

SAD SATAN
by Stephen Gnojewski

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Logline: When a teenage loner from a small town meets a mysterious runaway at a record store, he uncovers a dark secret and must save his new friend from a hidden demon that is out to destroy his soul.

FADE IN:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

A CASSETTE MIXTAPE rests in a large BOOMBOX.

A HAND presses play, and the CASSETTE WHEELS spin. The HAND cranks up the VOLUME.

LED ZEPPELLIN'S "STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN" blasts through the SPEAKERS:

OH-OH-OH-OH-WOAHHH

The BOOMBOX sits on a BOOKSHELF/DESK that is littered with shoplifted CASSETTES, COMICS, and SNEAKERS...

IF THERE'S A BUSTLE IN YOUR HEDGEROW
DON'T BE ALARMED NOW
IT'S JUST A SPRING CLEAN FOR THE MAY QUEEN

HEAVY METAL ALBUM POSTERS are RIPPED from the walls and hang like TORN SKIN:

DEF LEPPARD - HYSTERIA
IRON MAIDEN - KILLERS
BLACK SABBATH - BORN AGAIN
AC/DC - HIGHWAY TO HELL
MOTLEY CRÜE - SHOUT AT THE DEVIL

Large spray-painted LETTERS spelling NATAZ DAZ are graffitied across the entire length of a wall.

YES, THERE ARE TWO PATHS YOU CAN GO BY
BUT IN THE LONG RUN
THERE'S STILL TIME TO CHANGE THE ROAD YOU'RE ON

The whole bedroom is ransacked, as if some violent struggle occurred.

On the floor, an ACOUSTIC GUITAR lies, smashed - its neck snapped and splintered.

AND IT MAKES ME WONDER

Among the shadows in an open CLOSET, the DEAD BODY of a boy hangs from a noose. His face is severely BURNED, CHARRED beyond recognition.

OH, WHOA

The MUSIC is drowned out by the sound of hysterical SCREAMING.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. APARTMENT PATIO - AFTERNOON

The SUN RIPPLES in the heat of a scorching SUMMER SKY.

SPARKS and FLAMES jump from a hot GRILL in the backyard of a ground floor unit in a low-rent apartment complex.

A RADIO on a PICNIC TABLE is tuned to KSHE-95.

COMMERCIAL

You are listening to KSHE (KSHE)-
95 FM, St. Louis's real rock
radio.

DJ

Well, we are all in for one hell
of a hot one today, with
temperatures expected to climb to
a high of 101. That's right folks,
it's officially a heatwave. So,
keep it cool, keep it real, and
keep it KSHE. There's the chance
for a potential afternoon
thundershower, which might cool
things down, but in the meantime,
let me pour some Def Leopard on
you...

LOVE IS LIKE A BOMB, BABY, C'MON GET IT ON
LIVIN' LIKE A LOVER WITH A RADAR PHONE
LOOKIN' LIKE A TRAMP, LIKE A VIDEO VAMP
DEMOLITION WOMAN, CAN I BE YOUR MAN? (YOUR MAN)

KYLE, in his early 30's, stands over a grill barbequing hot dogs.

Kyle sports an unkempt mustache and beard. He wears a flannel shirt with the sleeves cut-off. The shirt has been left unbuttoned, exposing a hairy chest and gold chains. A cigarette tucked behind his ear draws attention to his mullet.

PAULA comes strutting out from a sliding glass door followed closely by her friend, ANGIE.

Paula is in her early 30's. She wears a yellow bikini top, pink lipstick, and daisy dukes. She is too tanned and too thin.

Angie is a bit younger than Paula. She has on a peek-a-boo blouse that reveals a hint of her shoulder tattoos. Around her neck, Angie wears a silver CROSS.

ANGIE

Do you think it's true?

PAULA

Well, that's the rumor anyway.

Paula wields a cigarette in one hand and carries a six-pack of Budweisers in the other. She manages to tear one off and serves it to Kyle with a kiss.

Kyle gives Paula a pat on her behind with his oven mitt as he sneaks a wink at Angie.

Angie flashes a flirtatious smile back at Kyle and then follows Paula, as she puts the rest of the beer in the cooler next to the picnic table.

PAULA

They say they found a satanic star and an upside down cross, spray-painted in the garage. Supposedly, one of the kids had hung himself with his belt, and the other had his throat slashed with a box cutter.

Angie shivers.

PAULA

Some sort of satanic suicide pact.

ANGIE

Gives me the willies...

Paula pretends to fuss with the birthday party decorations - rearranging the balloons, straightening the banner, and separating stacks of red solo cups and paper plates.

PAULA

I tell you, it's getting crazier
and crazier out there each and
every day. Nuclear bombs, drugs,
Satanic cults, AIDS...

ANGIE

It's the end of times.

Two teenage girls, RILEY and DREW, shout and giggle as they run through a rotating SPRINKLER.

Riley and Drew are the same age, 13. Riley has short, dark-brown hair and wears a Bud Light t-shirt over her swim suit.

Drew has a short, bleach-blonde bob and wears a floral, pink bikini.

They both wear flip-flops and lots of friendship beads/bracelets around their wrists and ankles.

PAULA

(Indicating Noel.) And then
there's this natural disaster over
here.

NOEL, 15, sits slumped in a plastic lawn chair listening to music on his Walkman.

Noel has short, dark, tousled hair. He wears a long-sleeved grey hoodie over a black Guns-N-Roses t-shirt. His jeans are badly ripped at the knees.

Paula kicks at Noel's feet to get his attention.

PAULA

Hey!

Noel sneers and lifts his headphones a bit.

PAULA

Why don't you make yourself useful
and go and get the cake?

Noel reluctantly gets up and goes inside to get Riley's birthday cake.

Paula claps and shouts at Riley and Drew.

PAULA
Time to eat, girls!

Riley and Drew abandon their sprinkler fun and run over to the picnic table.

DREW
Get anything cool?

RILEY
(Excited.) Tickets to the 'Hell
Fire' concert this weekend.

Drew screams. Kyle avoids Paula's disapproving glare.

DREW
No way.

RILEY
Wanna come?

DREW
You bet your life.

Noel comes outside carrying Riley's BIRTHDAY CAKE, as Paula makes room on the picnic table.

PAUL
(To Noel.) Why didn't you invite
any of your friends over, like
Riley?

DREW
He would've if he had any.

Riley and Drew chuckle.

NOEL
(To Drew.) It's not my party.

Kyle brings over a PAPER PLATE loaded with HOT DOGS to the picnic table.

KYLE

Best get 'em while they're hot.

Kyle starts stuffing the buns with hot dogs and passing them out.

KYLE

(To Noel.) So, young man, what exactly are you planning to do with yourself the rest of the summer?

NOEL

Oh, I don't know.

KYLE

Not much money in "I don't knows".

Kyle straddles a bench and takes a swig of his beer.

KYLE

You know, Roscoe's looking for some part-time help down at the auto shop.

NOEL

No, thank you.

KYLE

And what's wrong with holding down a summer job. Why, when I was your age...

NOEL

Sorry, but I don't see myself flipping burgers for nothing.

Kyle becomes visibly irritated by Noel's remark.

RILEY

Haven't you heard? Noel's gonna be a rock star.

Riley and Drew giggle.

KYLE

A rock star?

RILEY

He's taking guitar lessons,
don'tcha know.

PAULA shakes her cigarette at RILEY and Drew.

PAULA

Now, stop that, you two.

KYLE

Well, all I see is some little
punk prick, who doesn't know his
ass from a hole in the ground.

Noel pushes his plate of a half-eaten hot dog aside and gets up
from the picnic table.

NOEL

(To Riley with sarcasm.) Happy
Birthday.

PAULA

Oh, come on, don't go.

Ignoring Paula, Noel picks up his bike and puts on his
headphones.

PAULA

(To Kyle) Why do you have to talk
to him like that?

KYLE

(Still a bit heated.) Shut your
mouth, Paula. He's not your kid.

PAULA

Don't tell me to shut-up, you good
for nothing...

Noel turns up the volume on his Walkman, in an effort to down
out Kyle and Paula's bickering.

ANGIE

(Shouting after Noel.) Come back!
Where are you going!?

NOEL
(Shouting back.) Anywhere but
here!

Noel gives the party a MIDDLE FINGER SALUTE as he rides away
into town.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE - SMALL TOWN SUMMER

-- Blue Oyster Cult's "DON'T FEAR THE REAPER" plays on Noel's
Walkman.

