

A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND

by

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Adapted from the short story

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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD — DAY

A LARGE, BLACK 1950's MODEL CAR sits near a row of TREES at the edge of a dusty road. Next to the car, TWO MEN are pulling on CLOTHES THAT DON'T FIT. They joke with each other.

BOBBY LEE

Hey, pretty funny, ain't I, Hiram?

BOBBY LEE, a fat young man, is wearing a faded T-SHIRT that strains tight over his chest. He grins sloppily and squints in the BRIGHT SUMMER SUNSHINE.

HIRAM, a few years older, skinnier and tougher looking, tugs a CAP down low on his face. His JEANS hang loosely.

HIRAM

Bobby Lee, it's too damn hot out here to be worrin' 'bout what you look like.

A third man, wearing SILVER-RIMMED GLASSES, steps from behind the car.

THE MAN WITH GLASSES

opens the driver's door. He stands motionless beside the car. His CLOSE-CROPPED HAIR is flecked with gray. His JEANS ARE TOO SHORT. His TIGHT, WHITE T-SHIRT reveals MUSCULAR arms. He is deadly serious. In control.

MAN WITH GLASSES

Shut up, Hiram, Bobby Lee. You two get goin' and take care of things like I told ya.

Hiram and Bobby Lee stop laughing. They move around the car where

TWO MEN'S BODIES

lie sprawled in the dirt. SHOT. They are wearing UNDERWEAR and T-SHIRTS. No clothes. No shoes or socks.

Hiram and Bobby Lee grab the hands and feet of the smaller man. They drag him toward the WOODS.

THE MAN WITH GLASSES

gets into the driver's seat and waits in silence. He looks straight ahead. Perfectly still. Patient.

Hiram and Bobby Lee return. They stop laughing as they reach the car. Hiram gets into the passenger seat. Bobby Lee gets in the back. The MAN WITH GLASSES isn't irritated. Just matter-of-fact.

MAN WITH GLASSES

You two couldn't take care of a snake if it came right up and bit ya', if I didn't tell you what to do now, could ya?

BOBBY LEE

Aw, sure we could. We...

The MAN WITH GLASSES looks in the REARVIEW MIRROR at Bobby Lee. The driver's EYES are EXPRESSIONLESS behind his GLASSES. COLD. Bobby Lee's voice fades away.

MAN WITH GLASSES

Shut up, Bobby Lee. Let's just get ourselves outta Georgia, okay?

The MAN WITH GLASSES turns on the RADIO. COUNTRY MUSIC plays. The BLACK CAR moves slowly down the deserted country road.

EXT. SOLITARY OLD BUILDING — DAY

A WHITE 1950'S MODEL CAR

with LUGGAGE tied to the roof pulls slowly into the parking lot of a WEATHERED BUILDING beside a 2-LANE COUNTRY HIGHWAY. A FADED SIGN reads, "THE TOWER, HOME OF RED SAMMY'S BARBECUE."

The SAME COUNTRY TUNE that was playing in the large black car now plays from the DASHBOARD RADIO in the WHITE CAR.

The car parks. A back door opens. A little boy about ten years old with a PLAID SHIRT and ROLLED-UP JEANS, jumps out and runs toward the building. JOHN WESLEY looks back and SHOUTS.

JOHN WESLEY

Hurry up, June Star! I'm gonna beat ya, again!

His younger sister, JUNE STAR, wearing a BRIGHT HAIR RIBBON to match her DRESS, gets out and runs after him.

JUNE STAR

No fair, John Wesley! Grandma was fussin' with my hair!

A fat man pulls himself out of the car. The kid's father, BAILEY, wears a YELLOW SHIRT WITH BRIGHT BLUE PARROTS that sticks to his back. He wipes his face with a HANDKERCHIEF.

BAILEY

Martha! We ain't got all day.

MARTHA closes the pages of a FASHION MAGAZINE and gets out of the car. Her messy, faded blonde hair hangs from underneath a SLOPPY BANDANA. She moves at her own pace. Slow.

MARTHA

Alright, Bailey. Hold your horses. We ain't in that bigga hurry to get to Florida now, are we?

Bailey turns and looks in the backseat of the car. Irritated.

