

*Le Coeur a ses raisons, que la raison ne connait.*

Blaise Pascal

“The heart has its reason, of which reason knows nothing.”

*Alles nahe werde fern.*

Goethe

“Everything near, becomes distant.”

**Pianissimo**

*(The Flatirons rock formation, part of the Rocky Mountain range, west of Boulder, CO. The world sits between clouds and is colored white and cream and alabaster and sallow, filled with a soft light. THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER sits high in a tree made of glass or maybe bone. She is dressed in all cream. JOHNNY stands on the ground. His clothing is all white. He wears no shoes, only bandages around his bare feet. He reads a letter. A dead elk sits at the bottom of the tree. 27 stands on the ground. He is dressed in cream colored hunting gear, holds an elephant rifle in one hand and a Havana cocktail in the other. It is early in the morning. The town of Boulder can be seen below the ridge. The city of Denver can be seen in the distance. If the audience is lucky, they can see heaven through the clouds. A single brown ukulele hangs in the sky.)*

*(A frame of Silence.)*

**THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER**

I'm going to be writing all this down for you. Because I don't talk anymore. I don't see the need to talk anymore. It's easy not to talk much. Most people leave me alone. You leave me alone. I know you like to think you don't, but you do. That is fine. That is fine with me. Most people are uneasy around me. When they see me. And they know what I am. I saw it in the face of a waitress in Santa Fe. You didn't notice because you were watching the television the whole time we was there. Watching one football game after the next. Never looking at me. There is no way we can get to know each other better if we never look at each other. If we never talk. And you are allowing that to happen. Say something to me. Say something true. Not the usual fake words that come out of your mouth when you speak to me. Something real. Something I can believe. Say that you have changed your mind, and wish you hadn't agreed to protect me from The Devil. Say that you miss your girlfriend. The one I was nice with. Say something to me, so I can have one beautiful day. Where is your head, Johnny? And what has happened to your heart?

*(JOHNNY looks to the tree. He then burns the letter with a lighter.)*

*(A frame of Silence.)*

*(THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER looks to the audience. Then runs her fingers through her hair.)*

*(JOHNNY looks to his bloody feet. Then places his hand over his eyebrow to block out the sun as he looks across the sky.)*

*(A Chilean flamingo flutters across the scene. The sounds of search helicopters blow by.)*

JOHNNY  
How was the halfway house?

27

Same as the last one.

*(A frame of Silence.)*

*(The moment is framed.)*

JOHNNY  
How was prison?

27

I wasn't sent to prison, Kid. Prison is permanent. I was jailed. Jail is temporary.

*(A frame of Silence.)*

JOHNNY  
How was jail?

27

Similar to the last one I was in. A spiral that goes straight down at unholy speeds. A vortex. That is what a day or two of jail is like. Especially when you haven't done a damn thing to get there. You want me to get you a rifle?

JOHNNY  
I don't care for firearms.

27

There are cougars about. They are killing all the elk and draggin' them to the top of the trees. It's a matter of time before the cats start killing people. I would arm myself if I were you.

JOHNNY  
I thought you shot that elk.

27

I did. He was still alive when I found what was left of his crippled remains. I put him out of his misery. Don't you move? How long have you been standing under that tree anyways?

JOHNNY  
Since your first drink.

27

I don't remember that.

JOHNNY

I'm sure you don't. How many drinks have you had?

27

How is that your business?

JOHNNY

You're holding a gun and a Hemmingway. It is most definitely my business.

27

We are hunting game hens. What could possibly go wrong? Besides, this is a Havana, not a Hemmingway. I haven't had a Hemmingway for hours. Although, now that you have mentioned it, a Hemmingway would do me right.

JOHNNY

Doesn't booze break your probation?

27

Probation is not about being sober. Probation is an exercise in balance and there is no better way to test my balance than tying a few on in the morning.

JOHNNY

Do you mind if I ask you something?

27

How large is the something?

JOHNNY

Tiny.

27

Keep it under five words.

JOHNNY

Are you ever wrong?

27

Are you attempting to insult me on my own property?

JOHNNY

Not at all. I'm just curious. It's just a thought I had. Are you ever wrong? Four words.

How old are you? 27

You know how old I am. JOHNNY

Your age escapes me. 27

I am thirty-one years younger than you. JOHNNY

Honest? 27

Have you ever stopped the drinking to notice that? JOHNNY

I've been busy the past thirty years. 27

I have noticed. We all have noticed. The whole world has noticed. You haven't answered my question. JOHNNY'

What was your question? 27

Are you ever wrong? JOHNNY

Is this in regards to women? 27

Well, that is a left turn. JOHNNY

What makes you say that? 27

What does that question have to do with girls? JOHNNY

Your attention keeps returning to the ghost in the tree. 27

JOHNNY

This is a general enquiry.

27

And what the papers wrote about me was a violent falsehood. I didn't hit that woman. I pushed her. She came at me like a sex-starved cobra, in my home, with my wife...your sister-in-law, just inches away in the kitchen. And if I had a weapon on my person at that moment in time I would have killed the crazed bitch in the name of all that is good and proper.

JOHNNY

I heard you were busted on pot possession?

*(A frame of silence.)*

27

That was the dagger that did me in. It was a complete violation of my fourth amendment rights. A conspiracy from a piss-drunk judge that has had it in for me ever since I relocated here.

JOHNNY

You say all that in your column.

27

You read my column?

JOHNNY

I glance at it every now and then. Usually when I have been drinking.

27

The point that I am trying to make is that I didn't hit that girl. I am not a woman beater.

JOHNNY

I never asked if you did. I asked if you are ever wrong?

27

The answer to your question is no. And fuck you for asking. And this talking is startling the game hens. Outside of those damned helicopters that are looking for you.

*(A frame of silence.)*

*(JOHNNY looks to The Ghost of Sally Singer sitting in the tree. He then takes his hands, runs them across the back of his neck and looks out onto the audience again.)*

JOHNNY

I didn't know there were birds like that in these parts.

27

There's millions. And like fuck you're helping in bagging dinner with all your damn yammering. I should shoot you on principle alone.

JOHNNY

I am not afraid of you, Raul.

27

Don't call me that. You will never call me that again. And I am not afraid of you. I could shoot you dead, shoot you twice before your body hit the dirt. I would be a hero. To some. Hell, a hero to most. And then those damned helicopters would vamoose. But I am a kind person and I won't commit such a grievous act.

*(A frame of silence.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I don't like it here.

JOHNNY

I don't like it here either.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I don't like him.

JOHNNY

Neither do I.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I don't see why. He's just like you. He's cold. He ignores me.

JOHNNY

After the incident with the bounty hunter in Raton, it is my decision to stay here until we can get a better idea of what to do next.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Let's leave. Just you and me. We can go to Alberta, or Albany. Or Afghanistan. Or wherever we want. But let's not stay here.

JOHNNY

I can't do that. Not right now.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Yes you can. Don't tell me you can't.

*(Silence.)*

JOHNNY

We have to get to Malibu first. And I won't promise you anything from there.

*(A frame of Silence. Then the sounds of search helicopters.)*

JOHNNY

Has anyone been callin' for me?

27

You done talking to the dead girl?

JOHNNY

I asked you a question, I want an answer.

27

Elaborate.

JOHNNY

Has anyone approached your holiness asking for information on my whereabouts?

27

Your holiness? You are fuckin' cute, Kid. No. Only the FBI, but not real people.

JOHNNY

What did you tell them?