-- A WATER TOWER stands over a BASEBALL FIELD that has been
carved out of a CORNFIELD.

ALL OUR TIMES HAVE COME

-- A ferocious statue of a TIGER guards the local ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL.

HERE BUT NOW THEY'RE GONE

-- Noel bikes past the TOWN SQUARE which features a LIBRARY at
the center and a BANDSHELL off in a corner.

SEASONS DON'T FEAR THE REAPER
NOR DO THE WIND, THE SUN OR THE RAIN

-- Down MAIN STREET, Noel bikes by the STAGGER INN TAVERN, and
the WILDEY MOVIE THEATER, advertising showtimes for "CREEPSHOW".

WE CAN BE LIKE THEY ARE
COME ON, BABY (DON'T FEAR THE REAPER)

-- On the outskirts of town, Noel passes the NORTHSIDE DAIRY
BAR, a CHINESE RESTAURANT, and a TATTOO PARLOR.

BABY, TAKE MY HAND (DON'T FEAR THE REAPER)

END MONTAGE - SMALL TOWN SUMMER

CUT TO:

EXT. DARKSIDE RECORDS - DAY

Noel steers his bike off the sidewalk and jumps off.

WE'LL BE ABLE TO FLY (DON'T FEAR THE REAPER)

He walks his bike through WEEDS, GRAVEL, and BROKEN BOTTLES.

BABY, I'M YOUR MAN

Noel props his bike up against the side of a weathered, brick building that is painted:

DARKSIDE RECORDS

CUT TO:

INT. DARKSIDE RECORDS - DAY

As Noel enters the store, 'DON'T FEAR THE REAPER' finishes playing from the store's sound system.

A ROTATING FAN on the floor is cranked on high. LONG TAGS blow around, licking the air like snake tongues.

COLLAGES OF ALBUM ART POSTERS decorate the walls of the record store:

BOSTON

MEGADETH - PEACE SELLS...BUT WHO'S BUYING?

PINK FLOYD - DARKSIDE OF THE MOON

KING CRIMSON - COURT OF THE CRIMSON KING

JUDAS PRIEST - SCREAMING FOR VENGEANCE

ROLLING STONES - LIPS LOGO

VAN HALEN - 1984...

Noel casually walks down a row of record bins. Hand-drawn signs designate the different genres:

CLASSIC ROCK, JAZZ, PUNK, BLUES, POP, HEAVY METAL...

A goth CLERK, in his early 20's, with long black hair and eyeliner, briefly looks up from reading his comic and watches with suspicion, but more out of irritation.

Noel finds the HEAVY METAL section and absentmindedly flips through some cassette tapes.

At the far end of the same row, but on the opposite side, Noel notices another kid, LEON, 15.

Leon, a juvenile delinquent of sorts, wears a flannel shirt over a dirty tank-top and ragged jeans. Down-n-out, almost emaciated, Leon has short, spiky hair that has been dyed blonde at the tips.

Leon looks up and notices Noel watching him.

Leon slyly shoplifts a CASSETTE TAPE, sliding it into the front of his pants and covering it up with his tank-top.

The clerk glances up from his reading.

CLERK
Looking for anything in
particular?

NOEL
(As an attempt to distract the
Clerk) Uh? Yeah, as a matter of
fact. Do you have any Rush?

CLERK
It's a record store, man. Check
out the bin behind you.

As Noel makes his way over to the next bin, Leon takes advantage of the distraction and slips out of the record store.

The JINGLING of BELLS is heard as the door opens and closes.

Noel continues casually flipping through some more stacks and picks out a CASSETTE: RUSH CLOCKWORK ANGELS to purchase.

He checks his pockets for cash, but they are EMPTY.

He looks back at the clerk, who has turned his attention back to his comic book.

Disappointed, Noel puts the CASSETTE back and starts to leave the store.

On his way out, Noel passes a BULLITEN BOARD tacked with various ads and announcements.

One particular ad, offering BEGINNING GUITAR LESSONS, has tear-off phone numbers along the bottom. Some are missing, but the remaining ones read:

OTTO 656-7734

CUT TO:

EXT. DARKSIDE RECORDS - DAY

Menacing STORM CLOUDS darken the summer sky.

A CRACK OF THUNDER signals large RAINDROPS that smack and splatter against the pavement.

Noel jumps on his bike and pedals as fast as he can, in a futile attempt to out run the storm.

As Noel speeds past a CHURCHYARD, A ZIG-ZAG of LIGHTING strikes overhead illuminating the CEMETERY TOMBSTONES.

The RAIN falls down harder in TORRENTS forcing Noel to head for cover under the CANOPY OF TREES in a nearby municipal park.

CUT TO:

EXT. LE CLAIR PARK PAVILLION - DAY

Noel ditches his bike on the ground. Soaking wet, he takes shelter in a round, covered PAVILLION.

Another CRACK OF THUNDER and FLASH OF LIGHTING illuminates Leon, who stands behind Noel at the far end of the pavilion.

Noel jumps, freaked out.

NOEL

Jesus... You scared the shit out of me. What the hell are you doing here?

LEON

(Acknowledging the weather.) Same as you.

Leon fishes out a damp pack of cigarettes from his jeans pocket.

He knocks out a smoke and lights up. The flame from the lighter casts an EERIE GLOW against his face.

LEON
(Inhaling) Wouldn't have gotten
caught, you know.

Leon produces the stolen CASSETTE TAPE: AC/DC BACK IN BLACK

LEON
Nobody notices me.

Leon exhales a long plume of smoke.

NOEL
Yeah, well, I wouldn't have said
nothing if you hadn't taken
anything good.

LEON
(Laughing) No shit. You like
AC/DC?

NOEL
Angus is like probably one of the
greatest guitar players of all
time.

LEON
Really? Wouldn't've pegged you for
a fan.

Leon offers Noel his cigarette.

LEON
Smoke?

Noel approaches and accepts Leon's offer, more to prove he is cool, than to really smoke.

Noel take a puff and coughs a bit. Leon laughs.

They share a few more tokes back and forth, as the storm gradually subsides and the rain lets up.

LEON
Got a stereo?

Noel leads Leon out of the pavilion.

As they descend the stairs into the park, they pass an inverted, encircled PENTAGRAM that has been spray-painted on the concrete foundation of the pavilion.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Noel and Leon jaywalk across the street and approach a modest, two-level, midwestern HOME.

The house, in obvious need of repair, features a long, front porch and is painted a drab olive-green and brown.

Noel drops his bike in the overgrown front yard and hops up on to the porch. Leon follows closely behind.

From under a worn WELCOME MAT, Noel retrieves a SPARE KEY and unlocks the front door.

NOEL
Just so you know, I'm not supposed
to have anybody over when my mom
isn't around.

Leon stubs out his CIGARETTE on the porch.

LEON
Don't worry. She'll never even
know I was here. Scout's honor.

Leon pushes his way inside.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSTESS FACTORY - AFTERNOON

ROWS and ROWS of Hostess TWINKIES ride a conveyor belt on their way to a line of gloved WORKERS, who quickly package them in boxes, that are whisked away for shipping.

CUT TO:

INT. FACTORY LOCKER ROOM - AFTERNOON

DAWN, a single-mother in her 30's, sits on a bench lacing up her ratty tennis shoes.

Dawn has blonde but graying hair. She was once young and beautiful and full of promise.

ROSEMARY, a co-worker, in her mid-30's, enters the locker room and fiddles with her lock. Rosemary is also single and has always been overweight.

DAWN

Well, I'm off. Late to pick my son up from practice.

ROSEMARY

Hey, by any chance, did you mention the switch to Glen?

DAWN

Yeah. And I also restocked the storeroom shelves, like you asked.

ROSEMARY

Really, Dawn, you're the best.

Noticing that Dawn still has on her hairnet, ROSEMARY walks over and removes it.

ROSEMARY

You're sure you don't mind picking up my shift?

DAWN

Not at all, darlin'. End of the month. Could use the extra cash.

Rosemary tosses their hairnets into the trash.

ROSEMARY

Well, I sure owe 'ya one. How's about some beers some night down at the Stagger Inn?

DAWN
(Winking.) You're on. Have a good
visit with the folks.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSTESS FACTORY PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Dawn emerges from a side door marked 'Employees Only'. She
shuffles down a flight of stairs into a large parking lot.