BAILEY

Ma, are you comin'?

He doesn't wait for an answer. He and Martha head toward THE TOWER. They leave the children's GRANDMOTHER behind. Soon,

THE GRANDMOTHER

gets stiffly out of the car. She holds an OLD-FASHIONED PAPER FAN with a PICTURE OF JESUS on it. She straightens the COLORFUL SCARF around the neck of her respectable DRESS.

The Grandmother turns and leans back inside the car. She raises the NEWSPAPER that covers a BASKET on the floorboard. A BLACK CAT peaks its head out.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Now, you be good, Kitty. You know Bailey didn't want me bringin' you along. I'll bring you somethin' when I come back.

The Grandmother picks up John Wesley's EYEGLASSES off the seat and puts them in her purse. She walks toward the building, FANNING herself.

INT. THE TOWER — DAY

THE GRANDMOTHER

adjusts her eyes to the darkness in The Tower. COUNTRY MUSIC plays on the RADIO. She sees a

DARK, SMOKY ROOM (THE GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

TABLES scattered around. TWO MEN and a WOMAN at the BAR drinking BEER and LAUGHING. A bored, tired-looking WAITRESS sitting behind the bar.

The Grandmother sits down. She puts John Wesley's GLASSES on the table for him. Bailey reads a SPORTS SECTION he found. Martha thumbs through her FASHION MAGAZINE.

The waitress makes her way to the table. Slowly. She takes their orders. Starts to speak...

WAITRESS

You folks ain't headed south...

but stops as the DOOR OPENS. The fat man (RED SAMMY) whose picture is on the sign outside enters. The waitress hurries back to the counter and puts in the family's order.

Red Sammy sits down at a nearby table. He pulls out a STAINED HANDKERCHIEF from his DIRTY OVERALLS and wipes his neck.

The COUNTRY MUSIC stops mid-song. A SERIOUS VOICE interrupts to read a NEWS BULLETIN.

RADIO DEEJAY

"Breaking news about the criminal who calls himself 'The Misfit' and two fellow convicts who escaped from the Georgia State Penitentiary this morning.

The Grandmother leans forward. Hands on the table. Face anxious. Eyes darting. Bailey and Martha keep reading.

RADIO DEEJAY (cont'd)

"Authorities now have reason to believe they are headed toward

RADIO DEEJAY (cont'd)
 Florida. These men are armed and
 extremely dangerous."

The COUNTRY MUSIC starts to play again. The Grandmother looks
 across at her son and daughter-in-law. She FANS herself
 rapidly. Her voice is sharp.

THE GRANDMOTHER
 Bailey! Martha! Did you two hear
 that? That escaped Misfit is
 headed toward Florida. Didn't I
 tell you two we shoulda gone to
 Tennessee for vacation?

BAILEY
 (still reading)
 Yeah, Ma, you told us. 'Bout a
 thousand times. But we're goin' to
 Florida.

MARTHA
 (not looking up)
 'Sides, why should I spoil my
 vacation worryin' about a bunch of
 convicts we'll never even see?

John Wesley and June Star sit down on either side of the
 Grandmother. The Grandmother is determined to have her say.

THE GRANDMOTHER
 John Wesley and June Star have
 never even been to Tennessee — and
 we've got family there. Misfit or
 no Misfit, I say we shoulda' gone
 to Tennessee.

John Wesley and June Star roll their eyes. The Grandmother
 catches them making faces behind her back.

THE GRANDMOTHER
 Yes, and just what would you two
 do if this Misfit caught you?

John Wesley hits his palm with a fist.

JOHN WESLEY
 I'd smack his face.

JUNE STAR

Me, too. I ain't afraid of no
Misfit.

The Grandmother sits back. She nods her head firmly up and down as she pats the knees of her grandchildren.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Well now, we'd just see about
that, wouldn't we?

Red Sammy looks toward the family's table. Leans back.

RED SAMMY

I tell you folks, you just don't
know what kind of people you'll
find in the world today, do you?

The Grandmother nods her head up and down. She leans toward Red Sammy, her face animated. She wants to talk.

THE GRANDMOTHER

We're headin' toward Florida. Same
as that Misfit. I saw his picture
in the paper this mornin'.