27

I told them you are a warped kid with a twisted way of expressing your thoughts and emotions.

JOHNNY

I appreciate you being honest.

27

I'm always honest. I have made a fine living expressing my honest opinion.

JOHNNY

What else did you tell the FBI?

27

I told them you enjoyed photography. I told them you enjoyed taking pictures of trees that had been hit by cars. Do you still take pictures?

(JOHNNY and THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER look at each other. Continuous.)

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You take pictures?

JOHNNY

Not for ten years.

27

Do you still have that camera I gave you for Christmas?

JOHNNY

Yeah. Some place. Some place in Akron. Did you tell the FBI I was here with you?

27

I told them you weren't here.

JOHNNY

Thank you.

27

But that was before you showed up.

*(27 points his gun in the air. As if he is tracking an animal.)*

JOHNNY

Let it go. It's too small.

*(A frame of Silence.)*

27

The papers say you burned eleven churches.

JOHNNY

Twelve. I torched twelve. The papers are behind on my activities. And, yes. I did burn all of them to the ground. Everything they say is true about me. Isn't that right Sally?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I only saw you burn two.

JOHNNY

I guess Sally is behind the times too.

27

Well, don't tell anyone. I can get you a lawyer. A good one. You'd be surprised as to what a good defense attorney can do for people.

JOHNNY

I don't need a lawyer.

27

Not yet. But when they catch you, and they will catch you, believe me, they will throw the damned book at you. The cable stations will chew you like soup. You don't want that, Kid.

JOHNNY

Burning churches is a good thing. We need less of them. And I don't intend to be caught.

27

I didn't intend to go to jail, but I did.

*(A frame of silence.)*

**Andante**

*(An Egyptian goose soars across the scene. The sky begins to turn grey and the sun starts its descent as it converts to a red hue.)*

JOHNNY

My brother and I are nothing alike. When I was young, there were two rules. First rule: he made the rules. Second rule: the worst rule was that the rules changed whenever he damn well felt like they should. He made new rules whenever he was losing. He made rules that split us into two teams. I was on one team, and everyone else was on his team.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

And now you make the rules with me.

JOHNNY

I wouldn't say that.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You didn't have to. Why won't you make love to me?

JOHNNY

He can hear you.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I don't care. Why won't you make love to me?

JOHNNY

I think it is better if you and I find a neutral ground before we start talking about things like that.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

We have talked about things like that. At Manny's. In Santa Fe. Don't you remember? It was after our automobile broke down.

JOHNNY

My car.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Your car. After your car broke down, and we had to start walking. And your shoes burned away on the hot asphalt. And we had to stop in Santa Fe for the night. We went to Manny's to calm down, and you drank Macallan all night out of a shot glass. Sipping until the entire bottle was gone. There was an old Chicago blues band playing in the corner, by the bathrooms. And you kissed my neck.

JOHNNY

That was days ago.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Eight days. That was eight days ago. A man tried to dance with me, and you told him I was "off limits." Why did you say that?

JOHNNY

Because you are.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Because you like me?

JOHNNY

Because you are off limits, until we can find my mother.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

And then what? Did you kiss me on my neck because you like me? Or did you do that just because you could?

*(Silence.)*

27

You were in Santa Fe?

JOHNNY

Sort of.

27

Did you go to The Cowgirl?

JOHNNY

We were there for five minutes. The girl had a glass of vodka, I watched a few minutes of the Oregon State-LSU game.

27

I lost money on that game.

JOHNNY

Most people lost money on the game.

27

Did you see the Zozobra?

JOHNNY

I didn't try.

27

The papers say you torched the pink Scottish temple on the north side of Santa Fe.

JOHNNY

Who in their right mindset paints an adobe church pink? I burned it in the name of good taste. Not because of my issues with G-o-d.

*(A frame of silence.)*

*(27 looks to the tree, takes a slow sip from his beverage, then looks away.)*

27

How long do you intend to sleep on my sofa with that thing?

JOHNNY

I don't know. I'm making this up as I go along.

27

Sure sounds like it. If you don't need a lawyer, what do need from me? Besides the sofa. I have no money until my next advanced is wired. My trial cleaned me out.

JOHNNY

I don't want your money. I'm not doing this for money. There ain't much money in burning churches. You know, we haven't seen each other in a few years...

27

Many years.

JOHNNY

Many years. Yeah. Right. And you threatened to pop my guts.

27

And?

JOHNNY

It's a touch unnerving.

27

Lighten up, Kid. I didn't say I was going to pop your guts out.

JOHNNY

Then what did you say?

27

I said I was going to shoot you twice before you hit the dirt. God damn it! I hate it when people miss quote me. It's like getting the lyrics wrong to a good song.

JOHNNY

Oh, God.

27

Don't "Oh, God" me, Kid. You're in a bad spot and I'm doing you a favor.

JOHNNY

I understand that and I appreciate that, but I am not going to stand here and listen to you pretend to be the baddest thing since fried ice cream, and threaten me with your bird gun.

*(A frame of silence.)*

*(A soft wind begins to blow. The whispering sound of the ukulele can be heard.)*

JOHNNY

I saw the old man.

27

You are lying and I don't care for such behavior.

JOHNNY

I don't care if you don't care for it. I said I saw the old man.

27

The old man has been dead for years.

JOHNNY

Yep. About twenty-five. I found what was left of him in New Mexico. Along with the ghost girl.

27

Why are you telling me this?

JOHNNY

I thought you would like to know.

*(27 looks to The Ghost of Sally Singer.)*

27

Was he with the ghost girl?

JOHNNY

He was with her...but he wasn't with her.

27

Surprising. He always liked the girls. The girls that where much younger than him.

JOHNNY

Seems to run in the family.

27

Is that a stab at me?

JOHNNY

That's a stab at your new wife.

27

I won't put up with that. Did he ask about me?

JOHNNY

Dad? Sort of.

27

What do you mean "sort of?" Did he or didn't he?

JOHNNY

He asked if you were doing well.

27

Did you tell him the truth?

JOHNNY

I told him my version of the truth.

27

Did you tell him about my column? My books?

JOHNNY

I think he already knew. You know, he didn't read that much.

27

He read the sports page everyday, and I write about sports.

JOHNNY

For the most part.

27

For the most part, but I am known as a sports writer.

JOHNNY

And an enemy of Nixon. Is that why you started writing about sports? To impress the old man?

27

I started writing about sports because there was an opening in the air force newspaper at that position. I didn't and I don't give two shits what the old man thinks.

JOHNNY

Clearly.

27

Don't be smart with me. I knew the old man longer than you did.

JOHNNY

By default.

27

Yeah. By default.

JOHNNY

By default? Come on, Raul, say something clever. Say something impressive. Fuck the old man, impress me.

27

The old man was a sick and savage bastard. And dumb as a nail. Was he still tall?

JOHNNY

Yes. He was as tall as a tree. He wanted to take me fishing, but he had no bait.

27

He never had bait. When we would go fishing, when I was in the air force, back before you were born, when he was still on his first wife, my mother, he would try to stab the fish with tent poles. Did he ask for money?

JOHNNY

He is a ghost now. He has no use for money.

27

I sent him a lot of money toward the end. Or what I thought was the end. He would mail me empty envelopes with a P.O. box to his name. To a hotel in New Mexico. When the envelopes stopped coming, I assumed he was gone.

JOHNNY

He's not gone. He's just dead.

27

The only things I have from the old man are my memories and an empty can of Pabst Blue Ribbon. Fuck him, anyways.

JOHNNY

He asked if you're married.

