I'm the leas' crazy person'n Fort Payne!  
Listen ta me momma, if ya wanna  
git ta Heaven ya still can, all ya gots  
ta do is admit yer actions're not  
what the lord wants from ya, an' that ya know  
that what ya've been doin' is evil. If  
ya do that then Saint Peter wil let ya  
through the gates an' ya can be wit' daddy.  
Don' make things any worse than they'r ma.

### **GLADYS**

O' Hunter yer out 'ere breakin' my heart!

### **HUNTER**

Well good then, lettit git broken in 'alf!  
keep the good 'alf'a it an' throw away  
the bad, I 'ope ya sleep well tonight ma.  
But don' ya fuckin' dare sleep wit' Cletus.  
Ya cannot sleep wit' that piece'a shit no  
longer! If ya start sleepin' on'a couch  
now it'll be easier ta do then.  
From now on ma yer gon' be a child'a  
God. If ya don' wan' end up goin' ta  
'ell an' spendin' eternity wit' the  
Devil then ya better listen ta me.  
I've talk'd ta God an' the Devil too ma,  
An' the Devil is livin' inside'a  
Cletus. So sleep well momma, an' listen  
ta what I 'ave ta say from now on please.  
I can' lose Daddy an' lose ya too, ma.

### *Pointing to PRESTON*

'Ear me now my lord that is in Heaven,  
I am sorry fer killin' ole Preston,  
I thought it was anotha one'a those  
that 'ave been attackin' me as'a late  
But 'e's better off dead an' 'e can rest.  
Goodnight momma, I'm bein' cruel ta 'elp

ya so ya don' end up in 'ell wit' that  
no good uncle o' mine.

**GLADYS**

But why Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Look mamma I already don' spent the  
last thirty minutes tellin' ya why I'm  
doin' what I'm doin', I ain't gotta  
say no more. But I will say one more thing.  
Don' let that bastard seduce ya no more.  
But I better not 'ear a fuckin' word  
from nobody that Cletus knows Imma  
kill 'im! If I 'ear anythin' 'bout this  
then my anger won't be contain'd mamma.  
Jus' act like ya ain't know nothin' 'bout it.  
I'm not sayin' I'm gon' kill ya mamma,  
but I can't promise that you'll keep livin'.  
Can ya promise all'a that ta me ma?  
Can ya promise me ta keep my secret?  
Can ya promise not ta sleep with Cletus?  
Can ya make all these promises ta me?

**GLADYS**

Uhhh, yea I can promise ya all that son,  
I won' let Cletus know all yer secrets.  
I swear on my life.

**HUNTER**

Okay, good good good

**GLADYS**

Hunter,  
Ya do know yer goin' ta rehab, right?

**HUNTER**

O' trust me mamma I know all about  
that plan Cletus came up wit' ta git rid  
o' me since I know all 'bout 'is murder.  
An' I know that Ryker an' Gunner 'ave  
betray'd me ta work fer that piece'a shit.  
Don' worry, I'll be goin' wit' 'em though,  
make my way alla way ta Birmingham.  
But don' think imma jus' go ta rehab,

Jus' you wait an' see momma, you'll all see.  
Now I mus' git outta 'ere , ya know what  
ya 'ave ta do, I gots ta find the ghost.  
Jus' know that I'm doin' God's work momma.  
right now this is my greatest secret an'  
I can't 'ave you'r anyone else mess  
it up. Now Preston, yer comin' wit me,  
Imma take ya somewhere real nice an' safe.

*Exeunt severally; HUNTER dragging PRESTON away*

## ACT IV

### SCENE I. A room in the house.

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, RYKER, and GUNNER*

**CLETUS**

Wait what's wrong sweetheart? Yer out 'ere sighin',  
an' got that look on yer face that summin  
happen'd, where's Hunter?

**GLADYS**

Can y'all two leave please?

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

O' Cletus it's horrible! It's Hunter!

**CLETUS**

What Gladys? What the 'ell did Hunter do?

**GLADYS**

Inna anger fill'd fit'a rage where 'e  
was jus' yellin' an' yellin' an' yellin'  
at me an' sayin' all'a these awful  
things at me an' yell'd that there was a ghost  
an' then 'e pull'd out a gun an' shot at  
the closet an' kill'd Preston!

**CLETUS**

Lord above!

I was almos' the one in that closet,  
Hunter's almos' a threat ta all'a us,  
ta me, ta you, ta 'is friends, ta 'imself.  
What the 'ell're we spose'd'ta do 'bout 'im.  
If anyone found out 'bout this we'd git  
blamed fer it, ain't no one gon' believe us.  
Our boy's gon' completely insane, but we  
lov'd 'im too much ta recognize the signs...  
An' the ones we did see we ignor'd cause  
we were asham'd'a 'im, like a disease.  
Tell me now sweetheart, where did Hunter go?

**GLADYS**

I ain't sure 'e's takin' Preston somewhere  
ta git ridda 'is body, but it seem'd

that maybe 'e actually felt bad about it.  
I e'en caught 'im cryin' afterward.

**CLETUS**

Gladys we should go,  
First thing in the mornin' we should ship 'im  
off ta either the rehab er the cops,  
an' get 'im help 'fore 'e kills someone else.  
Ryker an' Gunner!

*Re-enter RYKER and GUNNER*

Y'all go an' find Hunter as soon as ya  
can an' see where 'e's hidin' ole Preston.  
Last time Gladys saw 'im 'e was draggin'  
Preston's body out the house a' ta the  
street. Go bring both'a them back ta us please.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

Com'ere Gladys, it's all gonna be fine.  
Ryker an' Gunner will go find Hunter,  
an' tomorrow 'e'll git the help 'e needs.  
But fer now ya should git some sleep baby.

*Exeunt*



## SCENE II. Outside the house

*Enter HUNTER*

**HUNTER**

'Ere ya go Buddy...

**RYKER: GUNNER:**

[Within] Hunter! 'Ey Hunter!

**HUNTER**

What the 'ell? Who the fuck is callin' me?

O' 'ere they are.

*Enter RYKER and GUNNER*

**RYKER**

Hunter what did ya do wit' Preston's corpse?

**HUNTER**

I put 'im back in the Earth wit' the lord.

**RYKER**

Hunter can ya show us where ya buried  
'im so 'e'll 'ave a proper funeral?

**HUNTER**

Nah I don' think so

**RYKER**

What? Why the 'ell not?

**HUNTER**

Why would I take y'all's advice an' do what  
y'all want me ta do when all y'all do is  
repeat whatev'r the 'ell Cletus says!

**RYKER**

Ya really think that bad'a us Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Yea I do Ryker, an' you too Gunner.  
I thought y'all were some'a my bestest friends,  
but the two'a ya been workin' against  
me ever since my daddy pass'd away.  
I needed y'all ta be there fer me but  
all y'all did was go ta my parents an'  
pin them against me.

**RYKER**

I don' git what yer tryna say Hunter.

**HUNTER**

I'm glad ya don', I'm jus' smarter than y'all.

**RYKER**

Hunter stop this shit, tell us where Preston  
is so we can bury 'im.

**HUNTER**

With Cletus,  
Not right now, but maybe sometime later...

**GUNNER**

What do ya mean?

**HUNTER**

Nothin', bring me ta 'im.

*Exeunt*

**SCENE III. In Cletus' room**

*Enter CLETUS, attended*

**CLETUS**

Those two should find Hunter an' Preston soon,  
But if Hunter ain't bein' watch'd 'e could  
hurt someone since 'e ain't right in the 'ead.  
But I don' want the cops ta find out an'  
lock 'im up, fer Gladys an' my brother's  
sake, I can't live up ta my brother if  
I can't e'en keep 'is son outta jail.  
The only way ta fix this is fer 'im  
ta go ta rehab an' get offa meth.  
I jus' hope no one else dies 'fore I can  
git 'im ta Birmingham.

*Enter RYKER*

O' Ryker!

**RYKER**

Cletus it's getting' worse, 'e won't tell us  
where 'e hid Preston.

**CLETUS**

Well where is Hunter?

**RYKER**

Gunner's walkin' o'er wit' 'im right now.

**CLETUS**

Well bring Hunter in!

**RYKER**

Gunner! Bring in Hunter!

*Enter HUNTER and GUNNER*

**CLETUS**

Now Hunter, where's Preston?

**HUNTER**

'E's at dinner...

**CLETUS**

At dinner! Where?

**HUNTER**

But 'e ain't eatin', 'e's bein' ate up.  
There's a group'a 'ungry worms eatin' real  
well right now all thanks ta good ole Preston.  
We can't be mad at 'em fer eatin' good  
when we eat their friends out in the forest.  
We all end up dead anyway so I  
jus' help'd Preston out.

**CLETUS**

Jesus Christ Hunter!

**HUNTER**

One'a these days one'a us will fish wit'  
that worm an' eat both the fish an' Preston.

**CLETUS**

Fuckin' 'ell Hunter...

**HUNTER**

I mean are ya gonna look at me an'  
tell me that that ain't was gonna 'appen?

**CLETUS**

Where is Preston at?

**HUNTER**

Well 'opefully 'e made it ta Heaven.  
Maybe ya should go up there an' look fer  
'im yerself if ya can e'en go there.  
If ya can't find 'im up there then ya might  
'ave some luck in the woods.

**CLETUS**

We will find 'im.

**HUNTER**

'E ain't goin' nowhere

**CLETUS**

Hunter, what ya  
done is damn near unforgiveable son.  
We all really care about ya Hunter,  
but ya've caused ev'rybody so much grief.  
I 'ate ta 'ave ta do this but yer gon'  
go ta the rehab place in Birmingham  
fer yer own sake.

**HUNTER**

Ta Birmingham rehab?

**CLETUS**

Fer yer addiction.

**HUNTER**

I ain't addicted!

**CLETUS**

Hunter we ain't fightin' 'bout this, jus' go...

**HUNTER**

O' don' ya worry uncle, I'll go ta  
Birmingham... I'm outta 'ere

**CLETUS**

Good luck son...

**HUNTER**

When I get back from Birmingham all'a  
y'all will see yer mistakes, see ya real soon...

*Exit*

**CLETUS**

Ryker, Gunner, y'all two take 'im down ta  
Birmingham now an' make sure 'e goes ta  
the rehab. I'll pay fer gas an' all'a  
that, I jus' need y'all ta drive 'im down there.

*Exeunt RYKER and GUNNER*

Oh Christ what the 'ell am I spos'd'ta do?  
Hunter was actin' weirdly fine wit' it,  
an' I don' trust that boy ta actually  
go do what 'e needs ta ta git better.  
I jus' 'ope Ryker an' Gunner can keep  
'im in check long enuff ta git that 'elp.  
'E'll need ta git better real fast too cause  
we can't afford ta send 'im there fer more  
than maybe a month at best, but that should  
at least git 'im through withdrawl, I wish ya  
the best'a luck Hunter, please git better.

*Exit*

## SCENE IV. A Gas Station on the side of the Highway

*Enter FREDDY and his cousin*

**FREDDY**

Alright Cousin, go an' tell the McCoys that the time fer them ta give us that land an' that I, Freddy Jennings, will take that land an' my revenge by the end'a the week. Them McCoy's 'ave 'ad it too good fer too long an' my daddy's murder will not be forgotten.

**COUSIN**

I'll git to it Freddy!

**FREDDY**

Thank ya cuz...

*Exeunt FREDDY*

*Enter HUNTER, RYKER, and GUNNER*

**HUNTER**

Well now who the hell're y'all?

**COUSIN**

The Jennings fam'ly.

**HUNTER**

What y'all doin' 'ere?

**COUSIN**

Takin' what's ours

**HUNTER**

Well what would that be?

**COUSIN**

The right ta McCoy land an' Hunter's 'ead

**HUNTER**

Well ain't that summin, Hunter senior or Hunter junior?

**COUSIN**

Hunter senior,  
years ago 'e shot Freddy's daddy in

the 'ead an' kept the land that 'e owed them.  
So now Freddy's gon' get 'is revenge on  
them McCoy bastards an' avenge 'is pa  
an' takin' back that Jennings land they took.

**HUNTER**

Well I got some real bad news fer ya bud.

**COUSIN**

O' an' what would that be?

**HUNTER**

Y'all two's target,  
the man that shot Freddy's pa in the 'ead,  
the most strongest man in all'a Fort Payne,  
was murder'd not too long ago. But 'is  
brother Cletus is still alive an' well.

**COUSIN**

I'll go tell Freddy

*Exit*

**RYKER**

Hunter, 'urry up

**HUNTER**

I'm goin' I'm goin', git off my ass.