Dawn strides down a row of parked cars, and then slips into a
BROWN-PANELED STATION WAGON. She turns on the ignition, and the
car slowly sputters and coughs to life.

Dawn sighs with relief.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

A large BOOMBOX sits on a BOOKCASE/DESK that is littered with
random piles of CASSETTES, COMICS, and MAGAZINES.

An unmade BED sits next to the bookcase/desk.

A collage of HEAVY METAL ALBUM POSTERS decorates the walls:

DEF LEPPARD - HYSTERIA
IRON MAIDEN - KILLERS
BLACK SABBATH - BORN AGAIN
AC/DC - HIGHWAY TO HELL
MOTLEY CRÜE - SHOUT AT THE DEVIL

On the other end of the room, a CLOSET has been left half open,
revealing a real mess inside.

A BLACK GUITAR CASE rests against a wall.

The floor is covered in lots of CRAP and CLOTHES.

Noel and Leon stand by the boombox speakers rocking out.

AC/DC'S HELLS BELLS blares from the BOOMBOX.

I WON'T TAKE NO PRISONERS, WON'T SPARE NO LIVES
NOBODY'S PUTTING UP A FIGHT

I GOT MY BELL, I'M GONNA TAKE YOU TO HELL
I'M GONNA GET YOU, SATAN GET YOU

LEON
Holy shit. Turn it up. This part's
insane.

Leon jumps up on the bed playing air guitar and stomping up and down on the mattress imitating Angus.

HELL'S BELLS
YEAH, HELL'S BELLS

Noel laughs. Leon laughs.

The boys nod their heads together in time to the music.

YOU GOT ME RINGING
HELL'S BELLS
MY TEMPERATURE'S HIGH
HELL'S BELLS

Leon jumps down off the bed, landing in front of the
bookcase/desk. He checks out Noel's music collection.

LEON
...Rolling Stones, Alice Cooper,
Kiss...

Leon picks up a generic CASSETTE MIXTAPE.

LEON
What's on this?

NOEL
Just a mix of some classic rock:
Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd... My
guitar teacher made it for me.

LEON
No way? You play guitar?

NOEL
I'm taking lessons.

Noel indicates the BLACK GUITAR CASE leaning up against the
wall.

Leon walks over and opens the case. He picks up the GUITAR, really feeling it out.

LEON

You any good?

NOEL

Just started really.

LEON

Too bad. 'cause I'm starting a band, you know. Gonna get outta this shitstain once and for all, go on tour, do some drugs, screw some chicks... You can join the band if you want?

Noel SMILES for the first time.

NOEL

(Apprehensively.) Sure? Why not.

LEON

Don't believe me, do you?

NOEL

Whatdya mean?

LEON

It's alright. No one ever believes me.

Somewhat disappointed in himself, Noel crosses to the boombox to turn down the music and observe Leon more closely.

LEON

...Master of Puppets, Styx, Darkside of the Moon, ooo, and Dio. Now, we're talking. Did you know that upside down Dio spells out Devil?

NOEL

No way?

LEON

Check it out for yourself.

Leon tosses the DIO CASSETTE to Noel, catching Noel a bit off guard.

Noel flips the DIO CASSETTE upside down, then right-side up, then upside down again.

NOEL

Cool...

LEON

So, what else you got?

Leon shuffles through a bunch of other cassettes that are piled up on the desk.

LEON

Guns n Roses, Ratt, Their Satanic Majesties Request. Oh, and, yes, yes! The White Album.

Leon keeps rummaging through the cassette tape collection.

LEON

Ever listened to "Revolution #9" backwards?

NOEL

(With a laugh.) No. Why would anyone want to do that?

LEON

Because, dork, sometimes...there are hidden messages in the music.

Noel shoots Leon a doubtful look.

LEON

Do yourself a favor, man, listen to it backwards some time. "Turn me on dead man". Turn me on! Turn me on! Turn me on!

Leon grabs his own throat and, pretending to choke himself to death, falls backwards on to the bed, both gasping and laughing.

LEON

You know, you're kinda cool...but
far too gullible.

Suddenly serious, Noel confronts Leon.

NOEL
So, what? Did you like run away
from home or something like that?

Leon stiffens and sits up in the bed, clearly irritated.

LEON
Or something like that. Look,
don't get all bent out of shape,
dude, but it's really none of your
business.

Leon looks around Noel's room and at all his stuff with a bitter
rage of envy and awe.

LEON
I'd really hate to wreck this...
cushy, little world of yours. But
yeah, it's probably best you don't
know. Besides, I couldn't tell you
anyway.

NOEL
And why not?

LEON
'cause if I did, you'd be dead. D-
E-A-D!

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Dawn steers the STATION WAGON into the driveway, and the car
shakes and sputters to a stop.

When Dawn gets out, she hears the LOUD MUSIC blasting from an
open upstairs window.

Irritated, Dawn grabs a GROCERY BAG from off the front seat. She
slams the car door shut and marches up the front porch.

Still holding her bag of groceries, she fumbles for the door key and drops the entire keychain.

Dawn bends down to pick up her KEYS and notices the stubbed-out CIGARETTE BUTT.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Dawn pushes open the front door and steps into the entry. The MUSIC BLARES even louder.

Dawn slams the front door closed, yelling up the stairs.

DAWN

Hey! Turn that crap down and come
help me with the groceries!

No answer. Angry, Dawn continues on her way into the kitchen.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Unaware that Dawn is home, Leon and Noel continue rocking out to the music.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Dawn slams the grocery bag down on the counter.

DAWN

Noel?! I'm serious!!

Dawn waits for a response, there is nothing, just the sound of LOUD MUSIC playing.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - DAY

Frustrated, Dawn storms up the stairs ready to attack.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Dawn stands before Noel's bedroom door and pounds her fist against the door, almost louder than the music.

DAWN

Hey! What in the hell's going on
in there? Open up!

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Startled by the pounding, Noel quickly reacts and turns down the music.

NOEL

Nothing! Just listening to some
music.

Noel frantically motions for Leon to be quiet and hid in the closet.

DAWN

Really? Is someone in there with
you?

NOEL

No. Whatdya mean?

Leon tip-toes to hide in the closet. Noel closes the door behind him.

NOEL

When did you get in? I didn't hear
you.

Noel rushes to open his bedroom door confronting his mother face to face.

DAWN

No wonder. That music was loud
enough to wake the dead.

Dawn pushes her way inside and looks around the room suspiciously.

DAWN

I could have sworn I heard voices...
(Turning to Noel.) Been calling
you to come help me.

Dawn surveys the room in all its messy glory.

DAWN

Jesus Christ, this room is a sty.
Would it kill you to clean up
after yourself every once in a
while?

Dawn picks up a wrinkled shirt and make her way towards the closet.

NOEL

No, no! It's okay. I'll pick up.

DAWN

When?

Dawn flings open the closet door and hangs up the shirt on a wire hanger.

Leon is nowhere to be found.

DAWN

Look, I don't know what's been
going on with you lately, but if
you hadn't noticed, I could sure
use some help around here. It's
not easy to -

Dawn notices the OPEN WINDOW for the first time.

DAWN

And what in the hell, are you
doing with your window wide open
on literally the hottest day of
the year?

Dawn goes over and slams the window shut.

DAWN

(Under her breath.) Just pissing away money. (To Noel.) And you know, you missed your lesson again. Stopped by to pick you up, and Otto said you never even bothered to show.

NOEL

I forgot.

DAWN

You forgot. Well, you're going tomorrow whether you like it or not. And I mean it! I'm not going to keep shelling out money that we don't have for lessons you don't even bother to go to.

Noel heads over to the window to check out if Leon somehow snuck out without him noticing.

DAWN

(As sort of an apology.) Look, I just need you to start being a little bit more responsible, okay? You're not a child anymore...not like your father.

NOEL

But I'm not any good.

DAWN

Well, how do you expect to get any better?

Looking out the window, Noel spies LEON watching and smoking from across the street.

Leon raised his fingers in a 'SCOUT'S HONOR' sign, and then gestures for him not to tell.

DAWN

When you do get done cleaning up in here, I could use some help with dinner.

Dawn leaves the room, closing the door behind her.

Noel looks back out of the window again, but Leon has disappeared.

FADE TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

With the window still open, the CURTAINS billow from a light evening breeze.