27

And.

JOHNNY

I told him I heard you were. By the way, I like the new wife.

27

So do I. She gets me in ways other girls don't. Have you ever been married?

JOHNNY

Sort of. Not really.

27

Yeah. I have had relations like that too.

*(The sounds of the ukulele stop.)*

JOHNNY

I left a girl behind with dad. Now I've got Sally with me.

*(27 looks to the tree.)*

27

The dead girl.

JOHNNY

The dead girl.

27

Her name is Kelly?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Sally.

27

It appears if though I was wrong.

JOHNNY

At least you owned up to it.

*(A frame of Silence.)*

*(THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS appears. He has several scars and a hook for a hand. Only Johnny can see him.)*

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

Why have you stopped moving? It's no fun unless you run?

JOHNNY

I am surprised it took you so long to find us. And I am surprised The Devil sent his right hand man instead of coming in person. You are healing very well.

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

Thanks. I have to say, Johnny, you are insatiably boring. I'm going to take Sally from you, and I will screw her on my couch, and there is little you can do. But I want to see how you handle the heat, just for the sake of amusement. Say howdy to your brother for me. For all purposes, your friends won't be able to see me today. I just like it like that.

*(THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS snaps his finger then disappears.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Something isn't right.

27

That's black smoke coming from Denver. And that is black smoking coming Boulder.

JOHNNY

The Devil is on our trail. The Devil wants Sally. Father signed a contract to give us a day head start on The Devil and his assistant.

27

That doesn't sound like the old man.

JOHNNY

No. It doesn't, does it?

27

That isn't the Devil. It's something worse.

*(A flock of turkey vultures fly across the stage.)*

27

What's the date?

JOHNNY

I don't know. Why?

27

Do you know what day it is?

JOHNNY

Tuesday.

27

Bad things happen on Tuesdays.

*(A pair of golden eagles swoop across the scene.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You make me sad. And I wish you would stop.

JOHNNY

You are just upset about this situation.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

This situation? This whole "situation" between you and me?

JOHNNY

This entire situation. Being on the run from The Devil and everyone.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

This entire “situation” didn’t start when we left my father and your father and your wife.

JOHNNY

Lynn was not my wife.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

That is right. You were her boy toy. This whole entire situation didn’t start then. It didn’t start the day we had breakfast. The day you and me had breakfast with my father and Lynn. This whole thing started the night you came to my father’s hotel. You walked across the blue tiles of the cantina floor to pour yourself a glass of ice water and we made eye contact. You looked me in the eye. You did.

JOHNNY

I don’t remember that.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You did. And I do think you remember. Don’t be disappointing to me. Please.

JOHNNY

I find myself to be disappointing often.

*(ANITA enters. She is dressed in all white and riding a giant rhea.)*

ANITA

Denver is under attack. A bounty hunter, the authorities call him Pony Gibbs, incinerated the walls at the Denver zoo. It’s all over MSNBC.

27

Who the Hell is Pony Gibbs?

ANITA

An old fashioned bomber. He don’t use fancy explosives or devices. Just sticks of dynamite he lights ‘em with a cigar. All the channels switched to cover it. Just like 9-11. The Reverend Fred Phelps has employed Gibbs to knock off abortion clinics. At least that is what the radio and TV is sayin’. I had to leave yoga early. It’s like the end of the world down there, but the stoplights are still working. Red pandas and monkeys blitzing through the streets. It must be like Christmas for all them animals.

JOHNNY

Why would this guy destroy the zoo?

ANITA

Oh. You're still here.

27

Wife. Would you care to explain the ostrich?

ANITA

It's not an ostrich. It's something else. I needed a ride home. I couldn't count on you being sober enough in remembering to pick me up.

27

I was gonna, as soon as I tagged supper.

ANITA

Of course. I like her. She's a fine bird. I'm gonna keep her and her name will be Betty. No. Pierre. Even though that is a boy's name. She is my new best friend. It's Hell on earth down there. Many buildings are on fire. A Carl's Junior. A handful of movie theaters. It's a serious situation. The earth is washing away and we need to seek higher ground.

JOHNNY

Anita. Why would this man do these things?

*(A frame of silence.)*

*(ANITA and JOHNNY look at each other for the first time. A murder of crows cut across the sky.)*

ANITA

What the fuck does it matter to you? And what makes you think it is just one man? Anyways, if you had dynamite, would you destroy ever thing that bothered you? That is what people do. Perhaps I am wrong. I doubt it, but perhaps I am wrong. Maybe this Gibbs guy just started removing buildings randomly. Maybe he's gone loco.

JOHNNY

No. Insane people are easy to dismiss. A man with dynamite should not be dismissed.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You can't just keep this animal.

ANITA

Why not?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

He doesn't belong to you.

*(The rhea kisses Anita on the neck.)*

ANITA

She. She doesn't belong to anyone. We will keep her in the garage until we can build barns and make a life with her.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Maybe the animal doesn't want to be here.

ANITA

Are you crazy? Can't you see this bird loves me?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I had a man do that to me once. It didn't mean he loved me.

ANITA

Yeah. Well I have had a man do this to me. I have had two men do this to me. And both became my husband. Speaking of, how lucid is he?

JOHNNY

He seems to fade in and out of reality.

ANITA

I wasn't asking you.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

He seems to see what he wants to see. And hear what he wants to hear.

ANITA

So he is doing average.

27

I am batting better than average.

ANITA

Of course you are, Raul.

27

I am growing tired of this. What time is it?

ANITA

It's breakfast time.

27

I want to take a nap.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Before breakfast?

27

I always take a nap before breakfast. Will you sing for me?

ANITA

No.

27

Please.

ANITA

There are people here.

27

I don't care.

ANITA

I do.

JOHNNY

I didn't know you could sing.

ANITA

I'm not much of a singer.

JOHNNY

I doubt that. I think you are a liar. Sing for him.

ANITA

Would you like that?

JOHNNY

I think it would be dreamy.

ANITA

I wasn't talking to you. Fucker. Would you like that?

27

I would like that.

*(ANITA removes the ukulele from the sky and sings.)*

ANITA

Hush, little baby, don't say a word,

(ANITA *cont.*)

Mama's gonna buy you a mockingbird.

If that mockingbird don't sing,  
Mama's gonna buy you a diamond ring.

If that diamond ring turns to brass,  
Mama's gonna buy you a looking glass.

If that looking glass gets broke,  
Mama's gonna buy you a billy-goat.

If that billy-goat won't pull,  
Mama's gonna buy you a cart and bull.

If that cart and bull turns over,  
Mama's gonna buy you a dog named Rover.

If that dog named Rover won't bark,  
Mama's gonna buy you a horse and cart.

If that horse and cart falls down,  
You'll still be the sweetest little baby in town.

(ANITA *sits on the ground. 27 puts his drink and his gun on the ground and places his head in her lap.*)

27

May I suck your nipples?

ANITA

No. Not in front of him. But you can have my finger.

(*As Anita stops playing the ukulele, she hangs it back in the sky, 27 places one of her fingers in his mouth, puts his head on her lap, and goes to sleep.*)

ANITA

Stay quiet. He is like a baby, when he sleeps.

(*A sign that reads SCENE MISSING appears, cutting Johnny and The Ghost Of Sally Singer off from the rest of the world.*)

**Ostinato**

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

When did your voice change?

JOHNNY

When I was a teenager. When I was thirteen.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I had no brothers. I've never noticed these things.

JOHNNY

Didn't you have other guys around? When you were growing up.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

My sisters had boyfriends. But I never noticed.

