

## THE DEAD ZONE

"Lotto Fever"

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**During one crazy night in Cleaves Mills, Johnny finds himself abducted by a desperate - and slightly insane - kidnapper. That is, until he realizes they're very much alike: two men whose lives have been upended by Fate.**

**He also learns that helping the Little Guy can lead to Big Problems.**

### TEASER

EARLY EVENING. Johnny arrives home from a trip to Boston. The PHONE RINGS. It's Sara. She and Walt and J.J. are going to cook burgers and rent a few movies. Johnny says he'd love to join them but he's beat and just wants to take a hot shower and finish a book he's been reading. Can he get a rain check? Sara says, of course.

Johnny hangs up, eyes his suitcases. Screw it. He'll unpack in the morning. But before he can get undressed to shower, the doorbell RINGS. Johnny reluctantly heads down stair and when he opens the front door he gets a GUN stuck in his face by **BOYD LUMLEY**, 30, twitchy, unshaven, a man on the edge (think STEVE BUSCEMI on speed).

Boyd forces his way inside. Johnny, his hands up, tells him to take whatever he wants. Boyd smirks, "*You don't remember me, do you?*" He grabs an apple from a bowl on the counter, holds it in his hand for a second and then tosses it to Johnny...WHOOSH

*A VISION: A YEAR EARLIER. Johnny uses a CONVENIENCE STORE payphone. Boyd bops in delivering mail. He's clad in a POST OFFICE UNIFORM, basically a good-hearted working stiff...if a bit of a know-it-all. He suddenly spies Johnny and grins, he recognizes him from a magazine article. He suddenly gets an idea and asks Johnny to "help a brother out," by giving him the numbers to tonight's Lotto. Johnny says sorry, his "gift" doesn't work that way. After Johnny leaves, Boyd spies some NUMBERS he scribbled down on a phonebook. He pulls his last two dollars out of his pocket*

*and says, 'What the hell.'" As he goes to the counter and plays Johnny's numbers...*

Johnny snaps out of the Vision. Is he kidding? Those weren't Lotto numbers; it was the phone number for a take-out Thai restaurant. Doesn't matter. Boyd played 'em and won big: A MILLION BUCKS. FATE wins the day.

Johnny eyes the gun in his face, "Why do I get the feeling you're not here to thank me?"

Boyd cocks the gun; "Oh I'll thank you - after you help me get my life back!" As he forces Johnny out the door...

### ACT I

Johnny drives Boyd's tricked out Hummer. Boyd rides in the passenger seat, pistol aimed at Johnny's side. He's very proud of the ride as he details all it's personal and expensive upgrades, including a pre-programmed computer system that communicates in a sexy female VOICE - in Italian! Johnny asks if Boyd speaks the language, he doesn't, but he still loves the way she sounds. Johnny can't believe this. Did this lunatic hear him say he didn't pick those winning numbers? How can he be expected to "do it again?" Boyd says they're not gonna play the Lotto again. There would be too many questions asked if the same guy hit the jackpot twice in twelve month. He's got a "better plan." To make a million dollars? Boyd says they need to take 'baby steps'. He just needs \$25,000, to "get the ball rolling."

Johnny wonders when Boyd slept last - or showered? Besides, what kind of idiot blows through a million bucks in less than a year? Boyd gets offended. "Idiot?" He's a man with "sophisticated tastes." He puffs up, "Would an idiot dress like this? This shirt cost \$250. My pants were \$500. Hell, these genuine Galapagos Island iguana-skin loafers were a steal at \$800!" Boyd assures him he'll be getting his whole life back on track by the end of the night.

While Boyd is yakking, Johnny tries to dial 911 on the CELLPHONE in his pocket. Boyd grabs it, cocks his gun, angry. "Don't be stupid, man! I got nothin' to lose by shootin' the both of us! You hear me? Do ya?!" Johnny can see he means it and backs off. Suddenly, a sexy female

VOICE says something in Italian. Boyd can't figure it out, until Johnny points to a gauge - the Hummer is out of gas. Boyd tells him to pull into a nearby self-serve gas station...

GAS STATION. Boyd forces Johnny out of the car to fill up. Johnny glances around for a way out, someone to yell to... but the booth attendant way across the lot, but the guy is locked inside a glass box scanning the latest addition of *Nozzle Monthly*.