Red Sammy turns his attention to the Grandmother.

RED SAMMY

Well, you be careful, mam. That
man ain't nothin' but bad news. I
tell you, a good man is hard to
find these days.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You're right, Red Sammy. You used to
see families at church on Sunday,
and you could just tell they were
good people. It's gettin' harder and
harder to find good people.

A LOUD ARGUMENT erupts between the two men at the bar. The woman joins in. Red Sammy wipes his face.

RED SAMMY

No use talkin' about it, mam.
You're 'xactly right. Ain't a soul
on God's green earth you can
trust. An' that's the God's honest
truth.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You're a good man, Red Sammy.

Red Sammy looks pleased. He looks over and sees the waitress standing behind of the counter. His face darkens.

RED SAMMY

Quit loungin', woman, and hurry up with these people's order. Sometimes I wonder why I ever did marry you.

Red Sammy's wife goes into the kitchen. She comes out soon, carrying FIVE PLATES to the table all by herself.

Bailey and Martha read as they eat. LAUGHTER breaks out at the bar again. The kids eat fast and run outside to play. June Star leaves her HAIR RIBBON on the table.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(shouting after them)

You two be careful out there! You never know what kind of people might be passing by.

After awhile, Bailey pays. He and Martha leave.

THE GRANDMOTHER

wraps a few LEFTOVERS in a paper towel. She pours a PAPER CUP OF WATER for the cat. She picks up John Wesley's EYEGLASSES and June Star's HAIR RIBBON from the table. A new ARGUMENT breaks out at the bar as she leaves.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Goodbye, Red Sammy.

RED SAMMY

Goodbye, mam.

INT. CAR — DAY

COUNTRY MUSIC plays quietly on the car's radio. Bailey drives as the others doze off and on.

The Grandmother wakes herself up with her own SNORING. She looks out the windows with particular interest.

THE GRANDMOTHER

I once visited a plantation with my cousins in this neighborhood when I was a young lady. The house had six columns across the front, and there was a beautiful avenue of oaks leading up to it.

Silence. The Grandmother looks around the car to see if anyone is paying attention. She sees that

EVERYONE IS AWAKE. (THE GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

The kids look out the windows. Martha thumbs through her magazine. The Grandmother speaks a little louder.

THE GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)

There was a secret panel in this house, and the story went that all the family silver was hidden in it when Sherman came through, but it never was found.

John Wesley and June Star bounce in their seats.

JOHN WESLEY and JUNE STAR

Hey! I bet we can find the silver!
Dad, we should go see the house with the secret panel!

The Grandmother looks out the window. Hides a slight smile.

THE GRANDMOTHER

I know it's not far from here. It wouldn't take just a few minutes.

Bailey's eyes flick to the REARVIEW MIRROR. He looks at his mother. Doesn't see her smile. But he is irritated anyway.

BAILEY

No.

June Star hangs onto the front seat. John Wesley kicks the back of it. They whine together.

JOHN WESLEY and JUNE STAR

Why can't we stop? We never get to do anything we wanna do! We wanna see the secret panel! Let's stop!

John Wesley kicks the seat again.

Bailey jerks the car onto the side of the road and stops.

BAILEY

Alright! You all shut up now! If you don't shut up, we're not goin' anywhere.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(primly)

It would be very educational.

Bailey shakes his head. Frustrated. Beaten.

BAILEY

Alright. But this is the only time we're gonna stop for anything like this. The only time.

The Grandmother tries not to sound smug.

THE GRANDMOTHER

The turn is 'bout a mile back. I marked it when we passed.

Bailey turns the car around roughly. The kids bounce excitedly in their seats.

JOHN WESLEY and JUNE STAR

We're gonna find the secret panel!

Bailey turns slowly onto a DIRT ROAD lined with TREES. The heavy car bumps up and down on the rough, beaten surface. Dust blows everywhere.

The children and Grandmother hold onto the edge of their seats. Martha tries to thumb through her fashion magazine.

Bailey drives cautiously. Sweating. Getting more irritated.

BAILEY

This place had better turn up in a minute, or I'm gonna turn around.

THE GRANDMOTHER

It's not much farther, Bailey. I'm sure I remember this stretch of road. I remember...