JOHNNY

Didn't you have boyfriends?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I had boy toys. My sisters were the ones with serious relationships.

JOHNNY

How old are your sisters?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Older than me. That is all you need to hear. Ask me what I did today.

JOHNNY

Why?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Because I want you to.

JOHNNY

What did you do today?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I wrote a country and western song.

JOHNNY

Good for you. Do you do that often?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

No. I've never done it before. But I think I am good at it.

JOHNNY

I bet you are great at it.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Do you know what it is called?

JOHNNY

I have no clue in my head.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Guess.

JOHNNY

Uncle Johnny's Hot Dog Dance.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

No.

JOHNNY

Broken Pig.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

No.

JOHNNY

Honkey Tonk Angel.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

NO!

JOHNNY

I surrender.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Oh. That's all I had to do to get you to surrender to me.

JOHNNY

What is the name of your song, Lynn?

*(A frame of silence.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

What did you call me?

JOHNNY

Sally.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You said Lynn.

JOHNNY

No I didn't.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You did. You called me Lynn. Tell me I heard you wrong. Tell me you said Sally.

JOHNNY

I said Sally. I didn't say Lynn.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Lynn is your ex-girl. Johnny, why did you call me Lynn?

JOHNNY

I didn't call you Lynn.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Well, that is what I heard.

JOHNNY

You are wrong. Sally. You are wrong.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Is that why you ignore me? Because I remind you of Lynn.

JOHNNY

You don't remind me of Lynn. What is the name of our country and western song?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Our? It's my country song.

JOHNNY

What is the name of your country song?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

We can share it if you want. It can be ours. We can have it together.

JOHNNY

I don't want to share your fuckin' song. I just want to know what it is called.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

It's called "Sad Refrain." I wrote the song for myself, but we can share it. Or you can have it.

JOHNNY

No.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Do you want to hear it?

JOHNNY

No.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Just a few lines?

JOHNNY

No.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Please.

JOHNNY

Fine.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Would you read it? I like the sound of your voice.

JOHNNY

Give it to me.

(THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER *gives Johnny a sliver of white paper.*)

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Just read the first line.

JOHNNY

(*Reading.*) I need your lovin'  
Like the sunshine.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Thank you. That is all I wanted to hear you say.

JOHNNY

What about the rest of the song?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Leave it. Just leave it.

JOHNNY

I've been thinking. I want to return you to your father.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

No.

JOHNNY

It's the last place The Devil will look. The Devil is looking for where we are going, not where we have been. He will try to anticipate our next move to find you.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I am not going home.

JOHNNY

It's the smart thing to do.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You just want to get rid of me.

JOHNNY

Don't say that?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Read my song again. Read the first line again.

JOHNNY

I don't see what it will do.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Of course you don't.

(THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER *disappears.*)

(*The sign that reads SCENE MISSING disappears.*)

**Dissonance**

(*A frame of Silence.*)

(ANITA *removes her finger from 27's mouth, and lays him on the ground by himself.*)

JOHNNY

You filthy fucking cunt.

ANITA

Is that all you have to say to me.

JOHNNY

No. Yes. For now. I guess.

ANITA

I knew it was you. I knew it was you as soon as you walked up the road with that God damned girl.

JOHNNY

Well I didn't. I didn't know. I didn't know you married my brother.

ANITA

Our wedding was in all the papers. It was on the news. It was in Rolling Stone magazine.

JOHNNY

I didn't see any pictures. I just read about. You changed your name "Anita."

ANITA

Annie didn't suit me anymore. Not after you left. And our picture, me and Raul, was all over the place. Newsweek, Time magazine. I don't believe you didn't see us. I've never believed anything you've said.

JOHNNY

I don't read magazines. How long have you been in Colorado?

ANITA

Six years. Six years exactly. You have some nerve coming in here with that girl.

JOHNNY

I don't see how this could bother you, "Anita."

ANITA

That is a shame. Of course you never could see how being with another woman bothered me.

JOHNNY

I'm not "with" Sally.

ANITA

That is right. She is ghost, isn't she? A spook. An apparition. You and little miss Sally have a lot in common in my eyes.

JOHNNY

You are the one that said the rough things when you left. You have no right to speak to me this way. Fuck, we were only married for a week.

ANITA

The longest week of my life. Do you know how humiliating it is to tell your mother, your father, that your wedding was for nothing six days after you walk down the carpet? After they dropped how many thousands of dollars? I don't remember. I erased it from my brain. I erased the band, and the flowers, and my dress. My mother's dress. I wore my mother's dress. The same dress her mother, my grandmother wore. And I looked God damned good in it. Any man would have married me. I could have had any man in the world, but a hiccup in judgment pinned me to a tire builder, a factory worker. But before we could go on the honeymoon, before we could even get on the plane for our honeymoon you slept with Lynn. Do you have any idea how humiliating it is to look your father in the eye and tell him his little girl wasn't good enough for fuckin'-you? No. You don't. Do you? You never talk to your family. You didn't even invite them to the wedding. Except Rooster. Your lovely cousin Rooster. How is Rooster?

JOHNNY

Rooster is gone.

ANITA

What do you mean "gone."

JOHNNY

He got shot.

ANITA

Your fault?

JOHNNY

You could say that.

ANITA

I am not saying that, I am asking.

JOHNNY

He got shot in the stomach. Back in Amarillo. He got shot by a preacher. While I was burning a church.

ANITA

Nice.

JOHNNY

Rooster never burned nothing. He just drove the car.

ANITA

Good for you, John. You are a real winner.

JOHNNY

I try pretty hard.

ANITA

That's why I wanted to have children with you. You never lack confidence. And I can't believe you never speak to your brother. Excuse me, my current husband.

JOHNNY

Current? Lovely. Well, I had no idea you two got married. I just knew he married somebody.

ANITA

Well, we did get married, and I had no idea he was your brother.

JOHNNY

Would it change things?

ANITA

Maybe. I don't know, but it might. It might have.

JOHNNY

You look good, Annie.

ANITA

No I don't. I don't look good. And my name is Anita now. Say it. Say my name.

JOHNNY

Anita. Now say "thank you."

ANITA

Thank you. If I knew you were coming, if I knew you were his brother and you were coming, I would have cut my hair. I would have cut my hair and had toe nails painted. I would've worn a little black dress with nothing on underneath, just to give you a hint. A small, single, solitary hint as to what you could have had.

JOHNNY

Just to make me jealous.

ANITA

You bet your ass.

*(A frame of silence.)*

ANITA

Maybe. Maybe to just make you look at me again.

JOHNNY

You got the better end of the deal, Raul is rich.

ANITA

That is not why I married him and fuck you for implying that. Your brother is fun to live with. He's a live wire. We have guns, and booze, and drugs. Not as many as people think, but we still have a good time. And all the pretty little girls that ask for his autograph. All the journalism students that come by looking to take a picture. All the English students that have to read his books, who tell him how handsome he is, and how much they all want to put his cock in their mouths. All the letters and photos of naked girls, wanting him. My time with you has made my new marriage so much fun. My time with you prepared me.

JOHNNY

Don't exaggerate.

ANITA

I'm the one that opens his mail. I inspect it. Looking for bombs. Looking for death threats. They don't come as often as the letters begging for sex with the great 27, Richard Nixon's nemesis. You do know he gets death threats? You do know the Muslims have called for his head. And the Muslims have asked for my head, because I'm his wife. Living with you was easy. Living with your brother is hard. You, you just ignored me, and read the sports page all day long. And slept with Lynn when I wasn't looking.