As Johnny fills the tank, he absently touches a HOUSE KEY on Boyd's key-ring and gets a VISION:

*A year ago, Boyd unveils the MANSION he bought with his Lotto winnings for wife **MARSHA**, 30, and daughter **EMILY**, 9. It's luxurious. There's even a music room with a grand piano for Emily (she's a budding virtuoso). As this bright-eyed girl begins playing for her Dad, her hero...*

Johnny comes out of the VISION, realizing Boyd's entire life could be on these keys. He touches a CAR KEY:

*Boyd buys a fancy HUMMER, preening for a TV crew filming the new Lotto millionaire. Then, in a bold display, he quits his job at the Post Office by pouring a cup of coffee in the lap of his long-time boss. And we see Boyd out on the town, partying, an instant high roller. His cellphone rings, blinking "Home." Boyd shuts it off. Party Man is having too much fun...*

Johnny snaps out again, touches a THIRD KEY:

*Boyd and his wife argue over money, their marriage, etc. She's holding stacks of unpaid bills, overdrawn accounts. Emily's up in her music room, crying as she practices piano to drown out their yelling.*

In short, Johnny sees behind Boyd's bluster, he's screwed up everything since winning the Lotto. Johnny knows how twists of Fate can overwhelm someone - and certainly understands the pain of losing the woman and child he loves. So maybe this greasy little weirdo *could* use his help after all...

That's when Boyd tells him to strip. *Huh?* Boyd pulls two clothing bags from the backseat of the vehicle and orders Johnny to join him in the men's room for a quick costume change. Johnny balks, but Boyd shows him the gun again...

MINUTES LATER: Johnny and Boyd step out of the bathroom now wearing designer TUXEDO'S. As Boyd compliments himself on his fashion sense, Johnny notices something across the lot. *"I hope your shoes fit, because I think we might be walking the rest of the way."* Boyd looks up to SEE a tow truck just finish hooking the Hummer to his truck. Boyd starts yelling as he runs towards the truck, which is now pulling away with his prize vehicle. The Driver tells him he's repossessing the vehicle and tosses a court order at him as he drives away. Boyd picks it up, scans it, then tears it up as he screams out in agony. *"Why me?! Why does this crap always happen to me?!"*

SHERIFF'S CAR rolls up. It's **WALT**, heading to the video store. He's a little confused, *"Johnny? I thought you were staying home tonight. And what the hell are doin' dressed up in that monkey suit?"* Gun in his (tuxedoed) back, Johnny stammers that he'd forgotten his "old friend Boyd" was coming in town tonight for...for... Boyd jumps in, *"A charity auction at the Cleaves Mills Country Club!"* Walt looks around and doesn't see a car. *"You boys hitchhikin'?"* Johnny and Boyd laugh off the question, then Boyd says they're waiting for another friend to pick them up. Walt isn't quite sure what to make of it, but he's runnin' late to the video store. But not before Johnny recommends that he rent "Fargo" - great movie. It's a strange moment, as Walt says he'll see if they have it. He wishes them a good night and drives away. As soon as he's gone, Boyd is pissed off. *"What was all that stuff about Fargo?"* Johnny says he was just trying to make conversation. Besides, what difference does it make if they don't have a car?

Just then a GYPSY CAB pulls in to the station. The driver gets out and goes into the bathroom carrying a large, folded newspaper. Boyd has an idea and orders Johnny to the parked cab.

INSIDE CAB. A few minutes later, Johnny is now behind the wheel of the stolen cab. He comments on Boyd's ability to hotwire the car so fast. Boyd says it's a trick he learned driving postal trucks, *"Everybody's always losing their*

keys. *If we didn't hot wire the trucks nobody'd ever get their mail on time.*" Johnny brings up Marsha and Emily. Boyd's trying to win them back? Boyd admits, yeah, they left after he blew all their money on partying, gambling, bad investments. *"Guess once I was broke, I was a lot less sexy."* Johnny can't imagine anyone connecting the word 'sexy' to this little rat. Now all he's trying to do is get "back on top." If he can pull this off, he knows Marsha and Emily will come back.

Suddenly, HEADLIGHTS begin following them. Johnny hopes it's Walt but it appears to be TWO MEN in a DARK SEDAN. Boyd seems to recognize them, tells him to drive faster. Johnny asks who it is but Boyd just acts like they're late for the Country Club. Finally they lose the Sedan in the dark...