*Exeunt all except HUNTER*

That's it! I finally know what I mus'  
do! I need'a stop focusin' on my  
attempts ta git ev'ryone else ta see  
'ow much'a a piece'a shit Cletus is,  
an' jus' focus on takin' my revenge now.  
I been a pussy 'bout this fer too long,  
dancin' 'round what I gots ta do cause I'm  
scurd'a what might 'appen if I do fail.  
But I ain't worryin' any longer!  
While I will always 'ate that Freddy boy,  
I respect 'is dedication ta 'is  
revenge an' I will follow 'is lead an'  
stop delayin' what I was born ta do.  
'Ell I can e'en take advantage'a

Freddy comin' ta kill Cletus so I  
can use 'im as'a distraction an' go  
in'ta kill Cletus while 'e ain't lookin'!  
No, no, no. Then I'd still be a pussy...  
If I jus' sneak in an' shoot the bastard  
then I won' git ta e'en see 'is face.  
I wanna look that fucker in the eyes  
an' let 'im know exactly why I'm gon'  
put a fuckin' bullet through 'is damn brain.  
At this point it ain't jus' 'bout revenge no  
more, now my own honor's on the line too.  
I ain't goin' any closer ta the  
rehab center in Bimringham so 'elp  
me God. I may 'ave ta kill Ryker an'  
Gunner if they refuse ta listen ta  
me an' 'elp me kill my uncle Cletus.  
I'll git as much blood on my hands as I  
need ta iff it means I git ta avenge  
my daddy once an' fer all. Now is the  
time fer me ta stop pussy footin' an'  
put honor back into the McCoy name!

*Exit*



## **SCENE V. The McCoy House**

*Enter GLADYS, HARRISON, and a NEIGHBOR*

**GLADYS**

I won' talk ta 'er

**NEIGHBOR**

She ain't inna good place right now Gladys,  
she needs a lady.

**GLADYS**

Why she need all'at?

**NEIGHBOR**

She needs'a lady's shoulder ta cry on,  
comfort only'a mother can give 'er.  
she won' stop cryin' 'bout 'er daddy's death,  
she's hysterical, not makin' no sense.  
I been tryin' ta listen an' be there  
fer the girl but I jus' don' know what ta  
tell 'er ta git 'er ta feel better. Please  
jus' take 'er in an' 'elp 'er out Gladys.  
I mean yer son is 'er boyfriend an' all,  
maybe git Hunter ta 'elp 'er out then.

**HARRISON**

Hunter's onna trip right now so 'e can't  
really do nothin' fer Olivia.

**GLADYS**

Let the girl in

*Exit HARRISON*

I guess I'll talk ta 'er  
I mean it is my son's fault she's so sad,  
I jus' don' know what ta tell 'er cause I  
don' want'er ta know that Hunter kill'd 'im.

*Re-enter HARRISON, with OLIVIA*

**OLIVIA**

Hey Gladys! Where is my good ole Gladys!

**GLADYS**

O'er 'ere darlin'!

**OLIVIA**

[Sings]

What's a girl ta do?

When I jus' see you?

My Hunter baby!

I miss you lately!

**GLADYS**

Olivia, what're ya singin' girl?

**OLIVIA**

Please Gladys, jus' let me do what I need!

*Sings*

An' where is my pa?

Ain't seen 'im so fa'

I need my daddy

I miss 'm badly!

**GLADYS**

But Olivia...

**OLIVIA**

Please Gladys, jus' please

*Sings*

Buried now inna town cemetery!

*Enter CLETUS*

**GLADYS**

Take a look Cletus...

**OLIVIA**

[Sings]

My grief 'bout Preston I will now carry!

An' no one ta 'elp

brother, boyfriend, left...

**CLETUS**

'Ow 'ave ya been feelin' Olivia?

**OLIVIA**

Well God be willin' I'm as good as I  
could e'er possibly be, jus' wond'rin'  
where the 'ell my boyfriend is I need 'im!

**CLETUS**

Bless yer little heart...

**OLIVIA**

O' don' y'all two worry 'bout me, jus' 'ear  
me out an' listen ta me grieve through song!

*Sings*

Tomorrow I'll see  
My Hunter an' me  
Togeth'r again  
I will see my man  
An' then we will go  
we're both out the door  
or inta 'is room  
where we'll be gone soon

**CLETUS**

O' Olivia...

**OLIVIA**

Don' worry Cletus I'm almos' done now

*Sings*

We'll go togeth'r  
Away ferever  
ta a place we know  
where others can't go  
'e'll show me the way  
so we'll go away  
ta a place we know  
that y'all will not go!

**CLETUS**

Olivia...

**OLIVIA**

Don' worry now Cletus!  
Thank y'all so much fer listenin' ta me,

now that my daddy's gone I can't be 'ere.  
When Lee gits 'ere tell 'im I'm not around,  
an' that I'm hangin' out wit' my boyfriend,  
wherever we go.

*Exit*

**CLETUS**

'Ey there Harrison,  
Can ya follow 'er an' see where that is?

*Exit HARRISON*

I feel so bad fer poor Olivia,  
it's jus' like wit' Hunter an' 'is daddy,  
I jus' 'ope that girl deals wit' it better,  
last thing we need is anoth'r druggie.  
I ain't 'ave the heart ta tell the girl that  
Hunter is down in Birmingham fer 'is  
addiction, would'a broken 'er poor heart.  
I wish we could'a 'ad a better chance  
ta give Preston a good burial but  
if people start'd 'earin' 'bout it then  
Hunter would end up inna jail cell fer  
the rest'a 'is life an' I don' think 'e  
or anyone else wants that ta 'appen.  
An' God only knows what we're gon' tell Lee...  
'e knows 'is daddy wadn't all'at sick  
er nothin', but I don' know what else ta  
say ta the poor kid. But if we told'im  
that 'is sister's boyfriend shot 'is daddy  
inna 'ead there ain't no tellin' what Lee  
will end up doin'. But if I were ta  
take'a guess 'e'd probably kill Hunter

*A knock on the door*

**GLADYS**

O', who's at the door?

**CLETUS**

'Ey ya can come'in the door is unlock'd!

*Enter another NEIGHBOR*

What's goin' on man?

**NEIGHBOR**

Jus' lettin' ya know,  
Lee's back in town an' I won' lie 'e's piss'd  
cause y'all 'ad a funeral 'fore 'e could  
e'en git back in town, now this shit ain't  
got nothin' ta do wit' me I was jus'  
sayin' cause 'e's on 'is way now an' I  
ain't want y'all ta git caught wit' yer pants down.  
I think 'e ran inta Olivia  
after pullin' inta the neighborhood  
so maybe she could'a calm'd 'im down but  
I wouldn't count on it.

**GLADYS**

O' Cletus! What  
in the world're we gonna tell Lee now!

**CLETUS**

Someone else is 'ere

*Another knock on the door*

*Enter LEE with a shotgun*

**LEE**

Alright Cletus now what the fuck happen'd?  
'ow the 'ell did my daddy die an' why  
ain't y'all wait fer me?

**GLADYS**

Calm down Lee, calm down

**LEE**

Right now I ain't got a calm bone in me,  
if I did I would not be my daddy's  
son! Now I won't put the fuckin' gun down  
till I know what's up!

**CLETUS**

Tell me what's wrong Lee,  
What's got ya so rile'd up'at me like I

'ad anythin' ta do with yer father  
passin' away? Yer daddy simply died  
of'a heart attack cause 'e's been so damn  
worried at work! Sorry we buried 'im  
'fore ya could git up ta Fort Payne we jus'  
ain 't want y'all ta 'ave'ta see 'im like that.

**LEE**

Tell me where 'e is

**CLETUS**

Look Lee 'e's gone now.

**GLADYS**

But no one kill'd 'im.

**CLETUS**

Yeah jus' 'is bad heart

**LEE**

I don' believe that shit fer a second!  
Pa wasn't e'en stress'd 'bout nothin' at  
'is job 'e lov'd what 'e did down at work!  
'e was way too young ta die of'a heart  
attack'r anythin' like that, my pa  
was a healthy man which means somebody  
must'a murder'd 'im!

**CLETUS**

Well who would kill 'im?

**LEE**

See Cletus, now ain't that the part I need?  
I won't give up 'till I find the bastard  
that kill'd my daddy!

**CLETUS**

Okay listen Lee,  
If yaw anna know what happen'd ta yer  
pa then why the 'ell're ya rushin' in  
ta my 'ome with a fuckin' shotgun out  
like ya'll shoot me?

**LEE**

Case ya were the bastard.

**CLETUS**

Well 'ow ya gon' find 'im?

**LEE**

Well Cletus since ya buried 'im I thought  
ya might know summin 'bout 'ow 'e really  
ended up six feet down.

**CLETUS**

Well listen Lee,  
if yer talkin' ta me straight from the 'eart,  
an' ya believe me when I say I ain't  
got nothin' ta do wit' it, I could at  
least let ya figger it out so ya can  
work it out. But don't tell Olivia.

[Knocking]

**LEE**

What the? Who is 'ere?

*Re-enter OLIVIA*

O' Olivia!

What the fuck happen'd ta my sister while  
I was gone? I been out the town fer like  
two months an' ev'rythin's gon'ta shit man!  
She looks like she's lost 'er fuckin' mind! What  
'as been goin' on 'ere, what the damn 'ell  
'appen'd ta my neighborhood? Did Hunter  
do this ta ya Olivia? Or are  
ya two finally broken up? Jus' tell  
me what's wrong wit ya!

**OLIVIA**

[Sings]

Brother 'ere ya are  
back ta 'ere from far  
ta find our pa dead  
wit' yer face all red

**LEE**

Ya lost yer damn mind,  
Olivia what's wit' all this singin'?

**OLIVIA**

[Sings]

I'm lettin' my 'eart

git it a fresh start  
without my daddy  
feelin' all saddy...

**LEE**

Olivia stop singin' an' wake up!

**OLIVIA**

Brother ya gotta understan' 'ow bad  
things're without daddy an' my Hunter...

**LEE**

Wait 'old on whaddy mean no Hunter?

**OLIVIA**

Well aft'r daddy pass'd away, Hunter  
'as jus' kinda disappear'd an' no one  
knows where the 'ell 'e went, I'm real worried  
'bout 'im cause 'e's been actin' so weird an'  
I 'ope daddy dyin' wasn't the last  
straw 'fore Hunter ends up killin' 'imself

*Sings*

O' where is Hunter!

**LEE**

Wait daddy died an' Hunter's jus' gone now?  
Olivia what 'as 'e been doin'?

**OLIVIA**

[Sings]

Where is my Hunter?  
Where is my Hunter?  
I 'ope 'e ain't dead,  
See 'im in my head.  
He never will come again.  
Where is my Hunter?  
Where is my Hunter?  
'E ain't in Fort Payne  
I 'ope 'e's still sane  
I can't lose 'im too,  
Jus' like I lost you!

*Exit*



**LEE**

What the fuckin' 'ell?

**CLETUS**

Alright Lee I'll tell ya ev'rythin' then,  
but ya gots ta promise ya won't tell'er,  
I don't want ta break Olivia's 'eart.  
I'll tell ya ev'rythin' an' if ya feel  
like it's my fault an' could'a been stopp'd 'fore  
Preston end'd up gettin' shot in the  
'ead, then I'll take the blame an' ya can kill  
me ta satisfy yer right ta git back  
at the person responsible an' 'elp  
ya an' yer sister in any way I  
possibly can.

**LEE**

'Preciate it Cletus,  
but if y'ain't kill my pa then we ain't got  
beef, I can 'andle any kinda piece  
a shit that did this ta me an' my sis.  
Jus' tell me ev'rythin' ya know 'bout what  
'appen'd an' we'll be square.

**CLETUS**

That I can do,  
I don' wan' 'ave ta do this but I can't  
jus' let ya live yer life wit'out answers.

*Exeunt*

## SCENE VI. Outside the house

*Enter HARRISON and BILLY*

**HARRISON**

Whaddy need man?

**BILLY**

Someone's callin' ya so I brought yer phone

**HARRISON**

Thanks man lemme see

*Friend hands phone*

Now let's see who's blowin' my damn phone up,  
ah shit it's a bunch'a texts from Hunter.

**BILLY**

'E won't stop textin'

**HARRISON**

Yeah 'e's jus' like that

**BILLY**

Yea' I notic'd y'all ain't really 'ang out  
n'more an' that 'e's been actin' real weird  
e'er since 'is daddy died an' 'e ask'd  
Otis fer more drugs.