Noel lies in his bed wide awake staring in fear at his BLACK GUITAR CASE that rests in shadow against the wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANIMATION - GUITAR DEMON

-- The STATIC SIGNALS and SOUND from an underground SHORTWAVE RADIO STATION.

-- THE BLACK GUITAR CASE slowly stretches in length, growing taller and taller.

-- The NECK of the case constricts, forming the shape of a HEAD, while the BODY of the guitar case forms broad SHOULDERS.

-- The BLACK LEATHER transforms into a long, tattered ROBE.

-- The GUITAR DEMON slowly contorts, turning around to reveal the hooded face of a WHITE SKULL with HOLLOW EYES.

-- The GUITAR DEMON opens up its ROBE as if spreading wide its WINGS.

-- The STRINGS of the GUITAR DEMON snap away and reach out for NOEL like tentacles.

-- The STRINGS wrap around NOEL's arms and neck, inflicting deep, bleeding LASCERATIONS.

-- The STRINGS pull NOEL off from the bed, closer and closer toward the DARK SOUND HOLE that bares SHARP, SALIVATING TEETH.

-- Closer and closer towards the DARK, EMPTY SOUND HOLE.

-- DARKNESS.

END ANIMATION - GUITAR DEMON

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OTTO'S TRAILER - AFTERNOON

The STATION WAGON pulls into a dirt driveway and parks in front of Otto's TRAILER.

Part of a larger trailer park, Otto's trailer is long more than it is wide, with a fading gray and blue trim.

On the front side, there is only one window with a wooden and rotting set of stairs leading to a screen door.

With the driver and passenger windows down, a DJ can be heard from the car radio:

DJ (O.S)
...That's right folks, we're giving
away tickets to the hottest
concert this summer. Just be the
7th caller, and win two tickets to
see Hell Fire this weekend at
Busch Stadium, sponsored by Pepsi
Cola and Mastercard. That's Hell
Fire live and in concert! Be there
or burn in hell...

Noel gets out of the passenger's side, and retrieves his guitar case from the back seat.

The car sputters, shakes, and stalls.

DAWN
Shit.

Dawn turns the ignition, and the fortunately car revs back up again.

DAWN
You're okay with walking home?

NOEL
Do I have a choice?

DAWN

Should be back no later than 8.
There's a frozen pizza in the
fridge, if you get hungry.

Noel closes the door, and watches the STATION WAGON shutter,
cough, and pull away kicking up a trail of dust.

The trailer door screeches open, and OTTO sluggishly emerges.

Otto is in his late 40's and wears an old maroon bathrobe over
his tank-top undershirt and crumpled boxer shorts. His legs and
arms are covered in tattoos. He has on dark sunglasses and black
cowboy boots. His long, flat, gray hair is just such as unkempt
as his long beard and mustache.

Otto could be a father figure, but he is too much of a hippie to
really care.

Otto rises his coffee mug in a gesture of 'good afternoon' to
the departing station wagon.

OTTO

(To Noel.) Almost given up on you.

As an invitation, Otto holds the door open with his boot.

Noel climbs the stairs, passing Otto as he enters the trailer.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - AFTERNOON

A rock 'n' roll hoarder more than a collector, the interior of
Otto's trailer is a museum of rock and roll relics and
memorabilia:

RECORDS, CASSETTE TAPES, 8 TRACKS, PICTURES AND POSTERS,
INSTRUMENTS, SOUND EQUIPMENT, CONCERT BUTTONS, SHEET MUSIC
- From ELVIS to WOODSTOCK to MTV.

On the wood-paneling wall by the front door are thumbtacked
POLAROID PICTURES OF PAST STUDENTS posing with their guitars and
smiling.

Written on the PICTURES in BLACK MAGIC MARKER are the NAMES of
Otto's students.

PETER, CRAIG, PATRICK, BRAD, DAVID, MELISSA, DEAN, SARAH...

Noel walks past the pictures and sits on a sagging sofa with a faded brown-tweed pattern.

All of the furniture and knick-knacks in the trailer seem to have been accumulated over time from various thrift stores.

Otto closes the door behind him, and the room gets noticeably darker with all of the shades drawn.

Otto lumbers over to a worn, leatherette recliner in the corner of the trailer and slumps down.

With Noel sitting slightly catty-cornered, Otto just stares at him for an awkward moment, and then takes a sip from his mug.

OTTO
Ready to rock 'n roll?

Otto sets down his mug and with a slap of his thighs, he gets up and grabs his ACOUSTIC GUITAR, which leans up against the wall.

OTTO
Do you remember the names of the strings? Six strings, six names.

Noel shakes his head and shrugs his shoulders in defeat.

NOEL
I forgot.

OTTO
You forgot? (With a sigh of exasperation.) Shit, man, without knowing the strings, how do you expect to learn how to tune or play any other notes or chords?

Otto collapses back down in his recliner.

OTTO
There's a saying that'll help you remember...

Otto plucks the individual strings.

OTTO
Eddie Ate Dynamite, Good Bye
Eddie.

Otto plucks the strings again.

OTTO
E-A-D-G-B-E.

Noel just sits with his guitar on his lap like a bump on a log.

OTTO
You know, you've really got to
practice if you want to learn how
to play.

NOEL
I know.

OTTO
So, why aren't you practicing?

Noel just sheepishly shrugs his shoulders again.

OTTO
(A bit stern.) Then why don't we
just stop wasting everyone's time,
shall we, and start with the truth
behind the lie. Why don't you want
to learn guitar anymore?

NOEL
Because...

At first, Noel struggles to come up with a plausible answer, and then the truth suddenly comes pouring out of him like venom.

NOEL
Because I am not a sissy, okay...
Because my dad thinks I should be
working on cars instead... Because
music is for faggots!

Otto takes a moment to let the gravity of Noel's response sink in.

OTTO

So...is that what you think, or is that what your dad thinks? 'cause, let me tell you, I heard the exact same shit from my old man when I was your age. But then he was a drunken asshole who didn't give two flying fucks about anything or anyone...not even himself.

Otto gets up and crosses the room to an old FENDER AMPLIFIER and plugs in his ELECTRIC GUITAR.

OTTO

(Stern and cold.) Now, you listen to me.

Otto plays a LOUD CHORD and lets the reverberation intensify and then fade out.

OTTO

Yes. Music is for fags.

Otto strikes another loud CHORD.

OTTO

And music is for rebels... (LOUD CHORD), misfits... (LOUD CHORD), and rejects...

Suddenly shifting tone, Otto gently picks out a soft, whispery ballad.

OTTO

And a true musician... a true musician is like a magician. He can conjure up feelings and fantasies and forgotten memories like some sort of secret... magic... spell...

Otto suddenly strikes another LOUD CHORD.

OTTO

Music is dangerous. And some folks are too fucking scared to listen.

Letting the reverberation fade, Otto places his ELECTRIC GUITAR back against its stand.

OTTO

And once you get that into that thick skull of yours, then no one, and I mean, no one can tell you what to do or who to be. Do you hear?

Noel shakes his head 'yes'.

OTTO

Good.

Otto picks up his ACOUSTIC GUITAR again and sits back down in his recliner.

OTTO

Now, I am going to teach you the way that I wished someone would have taught me when I first picked up this guitar.

Otto feels his GUITAR, caressing the black and beat-up body and neck.

OTTO

Let's start all over again, shall we? From the very beginning.

As if in a trance, Noel again shakes his head 'yes'.

OTTO

I'm gonna show you two chords, Just two. That's it. And these two chords are gonna give you the fundamentals. 'cause once you learn these chords and feel comfortable going back and forth, you'll have a good, solid foundation that will help you master other chords. Shit, it also doesn't hurt that they're in hundreds of songs. Sound cool?

Noel brightens up as if a light was suddenly switched on inside of him.

NOEL

Yeah.

OTTO

What's that? I didn't hear you?

NOEL

Yeah!

OTTO

That's more like it. Okay, then.
Let's start with E minor. Now, E
minor is one of my favorites,
because it has such a haunting
sound.

Otto strums an E minor chord.

OTTO

Now, what we want to do is start
with a little shape, "Scout's
honor" that we can move around and
start making music right away.

Otto makes the "SCOUT'S HONOR" shape with his fingers.

OTTO

Scout's honor.

Like a reflection in a mirror, Noel makes the same shape with his fingers.

NOEL

Scout's honor.