BANNERMAN HOME. Walt returns with their movies ("Fargo" and "Finding Nemo"). He mentions his strange run-in with Johnny. Sara thinks it's weird too. And she has no idea who "old friend Boyd" could be... Truth be told, as much as Walt likes the guy, he's glad he's able to spend an evening at home with his family.

CLEAVES MILLS COUNTRY CLUB. A black-tie charity auction is underway. Boyd hauls Johnny in, bragging about belonging to such an "exclusive" club, how much his wife and daughter liked coming here. (Johnny flashes on a VISION, showing the reality of it: Marsha and Emily were always bored here and tacky Boyd never fit in with this tony, upper crust crowd. He desperately wanted to be one of the "beautiful people" but only got smirks and eye-rolls behind his back).

Boyd pulls Johnny over to a group of local Business Roundtable-types, zeroing in on **BOB WESTERFIELD**, 55, a rich CPA. As Johnny shakes Westerfield's hand...

VISION: *Two months ago. A party at Westerfield's home, lots of country club cronies...including Boyd in his too-expensive clothes, being ignored mostly. He wanders into Westerfield's office to admire some art. Suddenly, Westerfield enters with another MAN, bragging about how he deducts "extra fees" from several corporate accounts - and keeps them in his SAFE. He opens it to show her the stacks of skimmed cash. Boyd hides behind a curtain, eyes widening at the sight of all that money, craning to see what the safe combination is but can't. But Johnny does.*

Johnny snaps out of the vision and Boyd is already dragging him out of the Country Club. "Where now?" Johnny asks. "You know where." Boyd counters as he flashes the gun.

Johnny of course says no way. Boyd isn't asking. Besides, stealing from a thief like Westfield makes them like Robin Hood! Johnny doesn't care if the guy is Saddam Hussein, it's wrong.

Boyd cocks his gun, anger rising again. *Johnny doesn't have a choice: he's coming inside and opening Westerfield's safe.* But Johnny knows something more is going on here. Dumb as Boyd is, would he really risk prison just to keep a lousy 9,000 sq. ft. house? And who was that following them earlier that made the little guy so nervous?

"What aren't you telling me?" Johnny asks.

Boyd snarls, "Get your ass moving!" As he shoves Johnny from behind...WHOOSH

A VISION: *Boyd in a nondescript LOCATION, whimpering as he's forced face-down on the grass. Oddly, we can hear the sound of a DELICATE PIANO being played somewhere nearby. It's a heavenly sound...but the vision is pure hell as a gun enters frame and fires TWO SHOTS into Boyd..*

Johnny snaps out. "You're dead if you don't get this money." Boyd finally cracks and admits, yes, after he blew his Lotto money, then dug the hole even deeper by getting loans from some "questionable people."

So Johnny really is Boyd's only hope - and the little roach hasn't got anything to lose by shooting him.

## ACT II

Driving again. Boyd is hooting with glee, rifling through all the "seed money," thrilled they pulled off their little heist. Johnny wants to know what 'seed money' refers to. Boyd reveals this was only Part of his plan. He lied earlier - he doesn't need \$25,000, he needs \$50,000. Johnny can't believe this little weasel *upped the ante* on him. Boyd can't believe "Mr. Big Psychic" didn't see it coming! Johnny fumes, okay, what now?

BANNERMAN HOME. Dinner is over, Walt, Sarah and J.J. are watching "Nemo, as Walt holds the 'FARGO' disk box and wonders about his run-in with Johnny. The PHONE RINGS - it's Roscoe calling about a break-in at Westerfield's place. Westerfield is demanding that "Walt himself" come investigate. Walt sighs, tells Sarah and J.J. to keep the popcorn poppin' and he'll be back...

TRACT HOUSE. Boyd and Johnny pull up in front of the slightly run-down, 3 bedroom house. Boyd can't believe his wife left their mansion to move back here (it's the first time he's had the guts to visit). They see Emily through a window, practicing on a crappy, out-of-tune piano. Boyd's heartbreaks...but still her talent is obvious. "*Isn't that a heavenly sound?*" He orders Johnny out of the car, as they sneak around the side of the house for a closer look. Johnny says how pathetic this is, a man sneaking around in the dark, spying at his family through the curtains.