**HARRISON**

Yea' but it's all chill,  
[Reads] 'Harrison, Harrison, I need yer 'elp,  
while Ryker an' Gunner were drivin' me  
up ta the rehab we ran into the  
Jennings an' they kill'd Ryker an' Gunner  
an' took all'a the gas outta the car  
an' totally took all my money so  
I'm stuck att a gas station an' don' got  
any money ta buy gas'r nothin'  
an' could really use yer 'elp. Could ya send  
me some money'r git Cletus'r my  
ma ta send me some money but don' tell  
them what 'appen'd jus' tell'em that I need  
food'r some shit in Birmingham. Also can  
ya make sure ta load up my pipe fer me  
when I git back? If ya do I'll let ya

take some hits of it fer yer troubles, text  
me back as soon as ya git the money'  
Well damn that fuckin' sucks, I guess I should  
git 'im that money, could ya pack the pipe?

*Exeunt*

## SCENE VII. The Living Room

*Enter CLETUS and LEE*

### CLETUS

Alright Lee, are ya ready ta 'ear what's really been goin' on 'round 'ere since ya mov'd away ta the big city an' find out what 'appen'd ta yer daddy an' who done kill'd 'im?

### LEE

Well no fuckin' shit Cletus, I don' understan' why y'all ain't done'a damn thing 'bout it yerselves, like why ain't y'all call the damn police'r summin'? But it don' matter no more jus' tell me.

### CLETUS

Well Lee,  
ya see it ain't all that simple, we ain't jus' dealin' wit' some random murder'r, we're dealin' wit a member'a my own fam'ly who I love wit' all'a my heart. E'en if I didn't love 'im like I do I promis'd someone very very important ta me that I would keep 'im safe as best I can, an' not only that but I love 'is moth'r an' if I call'd the police it would break 'er little 'eart. I been tryin' ta deal wit' it the best I can wit'out 'avin' ta git the cops ta do summin' 'bout it, wit' that bein' said I do think 'e 'as ta see what 'e's done an' face the music'r 'e won't learn.

### LEE

Well wit' my pa six feet in the fuckin' ground an'a sister who's gone bat shit wild, I think I deserve ta know who the fuck needs a fuckin' bullet through their god damn brain 'fore I end up killin' ev'ryone.

**CLETUS**

Look Lee I understan' where yer comin' from but we gotta think 'bout the best way ta go 'bout this'r things will only git worse an' worse 'till there ain't no fixin' what's goin' on in Fort Payne. Yer daddy was a good friend an' will git 'is justice Lee.

*Enter VINCENT*

Vincent? What is it?

**VINCENT**

Cletus! Yer son is back an' we saw 'im an' 'is girl leavin'!

**CLETUS**

Hunter's 'ere? 'E's spos'd'ta be in rehab!

**VINCENT**

That was the word 'round the neighborhood, that's why we were so confus'd when we saw 'em walk into the woods.

**CLETUS**

Lee this could be bad, Vincent can ya leave?

*Exit VINCENT*

So I don' know 'ow the 'ell Hunter got Ryker an' Gunner ta drive 'im back from Birmingham wit'out e'en goin' ta the rehab but I'm'a little stress'd 'bout what 'im an' Olivia'r goin' ta the forest fer, yer pa was always worried 'bout the two'a them doin' drugs.

**LEE**

Is 'e doin' drugs?

**CLETUS**

Yea' e'er since 'is daddy died 'e been smokin' meth an' trippin' an' all that shit. But so far Olivia ain't done none.

**LEE**

Ain't no fuckin' way in 'ell y'all let my  
sister 'round some meth 'ead, if she gits on  
any kinda drug I'll put Hunter's 'ead  
on a god damn spike.

**CLETUS**

Well that's the thing Lee,  
cause Hunter's also the man that kill'd yer  
daddy an' needs ta be punish'd some way.

**LEE**

Yer fuckin' wit' me,  
why the 'ell is Olivia wit' 'im?

**CLETUS**

Well we ain't go 'round tellin' people that  
my son murder'd someone in Fort Payne, we  
tried ta handle ev'rythin' ourselves but  
it seems like 'e won't jus' go ta rehab  
an' git off drugs ta make 'imself better.  
As much as I love Hunter I can't stop  
ya from gettin' revenge fer yer daddy.  
Jus' please be patient.

**LEE**

'Ow am I spos'd'ta  
be fuckin' patient when the man that kill'd  
my pa is out there druggin' up my sis?

**CLETUS**

Trust me Lee I git what yer sayin' but  
if ya act too fast then ev'ryone will  
know ya kill'd 'im an' ya won't be able  
ta git away from the police an' my  
wife will nev'r fergive me fer lettin'  
ya jus' shoot my son.

**LEE**

Then what do we do?

**CLETUS**

Lee there's lotsa shit goin' on right now  
not jus' wit' Hunter but wit' some'a my  
brother's enemies, the Jennings, want this  
land an' told us awhile back they're comin'

'ere ta kill me an' all'a my fam'ly.  
But if durin' that fight ya wanna take  
out Hunter an' 'elp me wit' the Jennings,  
then e'en though I'll be sad 'bout Hunter,  
we can both git what we want an' I can  
protect my wife an' honor my broth'r.  
While this ain't really what I 'ad in mind  
fer Hunter an' 'is drug problems, I git  
that ya need ta avenge yer pa fer yer  
own honor an' 'is.

**LEE**

'Ow long do ya think?

**CLETUS**

Not too long.

**LEE**

'Ow do ya know?

**CLETUS**

They sent'a lett'r not too long ago.

**LEE**

E'en then,  
I want that fuck'r ta know what 'e did.

**CLETUS**

But if ya go 'round screamin' ta the town  
'bout what Hunter did yer gon' go ta jail  
fer the murd'r cause ya nev'r know if  
somebody gon' tell the cops on ya'r  
not. Ya need ta be 'ere fer yer sister,  
'specially cause y'all jus' lost Preston an'  
wit'out a momma at 'ome she ain't got  
nobody ta take care'a 'er. That girl  
needs a man ta take care'a 'er an' it  
ain't Hunter an' it ain't Preston no more.  
Can ya promise me ta wait till the time  
is right?

**LEE**

But 'e's jus' out there livin' life.

**CLETUS**

Look Lee did ya really love yer father?  
Or are ya jus' gon' ignore what 'e wants?

**LEE**

The fuck'r ya tryin' ta say Cletus?

**CLETUS**

Look Lee, bein' a man ain't jus' 'bout the people ya gotta kill fer yer honor, it's 'bout protectin' the people ya love. Not jus' by gettin' violent wit' people that threaten them but also bein' there ta provide fer yer fam'ly when no one else can, yer daddy is dead, which makes ya the man'a the 'ouse, an' that comes wit' some responsibility fer the people that look up ta ya, yer sister ain't got no man ta look aft'r 'er, if yer gon' shoot Hunter ya gots ta do it inna way that won't send ya straight ta the big 'ouse. When my brother died I took o'er as the man fer Gladys an' fer Hunter an' that's jus' somethin' we gots ta do as men. Do ya understan'?

**LEE**

Fine, fer my sist'r.

**CLETUS**

Okay good, now while I won't 'elp ya kill my son, I can at least promise ta not git in the way'a yer revenge, jus' please don't let Gladys know yer gon' do it an' try ta make sure she don' see it cause it would break the poor woman's 'eart, now ya should go find Olivia an' make sure she ain't out there smokin'r nothin' cause the last thing we need is e'en more meth 'eads runnin' 'round Fort Payne causin' all'a us trouble. Ya could probably go an' find Vincent since 'e was the one who saw 'em go ta the forest.

**LEE**

Now that I can do,  
don't worry I won't kill the fuck'r in



front'a Olivia cause she nev'r  
would fergive me fer killin' 'er boyfriend,  
'specially if it was right in front'a  
'er an' she 'ad ta see the light leave 'is  
eyes. But I will go find 'em in the woods  
an' I swear ta the lord if she's on meth  
I will at least give 'im a piece'a my  
mind, that I can say.

*Enter GLADYS*

**GLADYS**

Oh my God Cletus!  
It's so so so 'orrible! I don' want  
ta believe it's e'en true! I don't know  
'ow ta e'en say this but I 'ave ta!  
Olivia was found dead!  
Hunter brought'r back ta the neighborhood  
an' 'er 'eart wasn't beatin'! 'E 'ad tears  
in 'is eyes an' was sayin' all kinds'a  
nonsense! It was so sad ta see 'ow much  
it 'urt 'im an' ta see what 'appen'd ta  
poor poor Olivia! I don't know what  
ta do! Hunter said it was some kinda  
drug overdose cause she ain't nev'r done  
smok'd any meth before! Lee I'm so so  
Sorry!

**LEE**

Mrs McCoy please tell me this is  
some kinda damn really fuckin' sick joke!

**CLETUS**

Oh my God...

**GLADYS**

God I wish it was one Lee...  
Hunter said they went in'a woods ta smoke  
cause she ain't nev'r smok'd before an' she  
want'd an escape from ev'rythin' cause  
o' 'ow sad she's been after Preston died.  
'E said 'e ain't mean fer anythin' ta  
'appen ta 'er! She came ta 'im askin'

fer summin' ta take 'er mind off'a things  
an' they were in'a woods smokin' from 'is  
pipe an' she smoke'd way too much'a the stuff  
an' Hunter said 'e tried ta give 'er some  
CPR but she jus' wouldn't wake up!  
I jus' can't believe this is 'appenin',  
'specially not e'en a week aft'r  
'er daddy pass'd away! I can't e'en  
begin ta imagine the pain ya mus'  
be feelin' right now Lee, it 'as ta be  
so very awful.

**LEE**

I can't believe this...

**GLADYS**

O' God 'elp this town!

**LEE**

This is the last straw,  
I'm sorry Cletus, but I can't let this  
go by unpunish'd. Hunter will 'ave'ta  
face the music one'a these days, an' I  
can't stand by an' let 'im git away wit'  
this shit any long'r. Not my daddy  
an' my sister. I'm'a go show 'im what!

*Exit*

**CLETUS**

O' God Gladys we 'ave ta go stop 'im!  
If we don't 'e'll go an' shoot Hunter now!

*Exeunt*

## ACT V

### SCENE I. A Burial Plot

*Enter RAYMOND and CLARENCE with shovels*

**RAYMOND**

Damn I feel bad fer this poor girl don't you  
Clarence?

**CLARENCE**

I mean yea'a course I don't want  
nobody ta die'r nothin' but ain't  
she die'a a drug o'erdose Raymond?

**RAYMOND**

Yea' she was smokin' meth wit' that Hunter  
boy out in the woods.

**CLARENCE**

Well that's on 'er then

**RAYMOND**

Wait whaddya mean Clarence the girl's dead?

**CLARENCE**

Well what I'm sayin' is if she ain't want  
ta die from'a drug o'erdose then she  
shouldn't'a smok'd meth in the forest that's  
jus' stupid like she 'ad 'er whole life in  
front'a 'er man.

**RAYMOND**

Well yea' but ya can't jus' blame it all on  
'er I mean word 'round town is that it was  
the poor girl's first time tryin' anythin'  
cause she was all sad 'bout Preston an' shit.  
While it was a stupid ass decision  
the fault ain't all on 'er man it's on 'im.

**CLARENCE**

She still did 'em though

**RAYMOND**

But it's Hunter's fault!

**CLARENCE**

But not jus' 'is fault,  
E'en if'a 'nother person gits ya  
on drugs it's still jus' as much yer fault too.

**RAYMOND**

Look man all I'm sayin' is while 'e gave  
'er the meth it ain't like 'e made'r smoke  
it! She ask'd 'im fer the meth an' got 'im  
ta smoke it wit'ter. She done brought this on  
'erself, but it don't matter we still got  
graves we need ta dig.

**CLARENCE**

Can ya 'and o'er my shovel Raymond?

**RAYMOND**

If ya answer this...

**CLARENCE**

Got dammit what now?

**RAYMOND**

Okay Clarence now say ya 'and me a  
gun right? Now if I take that gun an' I  
go an' shoot myself in the 'ead would that  
be my fault fer shootin' myself'r yer  
fault fer givin' me a gun.

**CLARENCE**

Yers Raymond.

**RAYMOND**

So why issit all'a the sudden 'is  
fault that she went an' o'erdos'd on meth?

**CLARENCE**

Cause 'e knew 'ow dangerous that shit is  
an' still gave'r some

**RAYMOND**

But ya also know 'ow dangerous'a  
gun is but if ya give me one it ain't  
yer fault that I done shot myself wit' it  
issit Clarence? So why issit Hunter's  
fault that the girl came ta 'im an' got it.

**CLARENCE**

I mean they were datin' so 'e knew she  
ain't inna good place.

**RAYMOND**

Don't mean 'e kill'd 'er

**CLARENCE**

'E still 'elp'd 'er die

**RAYMOND**

Someone's 'ere!

**CLARENCE**

Hush up!

*Enter HUNTER and HARRISON, at a distance*

**RAYMOND**

'Ere man I'll stay 'ere an' talk ta the kid  
an' 'is friend. Ya git yer ass outta 'ere  
since y'always git piss'd off when kids show up.  
Now then can ya go ta the gas station  
an' go pick us up some beers? Feel like I'm  
gon' need one real soon.