JOHNNY

That is not true.

ANITA

That is the way I remember it. When I was with you, the only threat was you getting burned at the tire factory...and having sex with my best friend. In my bed.

JOHNNY

Our bed.

ANITA

Our bed. You didn't even have the respect to get a room at the Motel 6. Get a room to fuck, what was her name?

JOHNNY

Lynn. You just said a second ago.

ANITA

I do my best to forget her name. How is Lynn?

JOHNNY

She was with me in New Mexico. Before I came here.

ANITA  
And?

JOHNNY  
And she is gone now.

ANITA  
Like Rooster?

JOHNNY  
Not exactly. She's just gone.

ANITA  
Well good for Lynn. Replaced by a ghost. How...appropriate, I think is the word I am looking for?

*(A soft frame of silence.)*

ANITA  
Why are you burning churches? This isn't like you.

JOHNNY  
How would you know what is like me and what ain't?

ANITA  
I didn't deserve that. I don't deserve to hear that from you. Let me guess, you are burning churches because you don't believe in God anymore.

JOHNNY  
No. No. As usual you are wrong about me.

ANITA  
Then why? People are going to hurt you for this.

JOHNNY  
I believe in God, I just don't believe in him anymore.

ANITA  
And you want to take him down.

JOHNNY  
No. I just want to give the world a little something nice. You take booze away from drunks. I am taking church away from idiots.

ANITA

You are never wrong.

JOHNNY

Just like your husband.

ANITA

You are nothing like my husband.

JOHNNY

Good. I'm glad to hear it.

ANITA

My husband just writes down his opinions. His observations. That is why Nixon hated him. That is why he was number 27 on Nixon's enemies list. But he never hurt people. You. You are one self righteous mother fucker.

JOHNNY

You know, Annie, you are right.

ANITA

Don't call me that.

JOHNNY

Well, I'm gonna call you that. I'm call you that if I damn well please. And there is nothing you can do about it. Are you happy now? Are you happy that you got to say all that to me?

ANITA

No. No I'm not. Because Lynn is not here. And this whole thing between you and me and her cannot be complete. You cocksucker. Cocksucker. I like saying that. I like calling you cocksucker. I like calling you a cocksucker.

JOHNNY

No you don't.

ANITA

The least you could say is sorry. The least you could say is please don't curse at me.

JOHNNY

I'm not gonna say I'm sorry. Because I am not. You were the one who walked out on me. I told everyone who asked that you left me for a shoe salesman.

ANITA

Who did you tell that to?

JOHNNY

Rooster. My father.

ANITA

And what did Rooster say.

JOHNNY

He said "Good. She likes shoes."

*(The two smile, and laugh softly.)*

JOHNNY

How did you meet the brother?

ANITA

I can't drive. You know that.

JOHNNY

I know.

ANITA

I was at a bar. It was late. About 2:00am. And I was drunk on red wine. And Raul came stumbling in the front door wearing a cow skin hat, and shocking all the alcoholics with a cattle prod. Attacking anyone asking for an autograph, or anyone who just seemed to piss him off. He looked tall, and dark, and handsome. Tall enough, anyway. He strolled up to me and whispered in my ear "There's werewolves behind every stool and corner in this joint. I insist on escorting you home." And we got into his jeep. And he drove me to his house, and he whispered in my ear "You are home now. And we kissed. And we made love. All in his jeep. And in the morning I told him my name. And he said "Not anymore. Now your name is Anita. And you will smile every day."

JOHNNY

He writes about you in his column.

ANITA

No he doesn't. I write about myself.

JOHNNY

You write his columns?

ANITA

It's called ghost writing. I am not the first wife to do it for her writer husband. He is in too much pain to write anymore. He is getting old and he's had too many surgeries. He had part of his spine replaced last spring. Most of his friends from the sixties and seventies are gone. He talks about killing himself. I know he plays Russian gambling...you know that game with the pistol... when I am at the farmers market. Some

(ANITA *cont.*)

times he takes a single bullet and runs it over his lips while we watch old movies. And sometimes I wish he would do it, just so I could say goodbye to him. He is the sweetest man, when no one is looking.

JOHNNY

My brother named me. My father was never around, so my brother named me.

ANITA

I didn't know that.

JOHNNY

He named me after Johnny Unites. I was born right after he got a gig with Sports Illustrated. When I think of my brother, I always think of Johnny Unites.

ANITA

When you think of me, what do you think about?

JOHNNY

I never think of your body. I think about how you hate raw onions. I think about the fact that you failed your drivers test, and you refuse to learn how to ride a bike. Is that still the case?

ANITA

Yes. What else? Tell me.

JOHNNY

I think of you making chili with coffee instead of chocolate. I think about the time when you were seven years old and the doctor had to break both your knees so your legs would grow straight. And I think about you running on the playground with those crutches. I think about the last letter you wrote me. And how it said "Take care of yourself." And how angry that made me.

ANITA

What was I supposed to write?

JOHNNY

Anything. Anything but that. "If I could do it all over again I would make love to you 'til your bones turned to glass." How about that? How about that instead of "Take care of yourself."

ANITA

You came up the mountain yesterday. And I kissed my husband last night, and thought of you. It was the best kiss I had in nine years. When I see you, I want to make decisions about my marriage to your brother.

JOHNNY

What are they?

ANITA

I don't think I have to say them to you. You cocksucker. I want to hate fuck you.

*(The world turns darker.)*

ANITA

You cocksucker.

*(The ukulele can be heard in the wind.)*

ANITA

Put your hands on the small of my back.

*(The two kiss. The Ghost Of Sally Singer can be seen in the distance. The Rhea screams. Black out.)*

**Sforzando**

*(In darkness.)*

ANITA

God damn.

JOHNNY

Do you know where the fuse box is?

ANITA

No. But I have a good ideas where it is.

JOHNNY

Can you find it from here before someone gets hurt?

ANITA

If we are lucky.

*(A crash can be heard.)*

ANITA

Ouch.

JOHNNY

Was that glass?

ANITA

Stay put. I don't want you getting hurt.

*(ANITA disappears. 27 emerges from the darkness. THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS appears, igniting two road flares. The world is covered with feathers, and the rhea is no place to be found. The sign that reads SCENE MISSING appears. JOHNNY takes a white chair and places it in front of the sign. TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY) sits in the chair. He is dressed in all white, with small bloodstains on his clothing. He has Touretts syndrome.)*

27

Speak.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

We walked into school...

27

We? What is this we shit, son?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Me and Nickey.

AH!

He was like a father to me. His thoughts were deep.

27

There were two of you?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes, sir.

27

And armed?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Nickey had a mac 10, and two glocks.

BAH!

And a head full of steam, like a S.O.B.

JOHNNY

Why do you talk like that?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I have touretts.

27

Of course. What about you, son?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
What about me, sir?

27

What were you armed with?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
A .45, sir.

JOHNNY  
That's all? Where did you get these weapons?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
Nickey got his guns from God.  
BANG!  
We never moved until he had to.

JOHNNY  
And you?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
It's my uncle's pistol.

27

Is your uncle a dead man?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
No, sir. Just unemployed.

27

Anything else?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
What do you mean?

27

Weapons, son.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
I had pipe bombs.

JOHNNY  
How?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Why, sir?

27

We will be asking the questions.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I made the pipe bombs.

JOHNNY

With what?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Tubing. Screws. Gunpowder. Whatever Nickey told me to make the bombs with.

BANG!