Suddenly, a late model Honda Civic pulls into the driveway, as MARSHA, Boyd's wife gets out. She's wearing a waitress uniform. **She walks towards** the front door, as Boyd steps out to confront her. At first, she seems both surprised and relieved to see him. Boyd introduces Johnny as a 'business associate' and they go inside for a minute.

Boyd greets his daughter, EMILY, with a big hug. He obviously loves and misses her. She asks if he's coming to her recital later that night. Boyd says no, he can't make it. But only because he's doing something very important. Marsha can see the disappointment in the little girl's face and tells her to go get her bath. "*Grandma and Grandpa are going to pick us up in a few hours.*" After she runs off, Boyd and Marsha get into an argument about his never ending get-rich-quick schemes. (These two are like Jim Carrey and Kate Winslet in *Eternal Sunshine*, a scruffy mixture of pathos, humor and a good dose of frustration). Boyd notices the waitress uniform and the pile of tip money on the counter. "*You went back to the Waffle Shack?*" Marsha says, "*Someone has to pay the bills.*" Besides, she likes to work, always did. It was Boyd who made her quit after he won the Lotto. Their argument escalates as Johnny is forced to step in between them. Boyd promises that she'll change her tune when she sees what he's done. "*One way or*

*another, the world is never gonna forget Boyd Lumley!"* He walks out, as Johnny smiles weakly and follows...

WESTERFIELD'S MANSION. The crooked CPA is ranting and raving to Walt about the lousy job he's doing to protect the upstanding citizens of the town. (The jerk's attitude is almost enough to make Walt - and us - happy he got robbed). Roscoe comes in and reports a neighbor saw a cab parked outside earlier. The same cab reported stolen from the gas station. Something isn't right and Walt can feel it...

INSIDE THE HONDA CIVIC. Johnny is now behind the wheel of the Honda Civic. *"I just think you should have asked to borrow the car, that's all."* Boyd answers, *"Since when does a man need permission to drive his own car? Besides, the cab is too hot. The cop's will be looking for it by now."* An uncomfortable LULL, then Johnny breaks the silence... *"You have a nice family. A little loud, but nice."* Before Boyd can respond the car in front of them STOPS SUDDENLY, as two LARGE MEN wielding baseball bats get out and approach them. The SAME GUYS they ran away from earlier. They SMASH the car's windshield and demand that Boyd get out. The car won't start, as it appears Johnny and Boyd are finished.

### ACT III

RESUME. In danger of being beaten to death inside the car, Johnny grabs the gun from Boyd and levels it at the two attackers. *"Put the bat down or somebody's going to have a hole in them!"* Even Boyd seems a little unnerved by the turn of events as he scrambles out of the car. *"I-It's okay, Johnny! I got it under control!"* The bad guys immediately GIVE UP, yelling, *"Whoa, Boyd! This wasn't part of the deal!"* *"Yeah, you didn't pay us enough to get shot."*

Johnny's confused. *"Pay them? What the hell is going on?"* Boyd sheepishly introduces Johnny to the **TED** and **LARRY** - friends from the Post Office. Turns out Boyd paid them \$100 apiece to "chase" him around and make it look like he was in danger - just in case Johnny didn't believe him.

Johnny is dumbfounded. Is there no end to the lying and scheming? Still, Ted and Larry faked it pretty good - including a real life bloody nose for Boyd. Ted shrugs,

"Hey, you've been hanging out with him. Wouldn't you like to kick his ass?" Johnny can't argue with that.

The two men walk away. Boyd checks his watch, "We better get going, it's almost time." Johnny laughs in Boyd's face. "Going?" I'm not 'going' anywhere with you!" Johnny helped this loser because he felt bad for him - especially about Boyd's estranged family - but no more. Besides, Boyd just revealed the "bad guys" were in fact, mailmen! Boyd says Larry and Ted were a set-up, but he really is in hock to some evil mother f'ers. And they aren't playing games.

Johnny doesn't care. He's done being the sucker. He's going home and he's taking Boyd's car.

Boyd grabs one of the baseball bats, "You're not going anywhere until we're finished!" Johnny can see the pain and turmoil in his eyes. "Either help me, or shoot me." Either way, I'm probably a dead man."