OTTO

Good. Now, E minor is an easy
chord to start with... It's the
first chord of Pink Floyd's 'Wish
You Were Here'... 'Don't Cry' Guns N
Roses...

Otto strums the E minor chord again.

OTTO
...'Nothing Else Matters', by
Metallica...

Otto stops strumming to demonstrate.

OTTO
So, what you do is, you take your
pointer finger and play the 2nd
fret of the A string. This area,
here, is the first fret, and this
is the 2nd. So... The tip of your
finger, straight down, not the
flat part but the tip. Now, put
the tip of your middle finger
straight down on the second fret
of the D string. Go on. Put them
both down. Together.

Following Otto's example, Noel does as he is told.

OTTO
And we want to make sure there is
enough space in our hand so that
the strings that aren't down still
ring out.

Otto strums his guitar.

OTTO
It should sound just like that.

Noel strums his guitar, which doesn't sound all that bad.

OTTO
Good. Very good. And then you want
to paint on the strings with your
pick. Just like that. Yeah. Paint
on the strings... and around the
sound hole...

Noel follows Otto's lead. All the while, Otto takes note of his
progress.

OTTO

Your arm should be relaxed, nice
and fluid, with the curvature of
the guitar on your right thigh,
for comfort. That's it.

Otto plays along with encouragement.

OTTO

Do some up downs... And we can do
down up, down up... or we can just
take it nice and easy...

After strumming in unison together, both Otto and Noel stop
playing.

OTTO

So, that's your first chord. And,
now, here's what's really cool.
Hold that shape of the chord, and
all we do is take that shape, and
scoot it down a string.

Fully engrossed, Noel follows Otto's instruction.

OTTO

Keep the shape, take your hand
off, and put it down again.

Otto plays an A suspended 2 chord.

OTTO

A suspended 2 chord - it's a fancy
name, I know, but we don't have to
learn anything new. All we do is
take that shape and scoot it down
to the 2nd fret of the D string and
2nd fret of the G string. D and G.

Otto strums the A suspended 2 chord and then switches to E
minor.

OTTO

A2 and back to E minor.
Strum and switch. Strum and
switch.

Feeling a bit more confident, Noel joins in on the jam session.

OTTO

That's it. You got it. You got it.
So, just like that we have two
chords. And now we can start to
make some sound.

Both Otto and Noel continue to strum along together - A2 and E minor, A2 and E minor, A2 and E minor.

Noel smiles, lost in the revelry of sound and music.

Otto hums, making up a song and improvising some lyrics as he goes along.

OTTO

Just practice back and forth, and
paint the strings. That's it.
That's it. Now, try to remember...
Try to remember the shape of the
chord and that will bring your
song together.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

With his guitar case slung across his back, Noel walks home along the railroad tracks listening to music on his Walkman.

OTTO (V.O.)

Try to remember... Try to remember...

Lost in a rapture of music and dreams, Noel doesn't seem to hear or feel the FREIGHT TRAIN that is barreling down the tracks directly behind him.

As the freight train approaches, a loud WHISTLE and PLUME of BLACK SMOKE signal a warning.

SPARKS SHOWER the tracks on either side as the CONDUCTOR attempts to slow down the powerful locomotive.

Noel slowly turns around and is frozen with fright at the sight of the massive FREIGHT TRAIN headed towards him.

In a panic, the conductor gesticulates wildly, and Noel instinctively leaps off of the tracks.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAILROAD EMBANKMENT - DAY

Noel slides down a steep embankment, and comes to rest at the opening of a TRAIN TRESTLE.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAIN TRESTLE - DAY

The freight train THUNDERS by overhead.

Noel hears the soft sound of crunching gravel and sits up to discover the BLURRY SHADOW OF LEON.

Leon stands over Noel checking to see if he is injured.

Leon has a backpack slung over his shoulder, and a discarded CAN OF SPRAY-PAINT lies nearby.

The inside of the train trestle is covered in layers and layers of GRAFFITI:

AFIRMATIONS/MOTTOS, BIBLE VERSES, FOUR LETTER WORDS,
SYMBOLS, NAMES, and DECLARATIONS OF AFFECTIONS...

The newest graffiti is a spray-painted:

UPSIDE DOWN CROSS

LEON

Holy shit. Are you okay?

Getting his bearings, Noel pats himself down and laughs off the almost near-death close call.

NOEL

Yeah. Yeah. I think so?

LEON

That was like the fucking coolest thing, I've ever seen...

Leon howls with excitement and then offers Noel a hand.

LEON
Glad you could drop in and drop
out.

Leon fetches Noel's guitar as Noel dusts himself off.

LEON
So, did you get into any trouble
with your mom?

NOEL
Not because of you.

LEON
You didn't tell her about me, did
you?

NOEL
No.

LEON
Good. (More as a threat.) 'cause
if you did, I'd have to run away,
and we couldn't be friends any
more.

Leon hands Noel his guitar.

LEON
How was your lesson?

NOEL
Alright, I guess.

LEON
Did you get any better?

NOEL
It doesn't really work like that.
I need to keep practicing.

Noel continues walking on his way home. Leon follows along like
a lost puppy.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

Side by side, the boys balance on the rails as they walk towards Noel's home.

LEON

Did you think about what I said?
Do you want to join the band or
not?

NOEL

It depends. What's the band's
name?

LEON

Don't really know yet. Haven't
given it much thought. But
whatever it is, it's gonna be
something cool, something really
dark and cool, like, like 'The
Hellraisers', or 'Lords of the
Fallen World'... Yeah... Something
like that.

NOEL

(Laughing.) 'Lords of the Fallen
World'.

LEON

No, no, wait. I got it. I got it. -
'The Sad Satans'. Yeah. I like it.
'The Sad Satans'.

NOEL

You are one twisted son of a
bitch, you know that?

LEON

Never odd or even. Never odd or
even.

They continue walking, taking a short cut through a wooded area
that leads them into LeClair Park.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The STATION WAGON is pulled off to the side of a country road with the HOOD UP and DARK SMOKE billowing from the engine.

A ROSCOE'S TOW TRUCK is parked in front of the car, and a MECHANIC fiddles under the hood, his upper half obscured.

BOSTON'S 'MORE THAN A FEELING' plays from the tow-truck radio.

SO MANY PEOPLE HAVE COME AND GONE
THEIR FACES FADE AS THE YEARS GO BY

CUT TO:

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Dawn sit behind the steering wheel, pissed, rapping her fingernails against the wheel.

YET I STILL RECALL AS I WANDER ON
AS CLEAR AS THE SUN IN THE SUMMER SKY

Dawn catches a glimpse of her REFLECTION in the rearview mirror.

She fusses with her hair identifying gray hair after gray, which only adds to her irritation.

IT'S MORE THAN A FEELING
(MORE THAN A FEELING)

The HOOD slams down loudly, startling Dawn and revealing Kyle as her roadside mechanic.

WHEN I HEAR THAT OLD SONG THEY USED TO PLAY
(MORE THAN A FEELING)

Kyle saunters over to Dawn's open window and leans in.

KYLE
Looks like your carburetor's shot.
Gonna have to take her in for a
better look.

I BEGIN DREAMING
(MORE THAN A FEELING)

Kyle stares at Dawn and watches a BEAD of SWEAT roll down her neck and cleavage.

He turns his attention to the BLAZING SUN, shielding his eyes with this cap.

KYLE
God, it's hot out here.

'TIL I SEE MARIANNE WALK AWAY
I SEE MY MARIANNE WALKIN' AWAY

CUT TO:

EXT. LE CLAIR PARK - AFTERNOON

CHILDREN giggle and shout as they run and play on SWINGS, SEE-SAWS, SLIDES, and MERRY-GO ROUNDS.

Noel and Leon walk down a paved path towards the PAVILION where they first met.

Leon tosses his backpack down on the pavilion steps.

LEON
So, I got you something for your troubles.

Leon opens his backpack, revealing loads of stolen CASSETTE TAPES.

NOEL
Holy shit...

LEON
That's right. Thought you'd liked 'em.

NOEL
Where did you get all of these?

LEON
Let's just say, it's our little secret, okay. You're good at keeping secrets, right?

NOEL

(Hesitant) Sure.

LEON
Sure? What the fuck, man?

Leon grabs the backpack, zipping it back up again.

LEON
You don't know? How in the hell do
I know if I can trust you?

NOEL
Come on, you can trust me.