He was good. He was very-very-good.

JOHNNY

Where did you get the hardware?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Wal-Mart, sir. Am I under arrest?

27

What makes you think we are the cops?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

You have a gun.

27

You had a gun. Are you a cop?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No, sir.

GOD!

I'm better than the pigs.

27

That makes two of us. How many pipe bombs did you make?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

About twelve.

JOHNNY

Twelve or about twelve.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Twelve, sir. But they wasn't for killing.

27

Pipe bombs are designed for killing.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Ours was made to create smoke, so it would be hard to see.

GAH!

Human presence at school couldn't do anything. The bombs made our jobs easier. I am very-very-good at what I do.

BANG!

May I have something to drink?

27

Why do you think you deserve something to drink?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Isn't it the law? The law that I can have something to drink?

JOHNNY

We aren't the cops. We told you that already.

27

The law means nothing up here. We could dehydrate you 'til your piss turns to pudding and no one could stop us.

JOHNNY

What is your name?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Travis.

27

Your full name, son.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Travis McNulty, sir.

27

Travis McNulty, you will get something to drink when we hear what we want to hear.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Can it be tomato juice?

27

You'll get something to drink when we hear what we need to hear, son.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

What do you want to hear?

JOHNNY

The truth.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I am telling you the truth.

27

You are telling me and my boy here a mess of grey. I want black and whites.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I am telling you everything I know. As it happened. That is the truth.

PIGS!

I only have a moment to arrange my thoughts. To think quickly and speak cleanly.

27

The child is mad.

*(JOHNNY looks to Travis McNulty (The Subliminal Boy.) He then takes his hands, runs them across the back of his neck and looks out onto the audience.)*

*(The ukulele can be heard in the wind.)*

JOHNNY

The truth. That is correct, Travis. You are telling us the truth. Aren't you?

27

How many people did you kill?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Between me and Nickey?

JOHNNY

No. Just you.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

One.

27

You choreographed a massive attack on your high school, and all you did was drop one body?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Nickey shot forty-two people. He was counting out-loud, as he requested.

BOP!

I was standing next to him. But I only killed one.

JOHNNY

And that makes it right?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No, sir.

JOHNNY

No. It doesn't does it?

27

I find it hard to image this child only butchered one individual. The school is in flames, Travis, we can see the smoke from here.

(TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY) *looks behind his shoulder at the sign that says SCENE MISSING. He then takes his hands and places them over his eyes.*)

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes, sir.

JOHNNY

What school are you from?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Columbia. Home of the fighting wild geese.

JOHNNY

Where is that?

27

It's a suburb of Denver. The place all the rich folks live.

JOHNNY

Where is our partner, Travis?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Nickey?

27

Yeah. The Nickey kid.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

He gave himself. Just as the war plan was designed.

27

Are you lying to us?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No. He's gone. He did his work.

27

His work. Cute. Where. Tell us where he killed himself.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Why?

27

Whom is asking the questions here, son?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

In the library, sir. He shot himself in the library. That was the plan.

BANG! DADDY!

The word the library coming from my lips makes me know it is real.

JOHNNY

You saw this? You saw him kill himself?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes.

27

That will be a "yes, sir" from you, son.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No. I'll just give you a yes.

JOHNNY

And you are certain he is dead?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes. He shot himself between the eyes.

JOHNNY

And this was "the war plan?"

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes. May I have something to drink now? I could go for a tomato juice.

JOHNNY

Not just yet, Travis. Tell us about the war plan.

*(A giraffe slams across the scene. The lights abruptly come on.)*

ANITA

*(Off Stage.)* Found it!

*(The sign that reads SCENE MISSING disappears.)*

*(The cities of Denver and Boulder can be seen, burning in the background. The Ghost of Sally Singer sits in the glass tree.)*

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

The world is on fire! Haaaaaaaaaaa!

*(A frame of silence.)*

ANITA

Who is this?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

His name is Travis. He just appeared.

ANITA

Out of thin air?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

He was inside your giant bird.

JOHNNY

The war plan, Travis. Talk about the plan.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

We got the guns last fall.

JOHNNY

From your uncle and God.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

They were given to us.

JOHNNY

Who?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I don't understand the question.

27

Yes you do you little fuck rag.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

We were told to dig holes. Six by three. Along a broken fence.  
Next to a garden.

JOHNNY

And the machine guns? The glocks? All your weapons? They were found there?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

What do you think? Sir?

27

Watch your mouth, son.

JOHNNY

Who gave you the guns?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

They came from God himself.

27

Let's just kill the little child.

JOHNNY

And the bullets?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

They had the bullets at Wal-Mart. They had the bullets and all I need to make the pipe bombs.

JOHNNY

Lovely. I've got little God damn time for this bullshit.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Of course you don't.

GOD!

*(The sound of the ukulele stops.)*

27

How did you learn to shoot?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

We took bowling pins and nailed them between trees. And we shot cows and dogs and birds.

JOHNNY

What did you tell your parents? What did you tell them you were up too?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

About five foot seven. Sir.

HA!

27

This is not a joking matter, Travis. You have murdered people.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Don't say that. Please don't say that to me.

27

But you have.

JOHNNY

What did you tell your parents you were doing during target practice?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I told them we was bowling.

JOHNNY

Fantastic.

ANITA

You're parents still together?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes. Been married twenty-three years.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Why does that matter?

JOHNNY

How about Nickey? His parents divorced?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No sir.

27

You a God fearing Christian?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes sir.

27

Do you accept Jesus Christ as your lord and personal savior? Do you go to church every Sunday?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Every Sunday of my life.

27

I say we put this pig out of our misery. We will kill him and make fine stew from his meat.

JOHNNY

Enough of that. That's enough of that, Raul. Let's get back to the real. Your plan was to go to school, shoot the shit out of everyone and watch your friend pop himself, and burn down Denver?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Sort of. We was gonna burn the school down, but the boiler room door was locked. It don't matter. The bombs caught the carpeting on fire. And Denver is a different matter. Sir.

27

What were you gonna do?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Excuse me?

27

Your pal Nickey put a bullet in himself, right?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes.

JOHNNY

What was "the war plan" for yourself?

27

You were supposed to follow suit, weren't you, Travis?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I don't know what that means.

JOHNNY

You were supposed to commit suicide. Along with Nickey.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

That was the war plan.

27

But you chickened out.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I chose not to.

27

'Cause you're a chicken shit.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I'm not chicken shit. I'm not chicken shit to die.

NO!

It's more appropriate for me to stay awake and seek forgiveness.

For I have not sinned.

27

Bullshit. You are afraid to die. Everyone is afraid to die.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I'm not.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

Then why didn't you kill yourself?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

It wasn't my time.

Mortality comes and goes but it never dies.

Nickey shot himself in the mouth.

27

Did you get to see his brains come out?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Yes.

27

If I saw my buddies brains come out of his skull, I gather I would yellow on the war plan.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I told you, I didn't go yellow.

JOHNNY

When did you make the conscious design to backstab your friend on the suicide pact?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

When we was in the cafeteria.

JOHNNY

Why the cafeteria?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I hadn't killed nobody. I shot everyone in the legs.

BUT!

27

Because you are chicken shit.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Because I didn't want to disappoint Nickey. The whole war plan was his thinking.

But it was flawed. Like Nickey.

27

Was Nickey your boyfriend?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I'm not a fag.

27

Easy, Travis. I'm just trying to get to the root of the matter.