The Grandmother's voice fades away. Her eyes narrow as if she is concentrating on something. She sits back quickly. Her feet jerk and KICK the BASKET on the floor.

The NEWSPAPER rises with a SNARL. The BLACK CAT springs out. Claws clamps on Bailey's shoulder.

Bailey turns the wheel wildly.

THE CAR

careens into a DITCH. Bounces up and down. HARD. The family SCREAMS. LUGGAGE flies off the top of the car. The car finally stops. It sits at a FUNNY ANGLE in the ditch.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The children scramble out of the car. Jumping and shouting.

JOHN WESLEY and JUNE STAR

We had an accident! We had an accident.

Bailey yanks the CAT from his neck. He opens the door and flings the CAT out.

Bailey goes around to help Martha out. Her FASHION MAGAZINE falls at her feet. Her forehead BLEEDS. Her BANDANA has fallen off. She holds one arm at a STRANGE ANGLE. She stumbles and sits dazed against the side of the ditch.

The Grandmother limps from the car. Her COLORFUL SCARF hangs awkwardly. She sits down heavily. Martha doesn't look up.

Bailey sits down beside them. He glares at his Mother.

BAILEY

What got into that stupid cat?!

The Grandmother's eyes are downcast. Her voice uncertain.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Well now, Bailey, now, maybe I might have startled the cat. I'm not positive, but I got to worryin' that maybe that house I was rememberin' was back in Tennessee, not Georgia.

Bailey's eyes are narrow. His face red. Fists clenched.

BAILEY

What are you talkin' about?! There ain't any stupid old house on this broken-down road?! What...

Bailey stops shouting as the Grandmother turns her head sharply and looks up the road. She sees a CAR in the distance. It moves slowly toward the family.

THE GRANDMOTHER

jumps up and WAVES her arms. The children JUMP and WAVE their arms, too. Bailey watches as he sits by Martha.

A LARGE BLACK CAR

reaches the family and stops just over the ditch. There are three men in it. It is the same BLACK CAR and same three MEN from the beginning.

The MAN WITH GLASSES looks down at the family through the driver's window with a steady, expressionless gaze. The Grandmother and children stop waving. No one speaks.

The MAN WITH GLASSES mutters to the other two men in the car. The two men get out and move to either side of the family.

The MAN WITH GLASSES gets out of the car and stands motionless for a moment. He looks down at all of them.

JOHN WESLEY and JUNE STAR

We had an accident!

The Grandmother looks closely at the

MAN WITH GLASSES (GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

as he climbs carefully down the embankment. He keeps one arm behind him. He stops and stands in front of the family.

MAN WITH GLASSES

I see you folks had a little spill. Hiram, try their car and see will it run.

Hiram goes over to the car. Bailey stands up and tries to take charge.

BAILEY

Look here now. We're in a predicament. We're in...

The Grandmother SHRIEKS LOUDLY. Points at the driver.

THE GRANDMOTHER

I know you! You're The Misfit! I recognized you right away!

The Misfit smiles. Just slightly. Not a real smile.

THE MISFIT

Yes'm, you're exactly right. Only it would've been better for all of you, lady, if you hadn't of recognized me.

Bailey jerks his head furiously toward his mother.

BAILEY

You damn, stupid ol' woman! Can't you ever keep your damn mouth shut, even just once?!

The Grandmother begins to CRY. The Misfit shifts uncomfortably. He turns to the Grandmother.

THE MISFIT

Look, lady, don't you get upset. I don't reckon he meant to talk to you thataway.

THE MISFIT

moves his arm around. He is holding a GUN. John Wesley hops eagerly.

JOHN WESLEY

Whatcha got that gun for? Whatcha gonna do with that gun?

The Misfit looks at Martha. She sits in the ditch, cradling her broken arm. Disoriented. Her head is down, forehead still BLEEDING.

THE MISFIT

Lady, would you mind calling them children to sit by you. Children make me nervous.

JUNE STAR

You can't tell us what to do.

Martha absently pats the ground beside her.

MARTHA

John Wesley. June Star. Come here.

The children reluctantly sit down beside Martha. She covers her face with one hand, her other arm useless.