LEON
(Serious.) Then swear.

NOEL
Okay, I swear.

LEON
No. Swear on your life.

NOEL
All right. All right. I swear. I
swear on my life.

Leon raises his fingers.

LEON
Scout's honor?

Noel raises his fingers in response.

NOEL
Scout's honor.

LEON
Good. Now, I can trust you to keep
away the demon.

NOEL
Demon? What demon?

Leon looks around suspiciously, checking to make sure that no
one is spying on them.

LEON
We all have demons.

Leon ditches his backpack with Noel, and then takes off running into the park.

Left with Leon's loot, Noel is suddenly worried that he might get caught.

Still running, Leon turns around and shouts back at Noel.

LEON
We always keep secret the thing
that terrifies us the most.

Noel quickly zips up the backpack in an attempt to hide its stolen contents.

When Noel looks back up, Leon is gone, and all of the children that had been playing just moments before have disappeared.

The entire park is DESERTED, and the SWING SETS, SEE-SAWS, SLIDES, and MERRY-GO ROUNDS abandoned.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANIMATION - PLAYGROUND DEMONS

-- VIOLIN STRINGS from 'Dance Macabre' by Camille Saint-Saens.

-- A BRIGHT NUCLEAR FLASH of LIGHT blinds the playground.

-- From a RISING MUSHROOM CLOUD of SMOKE, A WAVE of DUST and DEBRIS blows forcefully destroying everything in its wake.

-- Once the dust settles, a tall FIGURE OF DEATH stands triumphant in the center of the hellscape destruction.

-- Cloaked in a BLACK ROBE, the FIGURE OF DEATH slowly lifts its arms as if summoning spirits.

-- From the brittle, cracked dirt, small SKELETON CHILDREN rise.

-- The SKELETON CHILDREN clasp hands and dance in a circle around the FIGURE OF DEATH.

-- THE FIGURE OF DEATH opens its long BLACK ROBE revealing the body of a giant coiled SERPANT.

-- The serpent's LONG, FORKED-TONGUE darts out in Noel's direction.

END ANIMATION - PLAYGROUND DEMONS

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

A SPEEDING CAR HONKS as it races by.

Noel crosses the street and notices Kyle's TOW TRUCK parked in the driveway with the STATION WAGON still attached to the tow hook.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

Noel stomps up the steps to the front porch and retrieves the key from under the welcome mat.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - DAY

Noel enters the house and closes the front door loudly on purpose.

DAWN (O.S.)
(From upstairs) Noel? Honey? Is
that you?

Flustered, Dawn comes rushing down the stairs to greet Noel, discreetly tucking in her blouse.

DAWN
That damn car broke down again on
the way to work. Had to call for a
tow...

Not too far behind Dawn, Kyle saunters down the stairs, adjusting his belt and cap.

DAWN
(Blushing.) Your dad... Your dad was
nice enough to give me a lift...

Noel is embarrassed for the both of them.

NOEL
I bet he did.

Kyle smacks Noel across the head with his cap.

KYLE
Don't talk to your mother like
that.

DAWN
Kyle! Jesus...

Noel just glares at him with a look of pure hatred.

Without a word, he marches upstairs to his bedroom and slams the door shut.

Angry HEAVY METAL music, like QUIET RIOT - BANG YOUR HEAD, is blasted from Noel's room like a musical scream.

With affection, Kyle turns to Dawn to apologize.

KYLE
I'll have a better look at her
down at the shop.

Kyle tries to kiss Dawn on the cheek, but she moves her head away to avoid his advances.

Containing his frustration, Kyle punches the wall by the door as he leaves.

Dawn closes the door. She sinks against it deeply disappointed in herself.

Noel's music gets LOUDER and LOUDER.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - DAY

Tense from the rage he is holding inside, Noel sits on the couch/loveseat with his guitar, while Otto sits in the recliner opposite.

OTTO
You see, the notes are only
letters

Otto plucks out the six strings.

OTTO
E-A-D-G-B-E. But a chord...a chord
is like a word.

Otto strums a C chord letting the pleasant sound linger.

OTTO
And all instruments, from keyboard
to clarinet, rely on this same,
common language - a musical
alphabet of sorts.

Noel aggressively picks out the strings.

NOEL
Eddie-Ate-Dynamite-Good-Bye-Eddie.

Otto senses Noel's angry energy.

OTTO
So, why don't we start with some
basic power chords, shall we?

Otto strums a power chord as an example.

OTTO
Now, power chords are amazing
because your fingers only have one
job. When you make the power chord
shape, all you have to do is move
'em around, and you can play a
whole bunch of chords using that
same shape.

Otto plays a few power chords in quick succession, and then demonstrates the shape.

OTTO

Now the shape is really simple,
and it only involves three
fingers. Take your index finger
and place it on the 5th fret of
the low E string. Like this. Then
use your ring finger and place it
on the 7th fret of the A.

Without hesitation, Noel does as he is told.

OTTO

Next, take your pinky finger and
right underneath your ring finger,
place it on the 7th fret of the D
string.

Otto watches Noel as he struggles to form the chord shape on his
guitar.

OTTO

That's it. That's right.

Otto strums the chord. Noel follows suit but is noticeably
unimpressed.

OTTO

Now, in terms of picking, you're
just gonna play the low strings or
the strings you are fretting, and
that's your power chord. And no
matter where you move it on the
low three strings, it's gonna
sound cool.

Otto quickly moves his hand-shape around on the guitar as he
plays.

OTTO

You can move it anywhere, and it's
a power chord. Now. Check this
out...what your gonna do is drop
each finger towards the floor, one
string, with your index finger on
the -

NOEL
What's the Devil's Chord?

Taken by surprise, Otto abandons his lesson mid-strum.

NOEL
How do I play the Devil's Chord?

A sly SMILE slowly spreads across Otto's face.

OTTO
Ahhh... The dreaded flatted fifth.
(With a chuckle.) So, you wanna
learn the dark secrets of rock n'
roll.

Otto carefully strums a dissonant tritone.

OTTO
Diabolus in musica.

Otto strums the dissonant tritone again.

OTTO
A tritone consists of two notes
that are three whole steps apart,
such as a 'C' to an 'F#'.

Otto plucks out the individual notes.

OTTO
Because it's not found in the
major or minor scales, but mostly
because it just sounds scary, it's
been called 'the Devil's Chord'.

Otto strums the dissonant tritone again only louder.

OTTO
Now, the reason it's so scary and
unsettling is that it's
unresolved. It wants to go
here...(Playing a NOTE.) or maybe
there...(Playing another NOTE.) The
trouble is, you just don't know
where it'll go, but it sure as
hell can't stop where it's at.

Otto strikes another tritone.

OTTO

Tension and release. Order and chaos. An unstable sound sets up an expectation for resolution. But what if it never comes? That is the true horror. What if it never fucking comes?

Noel tries to mimic Otto's tritone.

OTTO

Monks banned it in the medieval ages, because it was, quite literally, the devil in music. And if played, Satan himself would soon appear.

Otto laughs loudly and darkly.

OTTO

Rock bands have used it all the time though... King Crimson, Jimi Hendrix, Rush... It is both the sound of longing and the sound of defiance.

Otto gets up and plugs in his ELECTRIC GUITAR.

OTTO

But, I guess, rock has always been the Devil's Music. It's dark and dangerous. It's freedom. And that frightens the shit out of most folks, so they demonize it. They always demonize what they don't understand.

Otto plays the G to C# to G tritone repeatedly on his electric guitar.

OTTO

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law.

Otto sings BLACK SABBATH'S BLACK SABBATH:

OTTO
WHAT IS THIS THAT STANDS BEFORE ME?
FIGURE IN BLACK WHICH POINTS AT ME
TURN AROUND QUICK, AND START TO RUN
FIND OUT I'M THE CHOSEN ONE
OH NO!

OTTO keeps playing the G to C# to G tritone over and over in a riff as he settles back down in his recliner.

OTTO
Music has always had two meanings.
It's a mirror almost with two
paths you can go by. There's the
treble, and there's the bass.
There's harmony and dissonance.
Evil and innocence. Music conjures
up our best angels along with our
darkest demons. And you'll never
find one without the other. Always
pleasure with pain, joy and agony,
life and death.