*Exit CLARENCE*

*He digs and sings*

I saw a critt'r  
It 'ad big ole feet  
it walk'd through the woods  
an' it ain't see me

**HUNTER**

[Aside] The fuck this ole coot thinks 'e's doin' out  
'ere got damn singin' while diggin' a grave?

**HARRISON**

I mean 'e digs graves I don' think 'e feels

**HUNTER**

O' if only I was like 'im an' could  
jus' stop feelin' ev'rythin' all the time!

**RAYMOND**

[Sings]

I walk'd ta the thing  
wit' a branch on me  
Plann'd ta kill'it dead  
then it stepp'd on me

*Throws up a bone*

**HUNTER**

Ya know that bone use'd'ta be a part'a  
some oth'r creature an' now this fuck'r  
is jus' diggin' it up an' throwin' it  
out like it's nothin'! That bone could'a been  
anybody's but now that it's dead it  
don't mean a damn thing.

**HARRISON**

Yea man could'a been

**HUNTER**

That bone could'a been'a neighbor, er a  
fam'ly dog, er e'en jus' some random  
fuck'r that 'appen'd ta die in Fort Payne.  
Whoever they were in life don' matt'r.

**HARRISON**

Ha yea

**HUNTER**

It could'a been anyone man,  
but now they're jus' some corpse inna damn field.  
But ain't that 'ow we all end up someday?  
Jus' dead bodies rottin' out inna field?  
Assumin' that God ain't real'r nothin'.

**RAYMOND**

[Sings]

I got up'an' walk'd  
Away from Bigfoot  
But 'e chas'd me down  
An' there I was put

*Throws up another bone*

**HUNTER**

There's anoth'r bone! 'E's still jus' throwin'  
them bitches up! I mean shit that could'a  
been jus' 'bout anyone! Could'a been'a  
doct'r or'a lawy'r or e'en'a  
police offic'r er summin! Why the  
'ell're they lettin' this random fuck'r  
dig'em up an' toss'em out like they ain't nobody!  
Whatev'r they did in life ain't matt'r  
no more though, now they jus' bones an' dirt an'  
worms an' shit. No matt'r 'ow much money  
they made, 'ow much land they owned, 'ow many  
cute girls they 'ad jus' fer them. None'a it  
means fuckin' anythin', all'a us'r  
doom'd ta live some shitty life till we jus'  
up an' kick the bucket, right Harrison?

**HARRISON**

Summin like that man

**HUNTER**

Life is jus' pain man

**HARRISON**

Yea man it sure is

**HUNTER**

If I'm keepin' it real man the people  
this fuck'r's diggin' up'r the lucky  
one's

**RAYMOND**

O' 'ey there boys

*Sings*

An' then the beast made  
graves fer me ta lay

**HUNTER**

Alright man so tell us, who's grave is this?

**RAYMOND**

I mean ya know I could tell ya son but  
I don't think ya will like the answer boy.

**HUNTER**

'Ey man ya best bett'r tell me who yer diggin' this grave fer 'fore I make it yers.

**RAYMOND**

'Ey man 'ey man no need ta git hostile

**HUNTER**

What man ya buryin'?

**RAYMOND**

It ain't no man

**HUNTER**

What then? A lady?

**RAYMOND**

Yeah it was a girl

**HUNTER**

Then whose grave issit?

**RAYMOND**

This is where they're buryin' that poor girl

**HUNTER**

[Aside to Harrison] What a fuckin' asshole man! Why won't 'e jus' tell us who the fuck is gettin' put down in this damn hole fer fuck's sake. What does 'e e'en gain from keepin' it secret! Ev'ryone's been actin' so fuckin' weird like damn. [To Raymond] 'Ow long 'ave ya been diggin' graves?

**RAYMOND**

I start'd diggin' 'em when ole Hunter fought off the Jennings. Lotsa graves that day.

**HUNTER**

'Ow long go was that?

**RAYMOND**

I thought ev'ryone knew that it was the same day that 'is son Hunter junior was born, big day fer 'im.

**HUNTER**

O' 'is son Hunter?



**RAYMOND**

Yea uh, the one that's up in Birmingham  
right now ta git away from 'ere awhile.

**HUNTER**

Why?

**RAYMOND**

I ain't really ask fer the details...

**HUNTER**

O' ya didn't man?

**RAYMOND**

Nah man ain't my son

**HUNTER**

Ain't 'is son neither

**RAYMOND**

Huh? Who ain't? Hunter?

**HUNTER**

Cletus ain't 'is pa

**RAYMOND**

I mean not by blood but 'e's 'is daddy  
now kid.

**HUNTER**

Cletus ain't 'is daddy, 'e's 'is uncle!

**RAYMOND**

Well if my uncle married my ma, then  
'e'd be my step daddy, makin' 'im my  
new daddy. Jus' like 'ow if ya adopt  
a kid they're still gon' be yer kid aft'r.

**HUNTER**

Nah only yer blood daddy is yer pa

**RAYMOND**

Think what ya want kid,  
I don't git why yer so mad 'bout this son,  
Thought we jus' 'avin' a conversation.  
Sunnuva bitch! There's a whole damn body  
of'a dog down 'ere!

**HUNTER**

Whose dog issit?

**RAYMOND**

If I 'ad ta guess I'd say the McCoys

**HUNTER**

Their dog from years ago?

**RAYMOND**

Yea prolly, if it is I'm glad it died,  
I saw lil Yogi once but it piss'd on  
my fuckin' shoes an' bit my damn ankles.

**HUNTER**

So that's Yogi?

**RAYMOND**

Yea it is

**HUNTER**

Let me see.

*Takes the skull*

Oh poor poor Yogi! What a great lil dog!  
I rememb'r back in'a day I used  
ta run all 'round the yard with this lil guy,  
'e'd always chase aft'r the squirrels an' lil  
critt'rs that would run 'round the yard an' eat  
whatev'r the 'ell 'e could git 'is mouth  
'round! But look at ya now Yogi, where is  
all'at energy ya used'a 'ave? Where  
is yer lil shit eatin' grin ya used'a  
'ave when ya would do summin' y'ain't s'pos'd'a  
be? It's all gone now, jus' like fer us all.  
'Ey Harrison! Ya think ya could answ'r  
a question?

**HARRISON**

Huh? Uh sure...

**HUNTER**

Ya think Elvis look'd like this in 'is grave?

**HARRISON**

Prolly man yea

**HUNTER**

Well got damn 'e smell'd like shit!

*Puts down the skull*

**HARRISON**

Haha yea

**HUNTER**

Jus' think 'bout it Harrison! With a corpse  
ya could see ev'rythin' they did in life!  
Ev'rythin' somebody ev'r got done!

**HARRISON**

I mean yeah I guess man if ya say so

**HUNTER**

Nah man it don't matter cause we'll all be  
buried down in'a ground jus' like all'a  
oth'r folk who came 'fore us. That's what we  
do Harrison. We're born ta suff'r then  
we die 'fore we can find an answer 'bout  
why we're e'en 'ere in the first place. If  
God is real then 'e mus' be one cruel son  
of a bitch, ta make me outta clay an'  
put me on this 'ell of'a planet jus'  
ta watch me lose my will ta live an' die...  
Oh shit Harrison shut up! It's Cletus!

*Enter Priest with a makeshift of OLIVIA, LEE and Mourners following; CLETUS, and  
GLADYS*

Who the fuck're all these people wit' Lee  
an' Cletus an' Gladys? I ain't see none  
o' these people in my entire life!  
An' whose shitty coffin is that? Looks like  
they made it yesterday. Let's watch...

*Hiding with HARRISON*

**LEE**

Stop 'ere!

**HUNTER**

[To Harrison] There's Lee! That's Olivia's broth'r! Watch!

**LEE**

So what else do we gotta do fer this?

**Priest**

Well, y'all already built 'er coffin an'  
plac'd 'er body innit so I 'ave ta  
bless the body an' read out from the book  
o' the lord and then we can put 'er ta  
rest in the heav'ns above wit' our lord.  
If all'a y'all could jus' git int'a lines  
an' separate yerselves as friends an' as  
'er fam'ly I can go 'ead an' say'er  
burial rites.

**LEE**

Thank ya good sir, that all?

**Priest**

We should be good now.  
Now togeth'r we'll sing the holy pray'r  
so 'er soul will find peace in the kingdom  
of our holy lord!

**LEE**

Lay 'er in the earth,  
an' we will plant flowers on top'a 'er  
so 'er beautiful soul can feed'a new  
gard'n fer all'a us ta see! Sleep well  
my dearest sist'r...

**HUNTER**

What? Olivia!

**GLADYS**

Sleep well ya kind girl...

*Scattering flowers and crying*

I wish I could'a seen the day that ya  
would marry my dear Hunter an' I could  
give ya these pretty flowers as a bride!

**LEE**

O' dear God!  
I swear ta git revenge on  
the person who did this ta ya! Ya  
were way too young Olivia! Please jus'  
let me 'old my sist'r jus' one more time!

*Leaps into the grave*

Jus' bury me with'er! I don' wanna  
live inna world wit'out my daddy an'  
my sist'r! Bury me till ya can't 'ear  
me scream no more!

**HUNTER**

[Advancing] Who do ya think ya are  
givin' a speech 'bout yer sist'r an' yer  
daddy when ya weren't e'en 'ere ta spend  
time wit'em when they were alive! It's me,  
Hunter McCoy is back!

*Leaps into the grave*

**LEE**

You fuckin' bitch!

*Grappling with him*

**HUNTER**

List'n 'ere buddy!  
Ya bett'r git yer fuckin' 'ands off my  
throat! I don' wanna 'ave ta kill ya but  
if ya don' wanna meet Saint Peter then  
you'll git the fuck away from me asshole!

**CLETUS**

'Ey! 'Ey! Break it up!

**GLADYS**

Hunter oh my God!

**HARRISON**

Hunter bro quit it

*Harrison and Cletus break up the fight, and they come out of the grave*

**HUNTER**

Git off'a me! Lemme at'im! I'll fight  
this bastard 'til 'e's fuckin' buried 'ere!

**GLADYS**

O' dear Hunter why?

**HUNTER**

I lov'd Olivia! More'an any  
o' y'all e'er could! I ain't gon' sit by  
an' jus' watch as this fuckin' asshole lies!

**CLETUS**

Hunter yer crazy!

**GLADYS**

Don' say that Cletus!

**HUNTER**

Fine then Lee, show me what the fuck ya got!  
Would ya cry fer 'er? Fight? Starve? 'Urt yerself?  
Would ya drink'a bottle'a rat poison?  
Ya came 'ere screamin' an' cryin' ta try  
an' make me look bad now yer in 'er grave!  
Ya'd git buried wit'er? Fine! So would I!  
I'd dig us'a 'ole a 'undred feet deep  
an' lay down there at'a bottom wit'er!  
I would'a done anythin' fer this girl!  
So if ya wanna run yer mouth then do  
it but I'll run mine right back!

**CLETUS**

Hunter please!

I know yer prolly jus' 'avin' one'a  
yer episodes but ya can't keep actin'  
crazy! Ya need'a calm down this is'a  
got damn funeral!

**HUNTER**

List'n ta me Lee,  
Why the 'ell're ya treatin' me like this?  
I always really lik'd ya man, ya were  
like a broth'r ta me, but if all y'all  
wanna treat me like this I'm outta 'ere!

*Exit*

**CLETUS**

O' thank God, Harrison, please follow 'im.

*Exit HARRISON*

*To LEE*

Alright Lee, I think it's time fer ya ta  
do what ya gotta do, prepare yerself.  
My sweet darlin', go watch o'er yer son.  
I promise we'll git 'im a wonderful  
grave an' we can bury 'im right next ta  
Olivia, fergive me my broth'r...

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE II. The hallway in the house**

*Enter HUNTER and HARRISON*

**HUNTER**

Wait Harrison did I e'er tell ya  
'ow the 'ell I got back 'ere from rehab?

**HARRISON**

Uhh I ain't think so?

**HUNTER**

Ah shit man my bad, I bet ya wond'rin'  
where the 'ell Ryker an' Gunner been huh?  
Well that fuck'r Cletus put me inna  
car wit'a two'a 'em an' told them two  
ta drive me o'er ta Birmingham an'  
put me in rehab an' I 'ad kinda  
given'up but then we ran into the  
Jennings an' 'ad ta stop an' talk ta'em

**HARRISON**

O' damn that's crazy...