The Grandmother dabs her eyes. Regains her composure.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You wouldn't shoot a lady, would you?

The Grandmother looks at

THE MISFIT (GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

as he points the toe of his BOOT at the ground. He digs at the dirt, looking down.

THE MISFIT

I sure would hate to have to.

The Grandmother moves a little closer. Speaks quickly. Anxiously, yet firmly.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Listen! I know you're a good man - you don't look a bit like you have common blood! I know you come from fine people!

The Misfit smiles, just slightly again. Hides his sarcasm.

THE MISFIT

Yes'm. Finest people in the world. God never made finer people than my Mamma and Daddy.

Bobby Lee comes around behind them. A GUN is tucked in the back of his waistband.

THE MISFIT

Watch them children, Bobby Lee. You know they make me nervous.

The Misfit squats on the ground, elbows on his knees. He looks down, then glances upward.

THE MISFIT

Ain't a cloud in the sky today.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(coaxingly)

Yes. Yes, it is a beautiful day!
Listen, you shouldn't call
yourself The Misfit, 'cause I know
you're a good man at heart. I can
just look at you and tell you're a
good man.

Bailey stands stiffly beside his mother. He doesn't move.

BAILEY

(hoarsely)

Quiet! Everybody shut up, and let
me handle this.

The Misfit ignores him. He draws a circle in the ground with his GUN. He speaks to the Grandmother as if Bailey hadn't spoken.

THE MISFIT

I 'preciate that, lady. I do.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You're welcome, young man.

Hiram comes over, rubbing his hands with an old rag.

HIRAM

It'll take me half an hour to fix
this here car.

THE MISFIT

(to Hiram)

Well, first you and Bobby Lee get
him and that little boy to step
over yonder with you.

THE MISFIT (cont'd)

(nodding to Bailey)

Would you mind steppin' back in
the woods with these men?

Bailey remains perfectly still, as if frozen. He looks at The Misfit. Tries to speak. Clears his throat.

BAILEY

Listen. We're in a terrible predicament. Nobody realizes...

Hiram has a GUN in one hand. He takes Bailey's arm and leads him toward the woods.

Bailey walks heavily, like an old man.

Bobby Lee moves toward John Wesley. John Wesley runs and catches hold of Bailey's hand. Bobby Lee follows.

JOHN WESLEY

You can't take us into the woods!
Dad, they can't tell us what to do!
Can they, Dad?

Martha sits unmoving. Head bowed. She doesn't seem to hear or realize what is going on.

June Star is silent. For once.

THE GRANDMOTHER

clutches at her COLORFUL SCARF. It comes off in her hand. Falls to the ground. She takes a step toward The Misfit.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(anxious, yet reassuring)
Now, there's really no need to take them off, is there? A family should all stay together...

The men reach the edge of the TREES. Bailey turns back. Puts his free hand on a TREE TRUNK for support. His voice cracks.

BAILEY

I'll be back in a minute, Mamma.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(sternly, imploringly)
Bailey, you come back this instant! Do you hear me?

They enter into the woods. The Grandmother looks after them.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Bailey!

The Grandmother turns. She looks pleadingly at The Misfit squatting in front of her. She speaks quickly.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Listen, I know you don't wanna hurt them. I can tell you're not a bit common, a young man as polite as you. I just know you're a good man!

Silence. The Misfit squints up at the sky.

THE MISFIT

No, mam. I ain't a good man. But I ain't the worst in the world, either. My daddy said I was just a different breed from my brothers and sisters.

The Misfit shifts his feet. Glances at Martha and June Star.

THE MISFIT (cont'd)

I'm sorry I don't have a shirt on, ladies. We borrowed these clothes from some folks we met. We're just making do 'til we can get better.

The Grandmother nervously clutches the neck of her dress. Her SCARF lies at her feet. She tries to speak calmly.

THE GRANDMOTHER

That's perfectly alright. Maybe Bailey has an extra shirt in his suitcase.

THE MISFIT

I'll look and see in a minute.

Martha looks up uncertainly, still dazed. She realizes Bailey and John Wesley are gone.

MARTHA

Bailey? John Wesley? Where did they go?! Where did they take them?!