Johnny considers the little guy, then gets in behind the heel of the Civic and cranks the engine. He throws it in gear as the Civic drives off down the road...but then the BRAKE LIGHTS FLASH. The car stops. It idles. Then it backs up and stops next to Boyd. "If you lie to me we're finished. Understood?" Boyd breaks a genuine smile, "Understood." "Alright, get it."

Boyd jumps in. He really appreciates this. Matter of fact, they kinda make a good team, right? Johnny tells him not to push it. "So, where to now?"

BANNERMAN HOME. Walt is back home. By now, "Nemo" is over and J.J. is in bed. Walt mentions the robbery and the stolen cab. How the car was stolen about the same time he saw Johnny at the very same gas station. Sarah says it must just be a weird coincidence. But as they settle in to watch " Fargo," Roscoe calls again, says Walt needs to come to the station right away. It's about Johnny.

A CHURCH. Johnny is confused why Boyd made him drive here. Then he sees a banner - "Bingo Tonite!" Oh no, if this another money scheme... Boyd assures him it's not. He needs to see someone. Johnny isn't about to let Boyd out of his sight, so he follows him inside.

Boyd eventually tracks down a broken old man, the church janitor. He's LLOYD LUMLEY, Boyd's father. He's an old school guy and everything Boyd isn't - stable, levelheaded, dependable. It's no surprise this father and son don't see eye-to-eye about much and immediately start arguing about the kid's money obsession, the family he drove off, even Boyd's fashion sense (\$800 for a pair of *fucking shoes?*). Once again, Johnny has to jump in to referee and when he does, he gets...

*A VISION: Grandpa Lloyd helping Marsha and Emily fix up their small rundown house. We learn Boyd's estranged wife and daughter don't care about being broke, they were all happy before Boyd won the Lotto, if anything it's the money that ruined everything! All they wanted is Boyd to be present in their lives again.*

Of course Boyd might figure this out if the motormouth schemer would shut up long enough to listen. But no one can get through to him. He hands his Dad a COUPLE THOUSAND from his stack of cash. "*What's this for?*" Boyd urges his dad to take some time and smell the roses. Lloyd refuses it. Boyd sticks it in the POOR BOX, as he grabs his old man in a BIG EMOTIONAL HUG, like the one he gave Marsha and Emily. Johnny watches, *why do all these hugs feel so final?* But Boyd is already rushing out, they gotta get going again...

POLICE STATION. Roscoe shows Walt the surveillance footage from Westerfield's house. Johnny and Boyd, wearing tuxedos, as they break into the safe and steal the money. *What the hell...?* They also have footage from the service station - again, Johnny and Boyd stealing the cab.

Walt tells Roscoe to run the footage back...then forward...then back...then freeze. They look close as they see the gun in Boyd's hand, the gun being held on Johnny. Walt makes the FARGO connection. The movie is about a kidnapping! Walt puts out an APB for Johnny Smith.

DOWNTOWN. Boyd leads Johnny through the darkened downtown area of Cleaves Mills. Johnny wants to know why Boyd has been dragging him around town, giving tearful hugs to the people he loves. It feels like some kind of bizarre, one-man *farewell tour!* Boyd ignores him. Johnny grabs his arm, "*I'm talking to you!*" and gets...

*That VISION again: Boyd being shot in the grass somewhere as a now familiar PIANO MELODY plays nearby.*

Johnny snaps out. "I'm going to give you thirty seconds to tell me everything. To tell me the truth. Or you're on your own." "I can't!" "Why not?" "Because you wouldn't help me if you knew I was going to die! Tell me you haven't seen my death already?" Johnny can't deny that he has, several times. Boyd asks, "How does it happen. No! Don't tell me." Johnny's had enough. "Would you please tell me what the hell you're talking about?"

Boyd finally sags. He admits that it's all been arranged, the guys from the post office looking like a real threat, the tearful good-byes to his family, everything...in case he's forced to use his "Fail-safe plan."

Johnny shakes his head. "Fail-safe plan?"

Boyd finally comes clean. "I hired a hitman to kill me if I couldn't raise the money I need." Johnny is dumbstruck. "I took out 2 million dollar LIFE INSURANCE POLICY that will take care of Marsha and Emily in perpetuity in the event of my tragic and untimely death. That way they'll be able to keep the big house and live the life I couldn't give them."