Otto continues to sing the next part of the song:

OTTO
BIG BLACK SHAPE WITH EYES OF FIRE
TELLING PEOPLE THEIR DESIRE
SATAN'S SITTING THERE, HE'S SMILING
WATCHES THOSE FLAMES GET HIGHER AND HIGHER
OH NO, NO, PLEASE GOD

Otto suddenly stops playing, overcome with emotion or fear, as if the lyrics had a personal meaning.

OTTO
You'll learn, soon enough that
everything gets fucked up and
twisted around. I mean, how are we
supposed to communicate, when even
our words have two meanings.
There's your ordinary, everyday
meaning...but if you listen...if you
really listen, you'll hear a
second, secret sound, like some

hidden devil. (Wiping away tears.)
And sometimes, sometimes people
are that way too. All calm and
cool on the outside, but on the
inside, they're just messed up and
misunderstood.

Otto gets up from his recliner and places the electric guitar
back in its stand.

OTTO
I'm sorry. I don't think I can go
on with this lesson today...

Waving off Noel, Otto retreats as he heads to the bathroom.

NOEL
I have a secret...

Otto stops dead in his tracks.

Noel hesitates, almost tearing up from his betrayal.

NOEL
A friend. Leon. He's scared of
something, something that haunts
him. But he won't tell me what it
is. I think he's in some kind of
trouble.

Otto turns and stares at Noel with a mix of sympathy, concern,
and understanding.

OTTO
Leon.

Suddenly, the silent bond is broken by LOUD HONKING.

CUT TO:

EXT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Dawn sits in her newly fixed station wagon with the engine
loudly purring.

She takes a few puffs from her cigarette and then HONKS the horn
again.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - DAY

Noel puts his guitar back into its case, guilty from his betrayal.

NOEL
He's going to be so upset that I
told you.

Otto places a reassuring hand on Noel's shoulder.

OTTO
It's okay. It'll be our little
secret... hidden in the music.

HONKING.

OTTO
Scouts honor?

Slowly, Otto raises his fingers in the shape of "SCOUT'S HONOR"

NOEL
Scout's honor.

CUT TO:

EXT. OTTO'S TRAILER - DAY

In a daze, Noel comes out of the trailer and makes his way down the steps.

Noel places his guitar in the backseat and then slides into the passenger side next to Dawn.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Dawn stubs out a cigarette in the car's ashtray.

DAWN
It's fixed! We're back up and
running!

Dawn shifts gears and puts the station wagon in reverse.

DAWN
How was your lesson?

Noel just ignores her, staring out of the window, more concerned about fall-out from his confession.

DAWN
Great. Just great.

Dawn puts the station wagon in drive, and they head home.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

The STATION WAGON pulls into the driveway and parks.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION WAGON - DAY

Noel, still staring out of the window, starts to open the car door.

DAWN
You know, you can't blame me
forever...

Noel pauses and then turns back to his mother.

DAWN
...I wish I could go back and change
things. I do. I wish I could make
things better for you. For us.
(Pause) This divorce hasn't been
easy on me either. But I thought
we were moving on. I thought we
were moving forward. But lately,
it's like we're stuck, living life
in reverse.

Noel is desperately close to telling Dawn about Leon.

DAWN

Please. Just say it. Shout it!
Scream it, for god sakes! Just
tell me what is going on with you!

Taken aback by her aggressive tone, Noel gives up and exits the car instead.

Noel retrieves his guitar from the backseat and slams the car door closed.

DAWN
Why won't you talk to me?

Dawn watches as Noel retreats into the house and slams the door behind him.

Frustrated, Dawn lays on the car HORN.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Noel flings his GUITAR on the bed.

He fetches Leon's BACKPACK, which is under his desk where he stashed it.

Noel dumps out the stolen cassettes and stuffs the backpack with some dirty clothes that he finds laying around the room.

Changing shirts, Noel takes off the long-sleeved shirt he is wearing, revealing DEEP BRUISES and RED WELTS around his arms.

Noel catches a glimpse of his BEAT-UP REFLECTION in the mirror on the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO TRAILER - DAY

Otto relaxes in his recliner with his guitar, picking out the same tritone - G to C# to G, G to C# to G, G to C# to G...

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

From behind Noel, the CLOSET DOOR slowly slides open.

Suddenly, Leon bursts out and charges towards Noel, pushing him up against the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO TRAILER - DAY

Instead of using a pick, Otto keeps plucking out the same tritone on his GUITAR with his FINGERNAILS, which are LONG and POINTED.

OTTO

Leon...

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - DAY

In their struggle, Noel and Leon knock the MIRROR off the wall, and it shatters in its frame as it crashes in pieces on the floor.

With his knees on Noel's arms, Leon pins Noel to the ground.

LEON

You told. Didn't you?

NOEL

No!

LEON

Liar! You told him about me.
Didn't you?

Noel shakes his head in denial.

LEON

You swore. You swore on your life.

NOEL

I... I'm sorry.

LEON

Why? Why did you have to go and do something so stupid like that!

Emotionally defeated, Leon gets up off of Noel.

LEON

I thought we were friends?

NOEL

But I didn't mean too. Honest. It just came out. I wanted to help.

LEON

Well, you should have just kept your big mouth shut and said nothing. It's all over now. Over!

Leon picks up Noel's GUITAR that's on the bed.

LEON

Goodbye, Eddie! Goodbye!

Raising the guitar over his head, Leon SMASHES it against the floor.

Suddenly, a LOUD, PIERCING CHORD from an electric guitar is struck, and Leon howls in pain.

LEON

AHHH!

Leon covers his ears, cowering against the bed.

Another SCREECHING CHORD is struck, and Leon convulses from the high-pitched sound.

LEON

AHHH!

NOEL

What is it? What's wrong?

LEON

Don't you hear it?

NOEL

Hear what?

LEON

His song. His sad, sick song!

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM CONCERT STAGE - EARLY EVENING

The GUITARIST from the band, HELL FIRE, warms up, striking a sharp CHORD from his ELECTRIC GUITAR which reverberates throughout the empty stadium.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING

Leon SCREAMS like the face on THE WALL album cover.

LEON

AHHH!

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM CONCERT STAGE - EARLY EVENING

The LEAD SINGER of HELL FIRE stands before a microphone.

LEAD SINGER

Testing... Testing... 1, 2, 3...

FEEDBACK from the microphone screeches from the stage MONITORS.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leon covers his ears. In a state of delirium, he tears and claws at the POSTERS that hang on the wall.

LEON

Make it stop. Please. Make-it-stop.

Attempting to calm himself down, Leon hums a strange, four-note tune over and over again.

NOEL

But I don't hear anything.

LEON
He's coming... He's coming for my
soul.

Leon keeps humming his tune over and over.

NOEL
But I don't hear anything.
Anything at all.

Leon seizes Noel's shoulder and imparts a cold warning.

LEON
Just play dead. Play dead.

Leon catches a glimpse of his REFLECTIONS in the various pieces
of broken mirror. He clutches at his face in terror.

LEON
Nataz Daz. Nataz Daz! Nataz Daz!!

NOEL
What is it? What are you saying?

Leon keeps shouting louder and louder, as if speaking in
tongues.

LEON
NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ!...

NOEL
I don't understand... What do you
mean? What are you trying to say?

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM CONCERT ARENA - NIGHT

Leon's chanting turns into the concert crowd stomping and
chanting:

BURN IN HELL, BURN IN HELL, BURN IN HELL, BURN IN HELL...

There is a loud SMOKE/SPARK EXPLOSION from the stage, and the
crowd erupts in cheers and screaming as the band, HELL FIRE,
storms the stage.

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM BALCONY - NIGHT

Riley stands at her seat, staring dizzily down at the stage below and clapping along like a super fan.

Drew stands next to Riley making out with a much older guy, PETER. Peter is in his 20's. He is dressed in a Hell Fire tank-top and jeans. He has long, CURLY RED HAIR.

As the lights gradually dim, the crowd erupts once more in wild CHEERS and SCREAMS.

Drew stops kissing Peter and turns her attention to the stage, joining in on the excitement and pumping her fists in wild anticipation.

Peter becomes visibly ill and uneasy. He glances up over his shoulder and catches a glimpse of SATAN standing in the vomitorium above them.

Satan is a tall SHADOW CLOAKED all in BLACK. Shilouetted, Satan slowly turns its head towards PETER revealing:

A HOLLOW, EMPTINESS

Terrified, Peter recognizes Satan and freaks out, pointing and shrieking at the top of his lungs:

PETER

NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ!