The Misfit and Grandmother ignore her. Behind them,

MARTHA

tries to stand. She gasps in pain and falls back down. She sits numbly, her head held by her unbroken arm.

The Grandmother stands above

THE MISFIT (GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

staring at his back as he squats with his GUN in one hand.

THE MISFIT

My Daddy was somethin' else. He never got in trouble with the 'thorities, though. Had the knack of handling them.

The Grandmother tries to speak convincingly.

THE GRANDMOTHER

You could be honest, too, if you'd try! Just think how nice it'd be to settle down and not worry about somebody chasin' you all the time.

The Misfit scratches the ground with the barrel of his GUN.

THE MISFIT

Yes'm. There's always somebody comin' after you.

The Grandmother holds her arms down in front of her, fingers linked together.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Have you ever prayed?

THE MISFIT

No, mam.

Two MUFFLED POPS come from the woods.

THE GRANDMOTHER

gasps. Steps back. Her head jerks towards the woods. She mumbles, as if speaking to herself.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Pray, pray, pray...

She tries to breathe. Looks pleadingly back at The Misfit.

THE GRANDMOTHER (cont'd)

I know you're a good man.

The Misfit doesn't look at the woods. He speaks almost to himself.

THE MISFIT

I never was a bad boy that I remember. But somewheres along the line, I done something wrong and got sent to the penitentiary.

The Misfit stops. He turns and looks directly up at the Grandmother. He holds her eyes in a stare.

THE MISFIT

I was buried alive there.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(desperately)

That's when you shoulda prayed.
What'd you do to get sent to prison?

The Misfit stares at the sky. Silent for a moment.

THE MISFIT

I forgot what I done, lady. I set there and set there, trying to remember what it was I done, and I ain't recalled it to this day.

The Grandmother's hands pull at her dress.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Maybe they put you in by mistake.

THE MISFIT

No, mam. It wasn't no mistake.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(imploring)

Maybe it was 'cause you stole somethin'.

The Misfit looks directly at the Grandmother. Sneers slightly.

THE MISFIT

Wasn't nobody had nothin' I wanted. It was a head-doctor at the penitentiary said what I'd done was kill my Daddy, but I know that for a lie.

My Daddy died of the fever, and I never had nothin' to do with it. He's buried in the Hopewell Baptist Churchyard. You can go there an' see for yourself.

The Grandmother looks away from the woods. Breathes deeply.

THE GRANDMOTHER

If you'd pray, Jesus'd help you. Jesus would help a good man.

THE MISFIT

That's right, lady.

THE GRANDMOTHER

(hopefully)

Well then, why don't you pray?

THE MISFIT

I don't need to pray and I don't want no help. I'm doin' alright by myself.

The Grandmother looks around. She catches her breath. Bobby Lee and Hiram walk slowly out of the woods. Bobby Lee holds a YELLOW SHIRT WITH BRIGHT BLUE PARROTS.

THE MISFIT (cont'd)

Throw me that shirt, Bobby Lee.

THE GRANDMOTHER

stumbles backward. She watches silently, shaking, as The Misfit slowly buttons up Bailey's shirt.

THE MISFIT (cont'd)

No, mam. I found out the crime don't matter. Kill a man or take a tire off his car, sooner or later you're gonna forget what it was you done and just be punished for it.

Martha looks up. She begins to make gasping noises.

The Grandmother and The Misfit look over at her as if they had forgotten she was there.

THE MISFIT

(almost respectfully)

Lady, would you and that little girl
like to step off yonder with Bobby
Lee and Hiram and join your husband?

Martha shakes her head slowly as if to clear it. She still can't focus. Her face is bloody. She moves numbly, her arm hanging by her side.

MARTHA

Yes, thank you.

She struggles to climb out of the ditch. June Star stands up beside her, still clutching Martha's blouse.

THE MISFIT

Help that lady up, Hiram. Bobby
Lee, you hold onto that little
girl's hand.

JUNE STAR

Ma, I don't wanna go with him. He
reminds me of a pig. What'd they
do with Daddy and John Wesley? Ma?

Bobby Lee grins his sloppy grin and catches June Star's arm. He pulls her off into the woods after Hiram and Martha.