JOHNNY

What happened in the cafeteria that made you decide to disappoint Nickey?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Everyone was running and screaming and everything was happening real fast. And Nickey was chasing after the crowds of kids. Laughing and shooting and counting. He shot Mr. Bisbey, our geometry teacher in the back of the knees so he couldn't get away. Then grabbed him by the back of the hair, and shot him in the throat. And I could hear some one whispering...

...the Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:  
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the  
paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the  
shadow of death; I will fear no evil: for thou  
art with me; thy rod and thy staff they  
comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the  
presence of mine enemies: thou anointest  
my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all  
the days of my life; and I will dwell in the  
house of the Lord forever.

And I looked her in the eye and said...

    "BOO!"

And I asked her what she was sayin' And she said nothing.

And I put my .45 on the crease between her nose and her lip.

And I watched her shake for a minute or two.

A second, really. A second or two. She was holdin' a little bible in her hand, the kind  
they give out to all the kids in front of the arcade. I liked watching her shake.

    I told her to kiss it.

Kiss it the way she would kiss

    her father.

JOHNNY

Kiss what?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Kiss my gun. Kiss my .45.

    And she wouldn't do it.

And I shot her. I shot her square in the teeth.

    She was the fat girl. The fat girl in gym class everyone made fun of.

Alicia Stillwater.

    She almost started to cry, but she wouldn't give it to me. I could see her tryin',  
tryin' hard not to give it to me.

    I'm not mean.

I'm not cruel.

I wasn't gonna make her cry. I was just gonna pop her.  
She was dead before her head hit the ground. I know she was.

She was dead right in front of me. Like a pet dog.  
I knew right then I was different. And before Nickey could murder anyone else, I screamed at him that the cops was comin' and we had to get to the library. We both knew that we had to be dead by the times the cops got there. I had no beef with the cops. Just the kids. They made fun of the way I talk. I demand respect. And Nickey wasn't gonna give the cops the satisfaction of killin' him.

JOHNNY

And Nickey killed himself.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I begged him to go first, so when I got to heaven I knew I wouldn't be alone.

27

And you chickened out on him.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

No. That ain't the way it happened. Nickey had to go. He would've hurt other people. He talked about high-jacking planes and killing the President, and the Pope, and movie stars.  
And he would've done it.

27

Then why didn't you kill yourself?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I won't let my best friend down. I won't be known like that. He killed himself, and I covered his head with my coat, and ran like Hell. Something happened at the zoo. What happened in Denver was. Very-very-different.

ANITA

What happened at the zoo?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

The sun turned to blood, and the stars turned blue and white. And two angels came to me from heaven. One was named Gabe, he was six foot twenty and rode a green dirt bike. The other was Mike, drank a bottle of red stripe and wore a Red Sox cap. Mike had a hunting knife and never spoke. Gabe did all the talking. They put the guns next to the fence and gave Nickey the war plan. And they tested me. And I passed. I am an angel, like them, now.

(JOHNNY runs his fingers through his hair. 27 takes a slow drink.)

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

Good ol' Gabe and Mike. My boss and them boys used to be mates, you know. They road horses together, and drank on the beach.

*(A frame of silence.)*

JOHNNY

What did the angels say, Travis?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

They told me I was a good boy, and that I had been saved by saving myself. The zoo was destroyed by the mad-killer-bomber Pony Gibbs. It was an accident. His explosives were unstable. He was unstable. And his bombs went off one-by-one in Denver. He was looking for you, Johnny. You are Johnny, right?

JOHNNY

Keep talking.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Gabe told me The Devil is on your trail. Gabe told me the Christians, the extreme Christians that have TV shows and white cars hired bounty hunters to have you murdered.

Three of them. Pony Gibbs.

A professional wrestler named Bat Lovelady.

And a circus knife thrower called Dr. Ofra Blonder.

Gabe told me he is or was a dentist and cuts the teeth out of people as a souvenir after he murders them. They all want you for burning churches.

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

I told you I was wanting to make this interesting...

JOHNNY

I know what they have against me. It sounds like you and Gabe did a boat load of talkin'; Travis.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Gabe told me the FBI wants you for the same. Gabe told me The Devil wants Sally and she runs with you.

JOHNNY

And the angels sent you for me?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

They didn't send me for you.

BANG!

I knew you would be arrogant. They sent me for her.

Gabe told me to protect her, for I am an angel now, an archangel. And Sally would respect me.

(TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY) *points to The Ghost of Sally Singer.*)

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Sally, I have been sent to protect you. I am the archangel, Travis. The mad girl with the kind eyes, and the white fingernails. Mike captured an enormous zoo bird, and I crawled inside its mouth. Gabe told me the bird would find you for me. He harmonized it with a yo-yo. I hid in his stomach until I couldn't breath anymore.

JOHNNY

The archangel. Travis. And now you want a glass of tomato juice.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

That would be nice.

YEAH!

27

I don't have tomato juice.

ANITA

We have bloody marry mix.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Are you gonna call the cops?

27

If we do, they will kill you and break your bones for what you have participated in. And they sure as shit ain't gonna trust that story you just told.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I just don't want my parents finding out what I did at school today. I don't want my mom to know. I don't want to make her cry.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I have something to say.

JOHNNY

How did you fit inside that bird?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

He was callin' to me. Inside my head. Like mother, wanting to hold me close. Are you gonna call the police?

JOHNNY

They might be headed this way to begin with?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

So could the bounty hunters. And The Devil. Denver must be on fire because of him. He must be coming. There's no way the bounty hunter would have destroyed the entire city looking for you. It's the only logical explanation.

ANITA

Logic was thrown out the window a solid sixty minutes ago.

(THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS *snaps his fingers. Snow begins to fall from the sky.*)

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

It's getting colder.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I said I have something to say. Why protect me?

JOHNNY

Don't ask that question. I don't even want to fuckin' know the fuckin' answer.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I do. Why does everything have to be about you? Maybe once, just once it can be about me.

JOHNNY

It's always about you. This whole thing, this running shit, its all about you. It is always about you.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

It's about the state you are in. And the truth is nothing else. Why me, Travis?

ANITA

Don't answer that. I don't want to know either.

*(The sounds of the search helicopter can be heard blowing around.)*

27

You need to leave now. I would be a bold face liar if I said it wasn't nice to see you, but twenty four is a lot for me and you are endangering the life of my wife and my well being by staying here. Especially with this mad fuckin' kid.

JOHNNY

I don't blame you for throwing me out.

27

I am not throwing you out. I am politely asking you to leave my farm. The sun is almost down and it is beginning to snow in September. The cover of night and weather will give you the appropriate access to split the mountains unnoticed. Despite the fact this world is on fire. The Christians are angry, the cops are up in arms, and the world is covered now in creatures of all kinds. If I was a God fearing man I would think it's the rapture. But it is not. It's all just a fat sloppy mess and it is your fault. You may hate God, but burning churches just leads to burning cities, and kids shooting up schools. You are out of control, it's like dealing with a vampire and I can't have that on my farm.

JOHNNY

You aren't kicking me out. I am leaving on my own accord.

27

I didn't say I was kicking you out. I hate it when people miss quote me.

ANITA and THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

It's like getting the lyrics to a good song all wrong.

27

That is my girl. A good soldier you are.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Do we have to go? Me and Sally?

27

I don't think it's a good idea to speak to you anymore, Travis.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You are funny. You are very strange and you don't know why, do you?

27

No. I'm stupid about things like that.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You have the soul of a child in the body of an elderly bulldog. That is why you have problems. People giggle in fear when you walk in the room...because no one gets you.

27

Anita gets me.