**HUNTER**

So there I was Harrison, surrounded  
by my own enemies an' the man who  
wants ta kill my fam'ly but I trick'd 'em  
an' sent Freddy aft'r that piece'a shit  
Cletus ta put more pressure on the fuck  
while I git ready ta shoot the fuck'r  
dead. So then an' there I came up wit'a  
plan ta make my way back 'ere ta Fort Payne.  
Seein' 'ow dedicat'd that Freddy  
was 'bout gittin' revenge fer 'is daddy's  
death fill'd me wit' the pow'r ta git my  
ass back 'ere no matt'r what lyin' sacks  
o' shit I 'ad ta take out 'fore I could  
drive my ass all'a way back 'ere ta 'ome.

**HARRISON**

Wait what?

**HUNTER**

I 'ad ta do it Harrison,  
I did whatev'r was necessary.



**HARRISON**

I ain't followin'

**HUNTER**

Look Harrison there  
were two big ole 'urdles in my way that  
were stoppin' me from doin' what I 'ad  
ta do an' so I took them 'urdles an'  
mov'd 'em outta my way so I could make  
my way 'ere fer my final revenge, it  
starts soon Harrison, the time'a my last  
revenge is boutta start an' finally  
my mission will be o'er...

**HARRISON**

What 'urdles?

**HUNTER**

'Urdles Harrison, like things that git in  
my way that stop me from doin' what is  
necessary. I'm talkin' bout the two  
that drove me up ta put me in rehab?  
Ya know, the folk I thought were my friends but  
ditch'd us an' start'd 'elpin' out Cletus  
instead'a 'elpin' us take the sunnuv  
a bitch out? The two that ain't been 'round town  
e'er since I got back ta Fort Payne? Don't  
ya know who I'm talkin' 'bout?

**HARRISON**

Wait're ya talkin' 'bout Ryker an' Gunner.

**HUNTER**

I am yea,  
aft'r Freddy Jennings left the highway  
an' Ryker an' Gunner were boutta git  
back into the car I look'd 'round an' saw  
there ain't nobody 'round us so I took  
my gun an' shot both'a'em inna 'ead  
an' then buried their bodies out inna  
woods so ain't no one can find where they are.

**HARRISON**

Wait so Ryker an' Gunner're dead now?

**HUNTER**

Well they did't ta themselves Harrison,  
instead'a 'elpin' me out in my time  
of need they tried ta kill me fer Cletus.  
But now there ain't no one that can stand in  
the way'a me an' my uncle, it's jus'  
me an' 'im now...

**HARRISON**

Oh shit yer still on that?

**HUNTER**

Don't ya think I gots ta finally take  
action an' put down this bastard? The man  
who kill'd my daddy an' married my ma?  
The fuck'r who took my perfect life an'  
ruin'd ev'rythin'? I think it's time ta  
stop bein' a pussy jus' git on  
wit' it 'fore 'e can kill me first. Don't ya  
think so?

**HARRISON**

I mean if ya kill'd Ryker an'  
Gunner ya might as well kill Cletus too.

**HUNTER**

Yes, yer right Harrison, I can't wait fer  
Freddy an' the oth'r Jennings ta git  
'ere ta finish off my Uncle Cletus.  
I do feel bad fer what I did ta Lee,  
I was jus' inna rage an' feelin' sad  
an' I kinda took it out on 'im when  
'e prolly the only man that knows 'ow  
I feel right now...

**HARRISON**

Oh shit! Otis is 'ere!

*Enter OTIS*

**OTIS**

'Ey whats up there fellers ya call'd me up?

**HUNTER**

'Ey there Otis, ya we're runnin' real low

**HARRISON**

Yea man we almos' outta the good stuff

**HUNTER**

Otis gimme some'a yer best shit, I  
want the strongest stuff ya got cuz I might  
die today an' I wanna go out strong,  
an' feelin' on top'a the world, ya got  
anythin' that strong right now?

**OTIS**

'Ell yeah man,  
ya know I always got the best shit 'ere.

**HUNTER**

Alright sweet gimme enuff ta make'a  
damn horse high'r up'n Heaven itself.

**OTIS**

Yea lemme look inta my bag an' see

**HUNTER**

If y'ain't got nothin' too strong I'll jus' take  
anythin'

**OTIS**

Hmmm I'm 'avin' some trouble

**HUNTER**

Look man if ya can't find the shit jus' 'and  
summin' o'er

**OTIS**

Aight man if that's what ya  
want I can give ya summa this weak'r  
shit but I ain't know who cook'd it so it  
could be a lil fuck'd up jus' be careful

**HUNTER**

I ain't care where it's from

*HUNTER takes the meth*

**OTIS**

Aight man do what  
ya wish, ya can do whatev'r ya want  
with it as long as I git my money.  
Jus' know I 'eard summin' 'bout lac'd reef'r

makin' its way 'round Fort Payne lately, I  
'eard that some guy o'er in'em 'ouses  
by the railroads o'er'dos'd few days back.

**HUNTER**

It really don' matt'r if I die'r  
not at this point I jus' ain't gots the strength  
ta do this shit sob'r I need'a git  
high an' git high soon'r I'm gon' 'ave'a  
panic attack'n give up on what I  
gots ta do. I don' care'f that shit got  
straight up fuckin' 'eroïn innit as  
long as I can put it inna pipe'n  
smoke it. Ya understan' what I'm sayin'?

**OTIS**

Nah man I git what yer sayin', why tho?

**HUNTER**

Whaddya mean why Otis? Like why what  
man?

**OTIS**

Why're ya tryna git yerself kill'd?

**HARRISON**

I'on think 'e wants ta git 'imself kill'd  
'e jus' wants some'a that good shit

**HUNTER**

Nah man

**OTIS**

Then what?

**HARRISON**

There is that thing wit' Cletus too...

**HUNTER**

That fuckin' bastard

**OTIS**

Wait fuck did 'e do?

**HUNTER**

The real question Otis is what ain't 'e  
do? The fuckin' asshole took ev'rythin'...

**OTIS**

Like yer uncle went an' stole all'a it?

**HUNTER**

Ya could say that, took my daddy's life, took my daddy's wife, took way everythin' that made me 'appy...

**OTIS**

Oh shit is that what 'appen'd aft'r yer dad died? Damn I'm sorry ta 'ear that man.

**HUNTER**

It ends t'night...

**OTIS**

Wait whoa whaddy mean?

**HUNTER**

Cletus bett'r make the most'a the day...

**OTIS**

'Old the fuck up are ya gon' kill the old man? Shit man I might 'ave ta git the 'ell outta 'ere I ain't wanna be involv'd in all'a that, the cops would lock me up fast'r than ya could take'a hit outta that pipe. Thank ya fer buyin' from me but I don' want nothin' ta do with this man.

**HUNTER**

Wait before ya go!

**HARRISON**

Shit man does this mean I need a deal'r?

**OTIS**

What is it Hunter?

**HUNTER**

'Ave ya seen Lee anywhere? 'E kinda disappear'd the oth'r day aft'r 'im an' I got inta a fight when they were buryin' Olivia an' I ain't seen 'im 'round the neighborhood since that night. Ya see 'im 'round'r did 'e jus' skip town?

**OTIS**

That's Preston's kid right? Yeah I think I saw  
'im o'er at the gun store back in town  
on my way o'er ta the dude who cooks  
all'a my good shit. Why the fuck ya git  
inna fight with that boy?

**HUNTER**

It don' matt'r

**OTIS**

Whatev'r it is ya should look out then

**HUNTER**

I ain't got nothin' against Lee, 'e lost  
jus' as much as I did an' it's kinda  
my fault so I git why 'e's angry. I  
'ope I can show 'im that it's all cause'a  
Cletus's bullshit.

**OTIS**

Whatev'r 'elps ya

**HUNTER**

Aight man we got what we need ya can leave

**OTIS**

Okay y'all be safe now

**HUNTER**

Good bye

*Exit OTIS*

'Kay Harrison, ya ready ta  
smoke this shit now?

**HARRISON**

Man that's what I been waitin' fer Hunter

**HUNTER**

Aight man but we gotta 'urry so I  
can git this shit o'er wit' while "im still  
high an' send Cletus straight down ta Hell where  
'e belongs. 'E should be comin' 'ome from  
work any minute now, then I git ta  
finally finish this an' git some peace.  
O' shit Harrison somebody's knockin'!

*Enter FORREST*

**FORREST**

'Ey Hunter I gotta message fer ya  
from Cletus an' Lee. They gon' be 'ere soon  
an' said fer ya ta make sure yer ready  
'fore they 'ere since y'all're goin' outside.

**HUNTER**

What the fuck? Why's Lee wit' my uncle? Fuck  
do they want me ta come do? Tell 'em ta  
come fuckin' git me themselves're summin.

**FORREST**

I ain't know they jus' told me ta git ya

**HUNTER**

Fuckin' bullshit

**FORREST**

I mean alright Hunter I can go tell  
Cletus an' Lee that ya won't listen then

**HUNTER**

Fuckin' whatev'r man

*Exit FORREST*

**HARRISON**

Damn that was weird huh

**HUNTER**

It's gotta be a fuckin' trap God damn  
it, I can't fuckin' believe Cletus would  
git Lee ta fuckin' kill me, fuck does my  
ma think 'bout all this shit? She in onnit?

**HARRISON**

Shit man I don't know

**HUNTER**

Well if it's a fuckin' fight they want it's  
a fight they got, I got my gun on me

**HARRISON**

Damn Hunter are ya always carryin'  
that thing? I ain't e'en know ya 'ad'a  
gun.

**HUNTER**

E'er since I realiz'd Cletus kill'd  
my daddy I been carryin' it on  
me cause I know that bastard 'as want'd  
ta kill me since the day 'e took out my  
daddy. Fuck'r bett'r not try nothin'  
er I'll blast 'is fuckin' brains real quick.

*Enter CLETUS, GLADYS, LEE, and FORREST*

**CLETUS**

As much as I 'ate it, come take this gun

*CLETUS hands HUNTER a pistol*

**HUNTER**

Listen Lee, I ain't got no problems wit  
ya man, we ain't gotta fight'r nothin'  
we can jus' talk this shit out man. I lov'd  
Olivia more'n anythin' in  
the whole fuckin' world man I ain't got no  
reason ta kill ya. I ain't e'en do  
nothin' ta ya man. Like what reason do  
we e'en 'ave ta fight 'bout? Hunter ain't  
done nothin' ta ya, that ain't me it was  
Cletus 'e's behind ev'rythin' that been  
'appenin' 'round Fort Payne I promise that.  
I e'en got the proof, my daddy's ghost  
came all'a way down from Heav'n ta tell  
me what Cletus did ta 'im an' sent me  
on'a mission ta take out the bastard  
an' git revenge fer 'is murd'r. I ain't  
done any'a this man ya gotta trust  
me Lee, think 'bout what Olivia would  
want from us man.

**LEE**

Jus' shut up Hunter,  
I don't care what ya gotta say fer yer  
self'r yer honor er none'a that shit.  
I ain't gon' kill ya man e'en if ya  
kill'd my daddy an' got Olivia



kill'd cause yer some craz'd fuckin' addict. I  
got these pistols fer us ta 'ave a duel  
an' settle our shit. Whoev'r loses  
'as ta leave Fort Payne.

**HUNTER**

Thank fuckin' God man,  
I'll take ya on man, jus' know I'm good wit'  
a gun, what's the rules?

**LEE**

Cletus can do that

**HUNTER**

Well then I guess we bett'r git ready  
fight, I'm sure yer thinkin' 'bout non lethal  
shots ta the arm'r leg?

**LEE**

Summin' like that

**HUNTER**

Cletus what's the rules?

**CLETUS**

Y'all're gon' take ten steps back an' shoot, first  
man ta git shot leaves Fort Payne.

**HUNTER**

Aight sounds good,  
Jus' know yer gon' 'ave ta leave Fort Payne Lee

**CLETUS**

Take the safeties off, an' start steppin' back,  
aft'r y'all take ten steps feel free ta shoot.

**LEE**

This is fer my Daddy an' my sist'r

**HUNTER**

Jus' know this ain't personal ta ya Lee

*They head outside to the front lawn*

**CLETUS**

Sweetheart can ya grab me a beer from the  
fridge o'er in'a kitchen? If Hunter  
wins the fight I'll drink it in 'is honor,

but if e loses an' ends up 'avin'  
ta skip town, I'll pour it out in'is name.  
now you two take 'em .22 pistols  
an' git ready fer yer duel, stay inside  
the yard an' don' run off ta no tree's're  
nothin', aft'r one'a y'all 'as been 'it  
then both'a y'all gotta stand down an' put  
the guns down 'fore ya git more 'urt, an' don'  
pretend y'ain't been shot, e'en if the shot  
ain't 'urt all'at much.