THE GRANDMOTHER

watches them walk away. Silent. Defeated. Her shoulders droop. She bows her head.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus...

THE MISFIT

Yes'm. It was Jesus thrown
everythin' off balance. It was the
same with Him as me 'cept He
hadn't committed any crime and

THE MISFIT (cont'd)
 they could prove I committed one
 'cause they had papers on me.

Course, they never shown me any
 papers. That's why I sign myself
 now. I call myself "The Misfit"
 'cause I can't make what I done
 wrong fit what I gone through in
 punishment.

A MUFFLED POP. The Grandmother's head jerks toward the woods.

THE MISFIT
 Does it seem right to you, lady,
 that one is punished a heap and
 another ain't punished at all?

The Grandmother turns to The Misfit. Her face is flushed.

THE GRANDMOTHER
 (pleading, desperate)
 Jesus! You've got good blood - I
 can tell! I know you wouldn't
 shoot a lady! Pray Jesus, you
 don't want to shoot a lady. I'll
 give you all the money I've got!

THE MISFIT
 Lady, there never was a body that
 give the undertaker a tip.

Another MUFFLED POP. The Grandmother's head drops heavily.

THE MISFIT (cont'd)
 (thoughtfully)
 Jesus was the only One that ever
 raised the dead, and He never
 should've done it. He thrown
 everythin' off balance.

Cause if He did what He said, then
 there's nothin' for you to do but
 throw everythin' away and follow Him.

The Grandmother looks up. Watches him numbly. Her face is
 ashen. Her head moves from side to side as if saying "no."

THE MISFIT (cont'd)

And if He didn't do what He said,
 then there's nothin' for you to do
 but enjoy the minutes you got left
 the best you can – killing
 somebody or burnin' down his house
 or doin' some other meanness to
 him. There ain't no pleasure but
 meanness.

THE GRANDMOTHER

sinks slowly down into the ditch beside The Misfit. Her legs
 twist under her. She looks blankly at her fallen, brightly
 colored SCARF. She seems to speak to herself. A monotone.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Maybe Jesus didn't raise the dead.

The Misfit begins to speak faster. He breathes quickly. He is
 losing his composure. His control.

THE MISFIT

I wasn't there, lady, so I can't
 say He didn't. I wisht I'd been
 there, though, so I'd know.

It ain't right at all, 'cause if
 I'd been there I'd have known –
 and if I'd have known, I wouldn't
 be the man I am today.

The Misfit hits the ground with his fist. His voice rises.

The Grandmother sees

THE MISFIT'S FACE (THE GRANDMOTHER'S POV)

twist as if he is going to cry. She looks into his eyes. She
 reaches toward him.

THE GRANDMOTHER

Why, you're just a child. You're
 like one of my own children.

The Grandmother touches The Misfit on his shoulder.

THE MISFIT

jumps back, startled. His GUN springs up. He SHOOTS the Grandmother three times.

The Misfit puts the gun down by his side, takes his glasses off and begins to clean them.

Hiram and Bobby Lee return from the woods.

They stand over the ditch and look at

THE GRANDMOTHER

as she half-sits, half-lies in a PUDDLE OF BLOOD. Her legs twisted below her. Her face looks blankly up at the sky.

THE MISFIT

(matter-of-factly)

Take her off now and throw her
where you thrown the others.

The BLACK CAT rubs against The Misfit's leg. He picks it up.

Bobby Lee shakes his head.

BOBBY LEE

She sure was a talker, wasn't she?

The Misfit starts walking toward the car. He doesn't look at the GRANDMOTHER'S BODY as he steps over it.

THE MISFIT

She'd have been a good woman if
there'da been somebody there to
shoot her every minute of her life.

BOBBY LEE

Hey, now that'd be some fun!

The Misfit keeps walking.

THE MISFIT

Shut up, Bobby Lee. There's no real
pleasure in life.

Bobby Lee stands for a moment, then turns back toward the GRANDMOTHER'S BODY.

WIDE angle of the road and the woods, then an OVERHEAD view of the green countryside.

A few more curves down the road, an OLD PLANTATION with SIX COLUMNS and an AVENUE OF OAK TREES leading up to it sits abandoned.

FADE OUT