Johnny stares at him. "You really are crazy. You're not just crazy, you're certifiable! Why would you do something like that? Marsha and Emily don't give a damn about living the "high life," they just want you. Can't you see that?" Boyd says it doesn't matter. He's a screw-up. A man who can't provide for his family is no man at all. If Boyd learned one thing from his father, it's that. "There's only one way out of this."

Johnny realizes he's talking about the "seed money". "This money wasn't for you, was it?" Boyd shakes his head. "No. It's for you. It's the "buy-in". "The 'buy-in? To what?" Off Boyd's pensive look, we CUT TO...

BACK ROOM SOMEWHERE. There's KNOCK, as a large BOUNCER TYPE checks a small video monitor.

ON THE MONITOR we SEE Johnny and Boyd.

A well-dressed woman checks them out, then gives the Bouncer a subtle nod. He BUZZES the security door open.

Johnny and Boyd step in like they own the place. The Woman steps up to greet them. *"I don't believe I know you gentlemen."* There's a tense lull, then Boyd says, *"No, you were recommended to us."* *"Recommended by?"* *"Marco."* She breaks a relaxed smile. *"You know Marco?"* Boyd cocks his head. *"Intimately."* She raises one eyebrow, then... *"You have your entry fee?"* Johnny slips a bundle of cash from inside his tuxedo pocket and hands it to Boyd, who fans it against his ear and offers to the woman. *"Fifty thousand dollars."* The woman holds the money, then... *"Welcome to the game. We're about to begin."* She walks away, as Johnny asks Boyd. *"Who the hell is Marco?"* *"I'll tell you later. Right now you need to play some poker."* Off Johnny's troubled look...

#### ACT IV

The other players are a motley crew of card sharks, Vegas-wannabes, geek math wizards and so forth. Danger hangs in the air as Johnny gets a few last minute instructions and pointers from Boyd. *"Just play tight to begin with. When you 'see' an opening nail these bastards to the wall. Don't chase any flushes or inside straights, and don't be afraid to pound the pot if you've got a high pair. Any questions?"* Johnny looks around, then... *"What's an inside straight?"* Boyd just stares at him, as the players are called to the table. *"What the hell are we worried about, if there's a ringer in the game it's got to be the psychic, right?"*

*THE GAME BEGINS.* In a matter of moments, Johnny is losing his ass. In a quick-cut MONTAGE, he loses hand after hand, bet after bet. The other players are merciless.

At a break, Boyd pulls Johnny aside, *"What is your problem? You're get slaughtered!"* Johnny isn't getting visions off players. At least, not any that will help. Johnny says he has seen a few things... *"The guy in the sweater likes to dress up in his wife's evening gowns. The guy on his left is cheating on his wife. And the guy next to him has webbed feet."* Boyd is dumbfounded. *"That's it? That's what you're seeing?"* *"I told you it doesn't always work on command."*

Boyd plunges into despair. Johnny turns and bumps into ANOTHER PLAYER, a tan, fit young man who looks like a Harvard graduate. WHOOSH --

*VISION: Boyd being shot facedown in the grass as the PIANO MELODY plays nearby. Only this time we pan to find another dead face in the grass. Then we finally tilt up to see the killer - it's the PLAYER Johnny just bumped into!*

Johnny spins out of the Vision. Boyd can tell he's bothered by something. "This hit man you hired. You ever see his face?" "No, everything was arranged by phone, Why?" "He's at the table." Boyd's face drops. "He's here? In this room?" Johnny pulls the little guy aside and gestures towards the Harvard man across the room making a sandwich. "The guy with the roast beef." Boyd feels sick. Johnny says this is a break for him. They'll just pull the guy aside and tell him the deal is off. Boyd looks away. "What's wrong?" Boyd says Johnny will need to win a few big pots first. He explains that the price would double to cancel the hit. And they're just about out of money. Which means if Johnny loses, Boyd is a dead man!

Johnny pulls his cell to call Walt.

*Whaap.* The Bouncer grabs Johnny's cell. No calls. He'll return the phone when the game is over.

THE GAME RESUMES. It's hard to tell who's gonna have the heart attack first - Johnny as he starts sinking like the Titanic again - or Boyd as the Player/Hitman catches his eye from across the room and points his finger at him in mock execution...