**HUNTER**

Sounds good

**LEE**

Ready up

*They start pacing*

**HUNTER**

I'm sorry

**LEE**

Shut up

**HUNTER**

I really am Lee

**FORREST**

Aight y'all git ready

**LEE**

It's time ta end it

**CLETUS**

Aight Hunter, Aight Lee, y'all can start it up!

*Cletus shoots a pistol straight up*

Now!

**HUNTER**

Well Lee if it is a fight ya want

*Hunter shoots, hits nothing*

God fuckin' dammit!

**LEE**

Dumbass, ya miss'd me

**CLETUS**

Hunter will win this

**GLADYS**

O' my poor baby,  
I believe in ya Hunter! Don't let that  
Cox boy make ya leave Fort Payne an' yer ma!

**HUNTER**

I'll try momma!

**CLETUS**

Sweetheart let 'im focus

**GLADYS**

I'm sorry 'oney, I won't bother 'im

**CLETUS**

[Aside] Hunter ain't notic'd 'e's firin' off blanks

**HUNTER**

Momma don' distract me, I'm tryna win!

**GLADYS**

I'm sorry sweet boy!

**LEE**

Quit talkin' an' shoot!

**CLETUS**

Oh god let it end!

**LEE**

[Aside] Bastard don't know I got hollow points 'ere

**HUNTER**

You won't win this Lee, we don' need ta fight,  
I'm too strong fer ya, in body an' my  
will ta do what I gotta do

**LEE**

Try me

*They continue shooting at each other*

**FORREST**

It's anyone's game

**LEE**

This ends 'ere an' now!

*LEE shoots HUNTER in the lung, so HUNTER pulls out his other pistol and shoots LEE in the heart*

**CLETUS**

'Ey 'ey stop shootin'!

**HUNTER**

Not when 'e's kickin'!

*GLADYS faints*

**FORREST**

O' shit Gladys pass'd out!

**HARRISON**

Fuck's goin' on?

**FORREST**

Ya good Lee?

**LEE**

I guess this is what I git fer cheatin,  
should'a jus' 'ad this damn duel fair an' square...

**HUNTER**

Fuck 'appen'd ta ma?

**CLETUS**

She faint'd Hunter

**GLADYS**

O' god it is so awful! My son is  
shot in the back! I can't take this no more!

*Faints again*

**HUNTER**

You fuckin' bastard! This pistol is fill'd  
with blanks!

**LEE**

Hunter you bastard, ya kept a  
gun on ya, but yea I did fill it wit'  
blanks. Ya deserve ta die ya piece'a shit.

Ya kill'd ev'ryone I 'old dear ta me,  
an' I'm glad I git ta spend my last time  
on this god fersaken Earth watchin' ya  
breathe yer last breaths, ain't no way ya can live  
through a hollow point bullet ta the lungs.

**HUNTER**

Ya fuckin' asshole, I swear ta kill each  
an ev'ry one'a ya that did this!

*Shoots CLETUS*

**All**

Christ!

**CLETUS**

Got dammit Hunter, I was tryna 'elp...

**HUNTER**

Don't ya fuckin' lie ta me on yer death  
bed ya sack'a shit, I 'ope ya rot in  
'ell with Lee

*CLETUS dies*

**LEE**

When I do git down ta 'ell  
I'll be waitin' fer ya at the front gates  
ta beat the shit outta ya fer the rest  
of eternity so Olivia  
an' my pa can find peace up in Heaven.

*Dies*

**HUNTER**

Finally, I got revenge fer my pa,  
an' 'e can make 'is way up ta Heaven  
'stead'a wastin' 'is time down 'ere wit' me.  
But it seems I'll be joinin' my uncle  
an' Lee pretty soon, I'm coughin' up blood  
an' my lungs're fuckin' killin' me, thank  
ya fer stickin' by me Harrison, yer  
the best friend I ev'r 'ad. Take care'a  
my momma fer me.

**HARRISON**

Uhh yea I can man,  
sorry yer finna die that shit sucks, there  
anythin' ya wanna do 'fore ya die?

**HUNTER**

Fuck it man, I jus'  
wanna do what I want ta, I'll jus' spend  
the last'a my time 'ere in Fort Payne the  
way I prefer, smokin' wit' my best friend.  
Go 'ead an' set it up I ain't got long  
'fore this damn bullet wound finishes me  
off. Tell Otis I said this is some good  
shit

*HARRISON prepares the pipe, a car drives up*

Aw fuck 'urry up it's the Jennings...

**FORREST**

Shit man I'm getting' outta 'ere this ain't  
my problem no more, I was jus' 'ere ta  
watch the fight

*FORREST exits and HUNTER smokes from the pipe*

**HUNTER**

Shit Harrison, I'm dyin'  
I should'a known this would 'appen, I'm my  
daddy's son aft'r all, but I went out  
fightin' fer what's right, an' now I can die  
wit' peace in my 'eart. Got damn this is some  
good shit, but I can feel my body shut  
down. Goodbye Harrison, 'Ope ya miss me...

*HUNTER starts to spew bloody foam out of his mouth as his gunshot wound and  
impending overdose kill him*

**HARRISON**

Jesus man, what a fuckin' awful day,  
Aw shit now I gotta deal wit' Freddy  
sunnuva bitch.

*Enter FREDDY and his cousin*

**FREDDY**

What the fuck ‘appen’d ‘ere?

**HARRISON**

Hunter kill’d ‘is uncle  
an’ ‘e kill’d Lee an’ then Lee shot ‘im too

**FREDDY**

Lord in ‘eaven this is a damn crime scene,  
but that don’t matt’r, wit’ the McCoys gone  
I guess that means this land belongs ta the  
Jennings!

**COUSIN**

Yea Freddy we did it! Yer pa  
‘as finally got ‘is revenge woohoo!  
Not only is ‘is kill’r dead an’ gone,  
but the whole damn fam’ly is dead too! We  
ain’t e’en ‘ave ta do nothin’! This land  
is Jennings land now!

**HARRISON**

I mean shit it’s yers,  
I nev’r really understood what the  
‘ell y’all’s beef was, but it ain’t my fight I’m  
jus’ Hunter’s friend from down the street if y’all  
wanna take this land ya can ‘ave it, but  
ya may ‘ave some troubles gettin’ the land  
from Hunter’s momma she still alive on  
the ground o’er there. I could git ‘er ta  
jus’ move an’ leave y’all alone if ya got  
some money ya can give me. Hunter ain’t  
‘round ta spot me no more. Also could y’all  
‘andle buryin’ ‘em? I got shit ta  
do an’ lookin’ at all’a this’ll jus’  
make me all sad an’ shit. I’ll prolly ‘ead  
out ‘fore the cops git ‘ere.

**FREDDY**

Since this is our  
land now we can ‘andle getting’ rid’a  
the bodies, an’ if ya want money jus’

go take some shit from the 'ouse I ain't give  
a shit what you do y'ain't kill my daddy.

**HARRISON**

Aight man whatev'r ya say, I know where  
ole mister McCoy kept 'is safe so I  
guess all'a that money's mine now, I'll be  
leavin' now I'll be back aft'r the cops  
leave I got reefer on me.

*Exeunt HARRISON*

**FREDDY**

Well Cousin,  
let's start puttin' the bodies out up the  
river 'fore the cops're 'ere. We got work  
ta do 'ere, an' we can't do it if the  
cops come an' steal the land from us Jennings.  
You grab the bodies, I'll go grab the truck  
An' I guess we bett'r figger out what  
ta do with the lady, ya can do that...

*FREDDY and his COUSIN begin to clean up the scene, and the curtain falls*



## **Introduction**

It is natural for a work perceived by a wide audience of people to be reimagined in ways that either better fit their culture or just simply in ways that the story had not been seen before. Due to his ubiquity and canonical status, the works of William Shakespeare are often adapted in this way to fit into settings more befitting of various cultural contexts.. With this in mind, I felt as if I could also create an adaptation of a Shakespeare work and implement themes and ideas outside of the original context without sacrificing the focus of the original work. I wanted to create an adaptation of Shakespeare that utilized the framework of *Hamlet* to explore aspects of a certain part of my own identity: the themes and culture of the rural American south. Throughout this paper, I will break down the nature of adaptation, the research that went into the themes present throughout the piece and how the theme of grief from within the original text butterflyed out into an exploration of rural Southern grief, along with what I changed when turning *Hamlet* to *Hunter*, and elaborate on the process as a whole.

### **The Art of Adaptation and the Justification of Change**

Something I was often asked when attempting to explain the project to others was something along the lines of, “why does it need to exist?” This question makes sense, especially with such a drastic change in setting and concept, and the justification of this quickly became something I needed to be prepared for when talking about my project. But this does not just apply to me; whenever a work is given an adaptation of some kind, especially one with substantial changes to aspects of the story, this question is always asked.

Shakespeare adaptations are not new; people have been adapting his works into many different forms for many years. This can be seen from the child-friendly *Lion King* as an

adaptation of *Hamlet* to the main subject of my research: *West Side Story* as an adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet*. While *Hamlet* is the story I adapted to fit into rural Alabama, I sought out to find versions of Shakespeare that not only altered the setting, but altered and implemented new themes to transform the story beyond what it originally was without losing the essence. Elizabeth Wells's *West Side Story: Cultural Perspectives on an American Musical* breaks down its historical and deeper contexts, while also discussing its ties to the Shakespearean. *Romeo and Juliet* already holds many themes regarding the idea of family versus family and competition, and *West Side Story* takes that base concept and weaves it into a story of classism and racial and xenophobic prejudice that maintains the core while also expanding on it in a new way. When discussing the creator's feelings of adapting *Romeo and Juliet* into *West Side Story*, Wells included that "[a]lthough Arthur Laurents claims that it was this added element of racial prejudice that made his version superior to Shakespeare's, trying to adapt that message and the wider issues of social conscience within the conventions of Broadway 'musical comedy' was challenging" (Wells 151). Here Arthur Laurents, the creator of the actual Broadway play of *West Side Story*, laments the challenging nature of adaptation, but also claims that the added themes of racial prejudice and xenophobia improved the story at large. Though *Romeo and Juliet* may not include a racial or immigration context, there is prejudice all throughout the original Shakespeare play, just between two different families. Because of this, I would consider that to be more of a transformative theme as opposed to an entirely new one. In *West Side Story*, Laurents changes the simple family rivalry between the Montagues and the Capulets into a gang rivalry between two racially and ethnically separated gangs. This was the justification for adaptation, to take the story and not just place it in the modern world as it was, but also to transform the story into

something new without losing the original soul of the play. This is precisely what I set out to do in my adaptation and went about reimagining the tragedy as such.

*West Side Story* is not the only adaptation of Shakespeare's work present within modern society though. Some adaptations like to stick very closely to the source material in terms of dialogue or setting to their best ability, such as the faithful dialogue and language adaptations from the Kenneth Branagh versions of *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, or A24's *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. But many of the adaptations take the original source material and drastically change the setting. Some of these works take the child-friendly route animating the story with pretty much the same themes, just implemented in a way more befitting an immature audience such as Disney's *The Lion King* or Rocket Pictures' *Gnomeo and Juliet*. A large quantity of Shakespeare adaptations, however, place them pretty much concurrent with whatever the current year is that the film is released, like *Hamlet* adaptations from 2000 and 2009, directed by Michael Almereyda and Gregory Doran respectively, and which are both placed at the turn of the 21st century. Then there are adaptations that are not in the original time period of *Hamlet*, but are also not set in the same time as the release of the film, such as Bruce Ramsey's 1940s *Hamlet* that came out in 2011. Each of these adaptations maintains the core themes and general plot structure of its source material despite the altered setting.

While I am interested in others' adaptations, my project actually began as a fascination I had with dialect in writing, and how it helps to characterize and immerse a reader into the world of the story. I am Southern, but I do not have an accent, unlike many members of my more rural family, but I am still capable of performing an accent and at a certain point read out an excerpt of *Hamlet* in said accent, which stuck with me. That is when it clicked: the idea that perhaps *Hamlet* and the South really are not so different. That idea only deepened as time went on and

my grandfather passed away, leading me to experience firsthand the effects of Southern masculinity, grief, repression, and drug abuse that led me down the path of writing *Hunter*. Spending time with rural family and experiencing more and more of the concepts discussed in *Hunter* helped to push me towards research as to what caused many of the different problems and cultural ideals present within rural Southern white communities, and what leads them down these paths. This was something I felt keen to explore through my own creative work, and *Hamlet*, with its emphasis on grief, anger, paranoia, conspiracy, and the harm we can do to one another, seemed to be the right framework. In this adaptation, I transport Hamlet to contemporary Fort Payne, Alabama to explore the Southern psyche, poverty, addiction, pain, masculinity, and misogyny.