ANITA

Raul. My name is Annie. It's not Anita.

27

I know. But you will always be Anita to me.

ANITA

That's why I love him. You broke my heart, Johnny. You snapped my heart like a twig. But your brother never will. When I am with him. I am not Annie anymore. I am not the girl you damaged.

JOHNNY

Well, that explains a great many things, doesn't it?

ANITA

No. It just asks more questions.

JOHNNY

I came here running, looking for you. I didn't know it, I didn't know you'd be here, but I know now and I don't want to go. I didn't know what I was doing when I started burning churches. I just hated God, and I know he hates me. And I thought I was making the world a better place. An easier place. But I had no idea I would find you. And I had no idea that when I saw you for the first time in ten years last night that I would want to take it all back, take all back and put it in a box and bury the past deep in the ground. But we can't and I won't pretend we can. Seeing Raul was one thing. Seeing Raul was an atomic bomb. Seeing you was simple and harder. Disappear with me. We will go to Canada. Or Cancun. And paint seashells. Or just listen to each other breathe. Run with me.

*(A soft frame of silence.)*

ANITA

No.

*(A hard frame of silence.)*

JOHNNY

Run with me.

*(A frame of silence.)*

ANITA

No.

*(A frame of silence.)*

Run with me. JOHNNY

*(A frame of Silence.)*

No. ANITA

*(A frame of silence.)*

Run with me. JOHNNY

No. ANITA

*(A soft frame of silence.)*

Please. JOHNNY

*(A frame of silence.)*

Disappear with me. JOHNNY

I can't. ANITA

I know. JOHNNY

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS  
I can make her go with you if you want?

No. That won't be necessary. JOHNNY

Where will you go? ANITA

Malibu. JOHNNY

To see your mother? ANITA

JOHNNY  
Yes.

ANITA  
You should be safe with her.

JOHNNY  
I don't care about that.

ANITA  
I do. Have you been to Malibu?

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER  
No.

ANITA  
It's like a Godless heaven. It's very American. When you see your mother, tell her I love her.

JOHNNY  
She will like that.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
We have to go.

JOHNNY  
Do you still have your gun with you?

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)  
Under my belt. But I won't use it to save you. I'm not here for you.

JOHNNY  
That is fine with me.

27

Kid. The fires. The killings. The animals. I've learned a few tricks along the way. A few simple skills, primarily avoidance techniques. But, mainly I have relied on luck and karma. You aren't the pilot, Kid. You are just the passenger. You can burn as many churches as you want, but you'll never change that fact. This day has just been a brief pause in the music. Good luck to you. I'll be watching the news for you. I want to go back to the house and have a nice dinner and write a few words down. Maybe write a song. Perhaps a book. And when the hour is right, I would like to pass on. And do it on my terms.

ANITA

I would like that for you. We will go home, and I will sing you to sleep. Good-bye, John.

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

You're a good boy, Raul. Too good for this world.

27

Did you say something?

JOHNNY

Yes. I did.

27

I love you, Kid. Let's vamoose, baby.

*(ANITA takes the ukulele from the sky, and 27 by the hand and exits. The world grows darker. The stars can be seen in the sky as the cities burn in the distance.)*

**Coda**

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

We will need money.

JOHNNY

We don't have any.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I'll rob a 7-11.

JOHNNY

Don't. We don't need to draw attention to ourselves. The cops and bounty hunters are looking for two, not three people. That is our advantage. Anyways, archangels shouldn't rob 7-11.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

And The Devil. The Devil is looking for two people.

JOHNNY

Right. Anyways, Travis, you are an agent of God now. You shouldn't be knocking over 7-11 stores.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

You never answered my question, Travis.

JOHNNY

He's here to protect you from The Devil.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

And you are just gonna let him join us.

JOHNNY

He has the gun.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

I wasn't sent to protect you from The Devil. That is Johnny's job. I was sent to protect you from Johnny.

HA!

Now pack your things, we need to get moving.

JOHNNY

Hey, Junior. I'm the captain of this ship. We move when I say we move.

TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY)

Did you listen to your brother? You aren't the pilot on this plane. You're just a passenger. Don't make me say it again. You think you are so smart, but you are not. You dip shit. And don't call me Junior. I only have one bullet left in my gun. Don't make me put your name on it. I work for God now, not you. I'll get some water. We will need it going through Utah.

(TRAVIS MCNULTY (THE SUBLIMINAL BOY) *exits.*)

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

I will be nice to you in Utah and Nevada. After that, I am gonna eat this girl like an egg. I think adding the archangel is fun touch. You are a real hero. A real champion. For whatever the fuck is real now. I like you John. You remind me of me when I was your age. You are sacrificing everything to save the world from itself. You are giving up everything to burn churches. You are a Greek myth. A magic man. I hope you had fun today, John. I know I have. Look, you can almost see the audience.

*(Everything stops.)*

THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS

I would leave before the cops get here.

*(THE GHOST OF ROBERTO JENKINS walks out the emergency exit. All that can be seen is the snow falling on Johnny and The Ghost of Sally Singer.)*

*(A fragment of silence.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I write you letters everyday. You know that?

JOHNNY

Yes.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

But I never give them to you.

JOHNNY

I know.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I have one for you I want you to read. Will you read it? That is all I am asking. For you to read it.

*(JOHNNY looks to The Ghost of Sally Singer sitting in the tree. He then takes his hands, runs them across the back of his neck and looks out onto the audience.)*

JOHNNY

Give it to me.

*(THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER gives Johnny the note and retreats to the glass tree.)*

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

*(Reading as Johnny reads to himself.)*

Dear Johnny,

I want you. And I want to call you John, not Johnny. I want to call you Dear and Lover. I want you to kiss my neck in public and mean it. I want you to kiss my neck when you haven't been drinking. I want you to kiss my eyes and my lips. I want to watch you pump gas into a car I am sitting in. I want you to touch my fingers and tell me my hair smells like a chrysanthemum. Or green tea. I want to be close to you. When we sleep in the same bed, I want to feel like we are sleeping in the same bed. I want you to notice when I am not in the same room.

I'm not writing you anymore. It is a decision you have made for me. You are always too busy to talk to me, too busy to look at me, too busy to notice me. But I think you are too busy to care. Every place we go there will be another woman. A woman more beautiful than me. A woman smaller than me or taller than me. More tan than me or more pale than me. There will always be a woman different than me.

When you took me from my father, when you saved me from The Devil, it was fun. You were handsome. You are not fun anymore. You are not handsome, you are only good looking. You rejected me in New Mexico. And now you reject me in Colorado. I won't be rejected a third time. It hurts too much and it makes me want to hate you. All I have ever asked you to do was to disappear with me. And all you do is disappear. I know you

can save my soul by going to the church in Malibu, The Big Malibu. But right now, I would rather go with The Devil than to continue with you like this.

I love you,

Sally.

*(JOHNNY looks to the tree. He burns the letter.)*

JOHNNY

Sally.

*(A frame of silence.)*

JOHNNY

Don't you ever write me a letter like that again.

*(THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER looks to the audience. Then runs her fingers through her hair.)*

*(JOHNNY looks to his bloody feet. Then places his hand over his eyebrow as he looks across the sky.)*

JOHNNY

It got to be night fast. The stars are nice tonight.

THE GHOST OF SALLY SINGER

I know.

*(A frame of silence.)*

*(The two characters disappear. All that can be seen is snow falling. If the audience is lucky, they can see heaven in the distance.)*

END OF INTERMEZZO