Johnny continues to lose tough hands. Even the other players are amazed. They've never seen anyone with such tough luck. The DEALER comments, "You're having an off night, sir." As Johnny is down to his few remaining chip, he slides them all into the pot as we see he's been dealt THREE KINGS. He ultimately gets beat by THREE ACES. And as his hand brushes against the Dealer's -- WHOOSH...

*VISION: The Dealer before the game, as he sets up HIDDEN CAMERAS in the ceiling, ANOTHER in the Waitress's EYE GLASSES, TINY MICROPHONES everywhere...*

Johnny snaps out of the Vision, realizing: *It's a rigged game!* He PULLS Boyd close and whispers, *"Have a seizure."* Boyd blanches, *"What?"* *"You heard me. Have a goddamn seizure!"*

So Boyd fakes a SPAZZ-ATTACK, shrieking paranoid delusions and crashing against the wall. Instant chaos! Johnny takes the opportunity to REVEAL the hidden camera on the dealer as everything erupts. Guys pull a guns! Johnny grabs Boyd and hauls him towards the door amid the confusion. The Bouncer is reluctant to buzz the security door open. *"For God's sake, can't you see this poor man is having a seizure?!"* Boyd continues to jerk and wail, as the guy finally hits the lock and let's them out. He then hurries to help subdue the chaos at the table. As Johnny and Boyd are about to split, they look back and make brief eye contact with the hit man. He takes off after them.

OUTDOOR STAGE. Emily gets ready to play her recital, scanning the audience for her dad. But only finding Mom and her grandparents. The little girl puts on a brave face as she takes her place at the piano. She announces into the microphone, *"This is for Daddy, wherever he is..."*

DOWNTOWN. Daddy is currently running for his life! Johnny stops him from going back to the car - the Hitman would expect them to go there. They head in the other direction. But which way is safe? They round a corner and reach the SMALL PARK at the town center. *Oh shit!* They're standing on grass, just like in the vision. Johnny grabs Boyd to haul him in a different direction but Boyd stops, cocks his head...

*"Do you hear that?"*

Sure enough, *the sound of piano* is wafting through the quiet streets, coming from the nearby park. Which is exactly when a gun butt hits Boyd from behind, knocking him to the grass! The Hitman turns his silencer pistol on Johnny, forcing him to the ground as well. Johnny can't believe it - in trying to get away from the deadly vision, *he led them right into it...*

Luckily, that's when WALT SHOWS UP (he ID'd Boyd from the surveillance footage, spoke to his wife and stationed officers around the park). Walt arrests the Hitman and saves Johnny and Boyd from certain death. Except that now

they have a LOT of explaining to do. Boyd pleads that he just needs to do *one thing first...*

RECITAL AREA. Afterwards. Marsha and Emily exit...to find Boyd waiting for them. He says he has nothing to show for himself, he's completely broke, he's lost their house and everything else...but he's here. Finally. His wife and daughter are thrilled. That's all they ever wanted.

TWO WEEKS LATER. JOHNNY'S HOUSE. Boyd stops by Johnny's house to thank him for everything he did and to say how sorry he is for getting him involved in such a high profile mess. We learn that Boyd got probation after Johnny spoke to the judge on his behalf. He's also gone back to work as a dishwasher at the Waffle Shack. *"It gives me more time to spend with my wife. Plus I'm home when Emily gets out of school."* Johnny seems impressed. *"Sounds like you've got your priorities straight."*

As his family waits in the car, Boyd thanks Johnny again and then starts to walk away, but remembers something and turns back... *"I nearly forgot why I came."* He hands Johnny a box. *"It's just a small token of my gratitude."* Johnny says it's not necessary and opens the box. He gets a funny look on his face as he lifts out the ostrich skin shoes that Boyd was wearing. *"I'm not sure about the size, but they did cost 800 dollars and I want you to have them."* Johnny is speechless. *"I don't know what to say...thank you."* Boyd shakes his hand, gets in the car and drives away as Johnny watches. He takes another disgusted look at the hideous looking shoe and goes back inside and closes the door. A BEAT. As the front door cracks open again and we see Johnny's hand set the shoes outside and close the door behind him. Off the shoes, we...

FADE OUT - THE END