### **Masculinity, Grief, and Drug Abuse**

One of the main focuses of research during the writing process of *Hunter* was the dynamics of toxic masculinity and the drug problems present within the rural South. While I had personally witnessed this phenomenon within parts of my own family that live in more rural sections of the South, I made sure to do research on the effects of methamphetamine, the causes of drug abuse in the South, and the nature of Southern toxic masculinity to ensure that I could tackle the topic in a more meaningful way. Starting with the root cause of this form of escapism within the story, I had to tackle masculinity. It is no secret that toxic masculinity is a worldwide issue, but I made sure to direct my focus on its place within the South before all else. Southern toxic masculinity is a powerful tool, embodied by its tendency towards heightened ideals of toughness and stoicism, and all but defined by ideals of traditionalism and gender roles. This brand of masculinity places the male as a stoic protector, near-devoid of emotion and vulnerability and whose primary job is to maintain a man's "place" as the provider. In *The Man*

*They Wanted Me To Be: Toxic Masculinity and a Crisis of Our Own Making*, Jared Sexton explores his own relationship with Southern masculinity, the effects of it on men in the South, and the root causes behind it. This experience, as he describes it, is almost entirely negative, as it is something that had control over him and how he went about living his life, while also detracting from him and other men's enjoyment of quality of life. This is something that Sexton believed to be an overwhelmingly controlling feeling that negatively affects men in the South, such as when he discusses its effects on his father and how "the expectations he'd carried, as a father, as a son, as a man, had sabotaged his relationships and prevented him from expressing himself, or really enjoying intimacy, emotionally or intellectually, his entire life" (Sexton). Utilizing this sentiment, it is not hard to see that the masculinity present within the South often causes men to repress their emotions, which leads to the issue of substance abuse and general unhappiness. Sexton described the trapping nature of this masculinity, saying that, "This high crime consisted of showing even the slightest hint of emotion. If I cried, if I complained, I could expect to be whipped or beaten" (Sexton). He also goes in depth on how the embracing and enforcing of this brand affected his father, with his lack of emotional vulnerability leading to a life of alcohol abuse within himself and emotional abuse towards his family.

This was something I wanted to capture in *Hunter*, with the patriarchal nature of Southern society affecting him. The exact thing that causes Hunter to push everything down but his anger and his resentment, which are often viewed as "masculine" emotions. This leads into the issue of drug abuse, a very prevalent issue in the more rural parts of the South, that are a byproduct of external society and of the nature of masculinity itself. But there are lots of other factors that play into the emergence of substance abuse in the rural South outside of repressed emotions. The article "Substance abuse by youth and young adults in rural America" has

Lambert, Gale, and Hartley state that, “The economic downturn in much of rural America (starting with the Farm Crisis of the 1980s) has resulted in economic disadvantage and stress that are strongly associated with substance abuse and other social problems (eg, low school and educational attainment, unemployment)” (Lambert 222). The economic disadvantage that is prevalent within these rural communities is directly tied to their substance abuse, and other side effects of poverty play into these factors such as the aforementioned education and job market problems due to a lack of government interference. Often within these communities the towns are just not large enough to support big business, and many of them are just expected to turn to blue collar work or move elsewhere. Essentially, all of these issues stack together to fuel a cyclical problem of disadvantage and substance abuse that only perpetuates itself. This was something I wanted to tackle in the story, planting the setting of *Hunter* in a rural zone outside of Fort Payne, Alabama, where the characters in the story live in relative poverty. This is a stark contrast to the glamor and riches of *Hamlet’s* royal family in Denmark, but it was a needed change in order for the story and the themes to make sense and work together, and for the story to better represent the experiences of rural Alabamans.

Another part of the shift from Denmark to Alabama that was integral to the story as a whole was methamphetamine addiction, and the place it holds within the setting. I have seen how methamphetamine affects people firsthand through members of my family, but to properly include it and its effects within the story, I opted to find clinical research. In an article from the scientific journal *Addiction* titled “A review of the clinical pharmacology of methamphetamine”, Dyer and Cruickshank break down research and study over the drug itself. Through this I found scientific verification for the idea that I had, and the negative effects of methamphetamine usage and addiction share commonalities with the way Hamlet acts over the course of the original

tragedy. The research found that “four of 12 developed aggressive thoughts or behaviours” (Cruickshank 1088) and that, “Regular methamphetamine use is also associated with a high incidence of chronic psychotic symptoms [61]. The most common signs of methamphetamine psychosis are hallucinations, delusions and odd speech” (Cruickshank and Dyer 1091). It is well known that Hamlet acts “crazy” over the course of *Hamlet*, and while the debate is whether or not he is faking it, it is fair to say that regardless of that, the way he does act relates to certain behaviors associated with methamphetamine abuse. He is aggressive and angry, finds himself lost in his own delusions, talks strangely, and other such acts. These are all ways that research shows that people who are addicted to meth may act over the course of their drug use. This compounds with the issue of grief and repressed emotion; whereas Hamlet acts in this manner due to the sheer amount of grief he feels over the passing of his father, Hunter represses these emotions and finds no catharsis, which causes him to turn to substance as an escape and ends up exhibiting these psychotic behaviors because of them. In *Hunter*, the insanity is far more a side effect of his overuse and addiction to methamphetamine. The characters and audience wrestle with the sober and the high Hunter, and it is rare within the tragedy to know if he is high or not, and thus it is left to the audience to determine.

Along with the inclusion of the theme of toxic masculinity, it seemed natural for me to include and expand on the effects of misogyny within the play at the hands of the male characters. In the original *Hamlet*, women are often the subjects of Hamlet’s anger as he takes out his rage on the seemingly “weaker” figures in his life, while also taking advantage of their care and nurturing of him for his own purposes. While he undoubtedly loves and cares about Gertrude and Ophelia, he also uses them for personal gain due to his instability. The core of this theme is still present and relevant within *Hunter*. Misogyny is something present deep within the

traditional nature of rural southern America, often masked by ideas of traditional gender roles of working man and housewife, but it often goes deeper than that. There is the concept of protection and shielding that the men are expected to perform, but that protection is also somehow meant to justify and excuse the aggressive and abusive ways that some men treat the women in their life. Hunter and his father both represent this sort of idea, as Hunter Sr. is described by Hunter Jr. as having been an alcoholic, and Hunter Jr. himself is seen verbally berating not only his mother but his girlfriend, despite constantly requiring their comfort and care.

On the other end of the theme of gender within the text is the way I included masculinity. The expectations of males in the south are a prime example of toxic masculinity, where men are supposed to act very tough and never show “feminine” emotions like sadness. This kind of toxic masculinity is a big part in what causes the story to happen, since Hunter is unable to deal with his grief over his father in a healthy and emotionally open way. He finds solace in methamphetamine rather than in being vulnerable. *Hamlet*’s main character wears his heart on his sleeve, while Hunter hides his emotions behind layers of drug abuse and anger. This kind of toxic environment is crucial to understanding why Hunter acts the way he does, for if he had a healthy way to cope with his emotions the story would have likely never happened. I felt like this change of theme needed to happen to truly transform the story from just *Hamlet* to an analysis of the rural mindset and how grief affects men who feel as if they are not allowed to be sad because it would be “non-masculine”.

Because of the existence of these new themes affecting the story, many characters had to be rewritten to match with the changes to the setting. To start, Hunter needed a complete rework to distinguish him from Hamlet, but not so drastic a change that he is identical to his Shakespearean counterpart. This can mainly be seen in the switch from the “is Hamlet insane or



not” to actual drug-induced psychosis, but he maintains a similar set of behaviors, they have just been recontextualized because of the changes made to other characters within the story. Along with this is the radical overhaul of the emotional side of Hamlet, where I utilize the toxic masculinity within the South to convert the emotional Hamlet into an aggressive and emotionally repressed Hunter. Gertrude to Gladys remained primarily unchanged because she treats her son with much love and is relatively oblivious to the schism between her son and her husband. Olivia is relatively similar to Ophelia, with a strong love for the protagonist and a rebellious streak. The primary change within her character is the manner of her death, converting her from dying of a suicide to a tragic victim of drug indulgence. This was primarily to better emphasize the themes of coping with grief, and to hammer in the idea of the external victims of drug addiction. She only decides to partake in drug consumption after the passing of someone close to her, paralleling Hunter’s transformation, and subsequently dies because of Hunter’s effect on the world around him, drawing her into the world of drugs. The last specific character with a major overhaul related to the themes of masculinity and drug abuse is the change from Horatio to Harrison, who probably has the most radical change in the way he acts out of everybody. While most of the characters act relatively the same as they did before just with newer contexts, Horatio had to be completely reworked. In *Hamlet*, Horatio is the genuine and loyal best friend of Hamlet, sticking by his side no matter what happens and being one of the only people in the world who believes him and supports his story. This part remains sort of intact, as Harrison just agrees with whatever Hunter says without questioning it for the most part, but the context is again changed. Harrison is someone you often see in stories about drugs, and it is the archetype of the “enabler.” Harrison is a drug addict like Hunter, and his friendship with him is entirely defined by this fact. He only hangs out with Hunter because of this fact, because Hunter is

willing to share and acquire the drug for the two of them with money he has been stealing from his uncle. The value of his dialogue was also decreased exponentially, as he does not have anything meaningful to provide and is just an accessory to the poor life decisions that Hunter is making. On a more minor note, the character of Osric the messenger was changed to Otis the drug dealer, and instead of bothering Hamlet before his big duel in the last act, he now sells him the methamphetamine he is high on during that last fight that furthers his rage and hastens his death. There was also a character added to fill in the place Harrison would have had if he was more similar to his Shakespearean counterpart, Callum. Callum was added for the purpose of introducing an older character to directly show sympathy to Hunter, and becomes an object of ridicule from everyone else for sticking his nose in business that it does not belong in, representing the strong sense of independence within Southern men and why many people sit by and do not act when addiction is ravaging somebody else. By fostering the idea of fierce independence within young southern men, they are expected to be capable of handling themselves without the assistance of others, and by stepping into somebody else's business you become a signifier of the implication that someone cannot provide for themselves, essentially insulting their masculinity.

### **Paranoia, Conspiracy, and Hunter**

The other primary focus of my research when it came to *Hunter* was the reasons behind Southern conspiratorial thinking, and the paranoid mindset present within those communities and the effect it has on them. As has become far more apparent in recent years, the divide between various groups within the United States has deepened, and the resentment towards the continually progressive America coming from the South has only increased. Oftentimes when speaking with members of the rural Southern community, they may make offhand comments

from those individuals regarding various conspiratorial thoughts or just general perpetuation of an “us versus them” mentality that has existed for a long period of time but has only become more apparent as the division present within America gets worse. This is not something that is entirely at the fault of rural Americans, but is the compounded result of a menagerie of side effects from various parts of American history and an increasing divide between socio-political groups. This is something that has been observed in various studies, such as in “Morality, identity, and mental health in rural ghettos” from the journal *Communities, Neighborhoods, and Health* where Burton, Garrett-Peters, and Eason state that, “Heightened stigmatization and discrimination by privileged outsiders against ghetto residents follow, resulting in mounting social isolation between the groups... That social distancing coupled with the stigmatization process, we argue, does much in the way of reconfiguring morality and identity in rural places as well as challenging people’s well-being” (Burton 8). The authors of the article essentially believe that the advent or belief of the existence of more privileged groups that live in cities and their perceived condescension over more impoverished groups has deepened the divide between these groups, something that has assisted with the creation of an “us versus them” mentality that is seen within said group.

This was something that seemed like a perfect addition to the overall plot and themes of *Hunter*, both on the individual and communal level. In my play, this societal mentality combines with the paranoia inherently caused by methamphetamine abuse and creates a strong sense of conspiratorial thinking within Hunter that causes him to distrust the world around him and invent fantastical observations of the world around him, rather than accepting them as is. On a more communal level, there is an ever-present ideal within the community of *Hunter* of the negativity that people in the “city” place on them. The characters often feel as though many of their

problems are the result of “city folk”, and that everyone in cities and in government are actively working against them. While often these thoughts are born from some semblance of truth to some degree with the exploitation of the working class and general American distaste for the south, it is also something that is a byproduct of the paranoid thinking of these groups. This phenomenon has also been the subject of study identified in an article from the *American Sociological Review* called “Paranoia and the Structure of Powerlessness”: “Life in certain sociodemographic positions is characterized by powerlessness and by the threat of victimization and exploitation, and that these objective conditions stimulate the development of certain beliefs and assumptions about oneself and others that lead to paranoia” (Mirowski 1). While the article is not specifically about people in the rural impoverished south, its findings are applicable and the research they have done into social status in regards to paranoia ring true to the beliefs of the poor southerner. People in less privileged areas often find themselves afraid and worried of their own exploitation at the hands of the world around them and develop paranoia through these ideas. Within *Hunter*, this primarily comes from a social demographical standpoint, with many of the characters expressing discontentment with their relationship to the “big city.” There is often a sense of fear and anxiety and distrust towards larger settlements shown through the characters, with the characters believing that everybody that lives in the city is out to get them or will treat them worse just because they come from a rural area. This sense of distrust is also rooted deep within racial bias that is prevalent within these rural southern communities, with the very diverse populations of larger cities being seen as a challenge to their whiteness. With the characters discussing the stereotyping that they feel as if they will be subjected to because of their place in the economic ladder and the area they are from, on top of the other potential fears as well.

When making an adaptation, especially one within a separate setting, one must consider the ramifications of how this change in setting affects the way the story plays out as a whole. The first big difference present from the very beginning is that the ghost that Hamlet sees and that the supporting cast sees in Act One, Scene One is now a drug-induced hallucination that Hunter is experiencing because of the grief and the way that he is coping. Shortly after this is another one of the biggest changes made to *Hamlet*, and that is that unlike Claudius, Cletus did not actually kill his brother. In the original tragedy, Claudius kills Hamlet Sr. in order to seize his power and influence, along with his wife. But in *Hunter*, the father dies due to an accident that occurred while hunting and asked Cletus to take over his responsibilities and his family. Because of this, the story is then transformed from a tragic tale of loss and revenge for an unjust murder, to a story of a young man experiencing terrible grief that he does not know how to cope with, so he turns to drugs and becomes paranoid and delusional, leading himself and others close to him to their demise. As a result of the story being the delusions of a drug addict rather than a possibly insane man, the spies and others that work against Hamlet in the original play have become genuinely caring people that want Hunter to get the help he needs but are pushed away because of the idea that the protagonist has in his head about what actually happened to his father. This is the first sign of the paranoid and conspiratorial thinking, even if it is on a separate scale than societal conspiracy. It still represents that concept of “nothing is the way it seems” that seems to pervade the minds of those who feel powerless. But there are also many aspects of the story that were kept, just modified, because of the place they hold in the grand scheme of the tale. Despite the changes to what actually happened, Hunter is still a grief-stricken man on a quest for revenge against his uncle for the death of his father, even if he is no longer responsible. Hunter is still responsible for the same deaths as he is in *Hamlet*, but in different ways that have been

recontextualized. Inherently different than if they had simply just been moved from the original to the adaptation. Many of the same story beats are still present, because the adaptation is still one to one in a way, the scenes have just been changed in ways that fit the new narrative and setting. Many of the characters serve practically the same role in the story from the perspective of Hunter, but when looked at externally serve new purposes as there is now a lack of actual foul play involved on the part of the uncle, further displaying the addiction and rage present within the character of Hunter. The story is undeniably still *Hamlet* at its core, but the changes work to better serve as an analysis of the drug problems and issues with grief and masculinity in the deep South.

The paranoid and conspiracy themes also played into the original themes of revenge from the original tragedy. With revenge, the theme has been transformed from a righteous goal to avenge one's own father to a deluded plan for vengeance for a crime that was not actually committed, at least, when it comes to Hunter. But other characters such as Lee, the stand in for Laertes, have goals pertaining to actual revenge for wrongdoings committed by Hunter in his quest for the misattributed revenge. In the original story, Hamlet struggles with taking action and committing to his plan initially because he lacks the proof he needs to vindicate Claudius in the murder, and later because he is somewhat cowardly and delaying the inevitable. In *Hunter*, he delays his murder of Cletus because he is a full-on coward and is practically begging for anybody to be on his side besides Harrison, but is incapable of admitting to his own faults because of his pride.

Like with the themes of toxic masculinity and drug abuse, there were also characters who were changed to fit and embody some of the themes of paranoia and conspiracy outside of the titular Hunter. One radical change that came as a direct side effect of the alterations of Hamlet

are the alterations of Claudius. In *Hamlet*, Claudius is a seemingly nice man with a dark and deceptive side, the same he showed when murdering Hamlet senior prior to the events of the play. In *Hunter*, Cletus is a kind and caring uncle who is genuinely trying to help Hunter recover and feel better, but is held back by Hunter's belief that Cletus killed Hunter senior. While the characters treat each other relatively the same for most of both plays, the context behind their behaviors is completely changed between works. Polonius remains somewhat changed as well, going from a conniving friend of Claudius to a worrisome father. In *Hamlet*, Polonius spies on people and is worried primarily about his place in the social hierarchy of the castle, along with being an accessory to the murder of Hamlet senior. Preston is a father worried about his daughter and her relationship with Hunter because of his drug problem and aggressive behaviors, along with believing that he will "knock her up and leave" like other young men in the area have done. But Preston maintains this worry about social hierarchy, although in *Hunter* he is concerned with the relationship rural areas have with more urban and city zones, embodying that sort of conspiracy behavior that the people who live in cities look down on and plot against people from rural areas.

One change that needed to be made to make more sense and to fit the more conspiratorial aspects of the story is the inclusion of the cowboy show and its cast. The cowboy show cast just replace the actors seen in the original play simply because it would not make sense to implement at home plays in a rural and poverty stricken zone, but the characters act as the implied reason behind the story that Hunter constructs in his head regarding his uncle, and also as representations of the Southern idealization of the old Wild West. Often within Wild West narratives one can see fiercely independent lone rangers who exhibit traditionally masculine traits, and protect those around them without the need for vulnerability or emotional openness.

These heroic stereotypes only help to further fuel the misguided stoicism of the toxic masculine ideal.

### **Color Theory and The Characters of *Hunter***

Something I was very interested in when going through the writing process was the use of color to draw out certain aspects of each character and act as representative of their personality and character arc. This is something I found lacking in written copies of Shakespeare outside of the basic description of Hamlet and his all-black mourning clothes. So I went through and granted every character a new outfit to match the setting, and used film color theory to try and display the aspects of each character through their physical description. Film color theory is essentially the idea that every color grants context within a story for scenes and characters to affect the viewer's perception, often without them realizing it consciously. For the most part, I stuck with just what they wear on their upper half, because a grand majority of people in these rural areas wear boots and jeans or work pants, very practical and long lasting. Hunter is one of two characters that features a wardrobe change within the tragedy.

In order to explore the concept of color theory in film within the context of the costumes of the characters, I turned to a book by Patti Bellatoni called *If it's purple, someone's gonna die*, a book breaking down every color and what it represents within film using science, preconceived notions, and nature. While some colors are somewhat self-explanatory like blue, which is known for its melancholy nature, some are a bit less obvious on the conscious and surface level without explanation, such as green. So to make that more clear, I have grabbed a couple of quotes from the book to help explain the concepts that are not immediately obvious. On the subject of green,



Bellatoni states that, “It is a simple fact that green, in its plant manifestation, signals life itself. Green in the atmosphere, however, can signal a low-pressure system that can spawn a tornado, and ‘Beware of the green water’ is a sailor’s warning. So green can signal health and vitality or danger and decay” (159). Bellatoni also helps to explain the color red, stating that, “Red is associated with all ‘hot’ emotions (e.g., aggression, lust, or anxiety)”(23). Finally, with two of the most important colors in the costumes of the play being black and white, I saw it fit to also include Bellatoni’s explanation of those as well, with her saying that the word black means “(wicked, sullen, soiled)” and that white means “(pure, innocent, the opposite of black)” (16). For the sake of brevity and simplicity, I have also organized the costume explanations into a table displaying the character, their costume, and the significance of the colors within that costume directly below.

Hunter	Jeans, boots, a red and black flannel, and a white t-shirt that becomes black after the end of Act 3	Red is a color of lust, aggression, and anxiety according to Bellatoni. Hunter shares this flannel with his two foils (Lee and Freddy), but only shares the red with the latter. Initially he wears a white t-shirt underneath his flannel, but once he loses his innocence after murdering Preston, he begins to not only wear black on his flannel, but also on his undershirt, representing his dark and brooding nature.
Cletus	Green and Brown Camo	Just like his wife, Cletus’s primary defining color is brown, the color of warmth and

		<p>comfort and homeliness. Due to the shift from murderer to genuine stepfather, Cletus wears brown to represent his status as a caring father figure. But Cletus also wears green to represent the dichotomy between who he actually is and who Hunter thinks he is.</p>
Olivia	<p>Comfy boots, white jean shorts, and a pink floral blouse</p>	<p>Olivia wears white, the color of innocence, as she has done nothing wrong to deserve any of the fate that she ends up getting. Along with this she sports pink, a color representing femininity, to not only show her status as a more feminine girl but also to further display Hunter's toxic masculinity and misogynistic tendencies.</p>
Gladys	<p>Jeans, sandals, and a brown shirt</p>	<p>As mentioned with Cletus, brown is a very comforting and homely color. Gladys acts as a pillar of Hunter's home life, even if he no longer sees her as such after her continued relationship with Cletus.</p>
Preston	<p>Jeans, sneakers, and a yellow and white button down</p>	<p>As mentioned previously, the white of Preston's shirt represents his innocence due to him not actively seeking to harm</p>

		<p>anybody, he merely wants to protect his daughter from a potentially harmful boyfriend. Preston’s other defining color is yellow, and in this case he is sporting Bellatoni’s obsessive yellow, with Preston frequently overextending himself into his children’s lives to the point where he comes off as controlling.</p>
Lee	<p>Jeans, boots, and a green and white flannel that becomes green and black after Olivia’s death</p>	<p>Lee sports a flannel in a similar fashion to Hunter, who he acts as a foil for. Like Hunter, the white of his outfit becomes black after his loss of innocence and helps to mark him going down a path similar to that of Hunter. He also wears the dichotomous color green, showing him as the sane version of Hunter through his lust for a far more justified revenge, but still representing a fruitless effort and dangerous sense of toxic masculinity.</p>
Ryker and Gunner	<p>Jeans, sneakers, and a yellow hoodie</p>	<p>While Preston sports the obsessive yellow, Ryker and Gunner wear the more cautionary and innocent yellow. Their yellow shows more of their careful nature and initial</p>

		unwillingness to interfere with Hunter's affairs, and how their eventual interference leads to their demise despite their caution.
Freddy	Jeans, boots, and a red and yellow flannel	Like Hunter and Lee, Freddy also wears a flannel to cement his place as part of the foil triad. He wears red similar to Hunter for his aggression and violent nature, but also yellow due to his obsession with getting revenge on the McCoy family.
Ghost	Camo dyed all yellow	The ghost of Hunter Sr. wears a different yellow than the rest, due to him not actually being a ghost but merely a hallucinogenic figment of Hunter's drug addled mind. Hunter Sr.'s yellow is the idyllic yellow, representing a picturesque life that Hunter Jr. sees that is no longer possible, showing Hunter Jr.'s troubled mind.
Callum	Boots, Jeans, Orange shirt, Green Jacket	Callum wears orange, the color of naivety, since he believes that he is able to help Hunter but ultimately fails to influence him in any way.

Forrest	Boots, Jeans, and an Orange Work Shirt	Forrest wears the same naïve orange of Callum, due to him failing to make any real change.
Clarence	Boots, brown work pants, red shirt, blue jacket	While just about every character wears blue jeans due to their ubiquity in life as a whole but especially this region of the United States, the blue of the jeans also serves to represent the sadder melancholy of the play through the saddest color. Clarence himself wears blue due to his ultimate inability to actually influence the story.
Vincent	Brown work pants, boots, blue work shirt	Vincent sports the same sad blue as Clarence, for the same reasons.

Color theory is often overlooked, but is a very important part of storytelling that I find particularly fascinating and made great effort in including as part of my reimagining of *Hamlet*. By utilizing the various representations of colors we often see in visual media, I believe that one can create strong characterizing undertones simply by planting the character's personalities and purposes onto their wardrobe.

### **What it All Means**

With everything I have stated previously in mind, I believe that the story of *Hunter* accomplishes the goals of taking *Hamlet* and creating something new, with setting-specific themes that work to explore the mindset and struggles of the impoverished rural Southern white

American, without losing the spirit and ideals present within the original work. The recontextualization of many of the various puzzle pieces that fit together to create *Hamlet* works to create a new story not for the purpose of critiquing or ridiculing the people who live in this social zone, but to explore various issues and problems that occur or that are perpetuated within them. Adaptation transplants the organs of an original work into a new body with a different look and feel, but the organs of that original piece do not remain unchanged. When creating a work like this, one must consider what changes need to be made to these various pieces for them to truly fit into this new body, and the ramifications of every little change on the work itself and on the meaning of it as a written work. I believe that by changing all of these pieces, I was able to create a story that stands on its own as an exploration of the Southern psyche and the way an environment affects a person on an individual level, along with paying due respect to the original story as a whole. This work is my own exploration of the sins and struggles of the South, and one that allowed me to express my own grievances with a place I call home and a people I know as family.

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