Drew turns to Peter with a look of confusion and embarrassment.

DREW

Hey, man. What are you on!?

Peter only points and screams.

PETER

NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ!

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leon screams at Noel.

LEON
NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ! NATAZ DAZ!

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM BALCONY - NIGHT

Peter scrambles and runs away from his terror, pushing and knocking over the concert-goers that stand in his way.

The others concert-goers react to Peter's panic by instinctively following him, running and pushing forward towards the balcony, in an attempt to get away from the perceived danger.

RILEY
Oh my God, what is it?

The panic soon swells out of control as the all of the CONCERT-GOERS in the section start a STAMPEDE.

Riley and Drew grab each other's HANDS, but they are quickly whisked away with the force of the crowd.

RILEY
(To Drew.) Hold on! Don't you let
me go!

The STAMPEDE grows stronger in energy and momentum.

RILEY
Stop it, stop it! STOP!

The STAMPEDE rushes forward as concert-goers are either CRUSHED or TUMBLE over the balcony, falling to their DEATHS below.

Caught in the commotion, Riley and Drew's HANDS slip apart.

SCREAMING, Riley is carried away by the swelling crowd.

RILEY
NO!

Drew is forced forward. She stumbles and is soon trampled repeatedly by the panicked concert-goers.

As the STAMPEDE continues, Drew's lifeless BODY is stomped on over and over again until her SKULL cracks open from under the relentless pressure.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Still plucking out the same tritone with his eyes closed, Otto suddenly stops.

Otto leans back and relaxes in a state of utter exhaustion and ecstasy.

CUT TO:

INT. NOEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leon gazes at his REFLECTION - a bloody horror. He clutches his face and screams.

LEON

NATAZ DAZ!!!

Leon's whole body constricts and convulses as if he is having a seizure.

NOEL

Leon? Leon! Are you okay?

Leon passes out, motionless on the broken pieces of mirror.

Afraid and helpless, Noel get up from off the floor and runs out of the room.

NOEL

Help! Help!

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Noel stands at the top of the stairs and yells down to his mother below.

NOEL

Mom! Mom! Help! Hurray!

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Having fallen asleep on the couch, Dawn wakes up with a jolt, startled by Noel's SCREAMING.

DAWN.

Oh my God! What's is it? What's wrong?

The television is tuned to "THE TONIGHT SHOW WITH JOHNNY CARSON".

NOEL (O.S)

I think he might be dead!

DAWN

What the...?

NOEL (O.S)

Hurry!

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - NIGHT

Dawn bolts up the stairs to Noel's bedroom in sheer panic.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dawn rushes into the bedroom to find only Noel standing over the broken pieces of the mirror.

DAWN

What is it? What happened in here?

Noel seems just as confused as his mother, and he stammers for an explanation.

NOEL

I... I don't know? He was here. He was right here.

DAWN

Who? Who was here? Is this some
kind of sick joke or something?

NOEL

But he was here. Hiding in the
closet when we got home!

Noel is increasingly agitated and frantically searches the room
for Leon.

DAWN

What are you talking about? Are
you on drugs?

NOEL

Help me! Help me find him!

Without hesitation, Dawn crosses to over to Noel and slaps him
hard against the face.

DAWN

What the fuck is wrong with you?

NOEL

But he was here! I swear!

Noel rushes over to the open window. The SIDEWALK below is
DESERTED.

NOEL

He must've run away. He's in
danger. Real danger. Something
evil is after him.

Dawn observes Noel in his frantic state. She then surveys the
bedroom for the first time, taking in all destruction and stolen
merchandise:

BROKEN MIRROR, SNEAKERS, RIPPED POSTERS, CASSETTE TAPES,
SMASHED GUITAR...

Noel turns back towards his mother, recognizing her disbelief
and disapproval.

NOEL

You don't believe me, do you?

DAWN

What kind of trouble are you in?

NOEL

He told me no one would believe me.

DAWN

Where did you get all of this... stuff?

NOEL

It's not mine. It's -

DAWN

Stop lying to me, goddammit!

Dawn steps away to prevent herself from yelling.

DAWN

I didn't raise you like this. I didn't. I didn't raise my son to be a -

NOEL

But something terrible's going to happen to him! Don't you get it! I've got to find him! I got to save him!

Noel pushes past his mother almost knocking her over and runs out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Dawn chases after Noel, shouting after him, as he storms out of the house.

DAWN

Get back here! Right now! I mean it!

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Noel bolts down the front porch steps. He picks up his bike, that is lying in the yard, and rides away.

Running as fast as she can without her shoes on, DAWN races to the station wagon.

As she opens the car door, she notices her FRONT TIRE is FLAT.

DAWN
(Under her breath.) Jesus Christ.

Dawn races back into the house.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Running into the kitchen, Dawn grabs the phone from off the wall and dials.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Noel bikes down the middle of main street like a bat out of hell.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANIMATION - DEVIL DRAGON

-- VAN HALEN'S RUNNING WITH THE DEVIL.

-- Noel pedals his bike faster and faster.

-- Suddenly, from above, a SHOWER OF FLAMES stops him dead in his tracks.

-- Overhead, a RED DEVIL DRAGON soars in the STARLESS, NIGHT SKY, its tail dripping with BLOOD.

-- Noel turns his bike around and pedals hard towards the safety of a TRAIN TUNNEL.

YEAH, YEAH, AH, YEAH

-- The RED DEVIL DRAGON barrels after Noel, almost catching him, before Noel reaches the entrance of the DARK, CONCRETE TRAIN TUNNEL.

I LIVE MY LIFE LIKE THERE'S NO TOMORROW
AND ALL I'VE GOT, I HAD TO STEAL

-- Noel rides down the entire length of TRAIN TUNNEL/CAVE. The WALLS are GRAFFETTIED with NATAZ DAZ.

LEAST I DON'T NEED TO BEG OR BORROW
YES I'M LIVIN' AT A PACE THAT KILLS

-- Over BONES and SKULLS, Noel pedals faster and faster on a collision course with a reflection of HIMSELF.

RUNNIN' WITH THE DEVIL

-- Just as Noel is about to crash into himself, he brakes in front of a large MIRROR, that seals the entire end of the tunnel/cave.

RUNNIN' WITH THE DEVIL

-- Suddenly, the MIRROR SHATTERS revealing the RED DEVIL DRAGON on the other side.

-- The RED DEVIL DRAGON leans back ready to strike. It opens its mouth wide and spews a FOUNTAIN OF FIRE and FLAMES.

END ANIMATION - DEVIL DRAGON

FADE TO:

EXT. ROSCOE'S AUTO SHOP

After hours, Kyle tinkers under a CAR in the garage.

VAN HALEN'S RUNNING WITH THE DEVIL plays from a radio in the office.

From his vantage point, Kyle spies the SNEAKERS of a stranger loitering just outside of the garage.

The SNEAKERS hesitate as they enter the garage and then quickly approach the car that Kyle is underneath.

Kyle swiftly rolls out from under the car, surprising his intruder.

KYLE

Hey, buddy! We're closed.

Kyle laughs off his fear when he notices that the intruder is just Noel.

KYLE

Shit, I'm sure glad it's you.

Kyle gets up and heads towards the office to turn off the radio.

He fetches his six-pack of Budweiser from the mini-fridge, which by now is down to only three cans.

KYLE

You know, your mom just called.
She's practically got the whole town out looking for you.

Noel is now nervous and fidgety and finds himself resisting the urge to ask his father for help.

KYLE

You really freaked her out good this time.

Kyle chugs an entire beer, and then crushes the can with his bare hand.

KYLE

Look, you don't have to tell me squat. Hell, I don't even want to know. But you do have to make things right.

Kyle toss the crushed can into a trash bin. He opens another one and takes a large gulp.

KYLE

The other day... what happened between me and your mom... It never

should have... Okay? It was a mistake. Pure and simple. Shit, everything that happens with your mom is a mistake.

NOEL

So, I'm a mistake.

KYLE

No, No. Jesus. Come on. That's not what I meant. You know that. You're just confused. Hell, I'm confused. We're all confused.

Kyle takes another large gulp of beer.

KYLE

But, believe me. And you've gotta know this, your mother... she twists things around. She sees things that were never even there. Your mom is so messed up in the head, she thinks she saw something that NEVER EVER happened.

Kyle approaches Noel, putting his hands firmly on Noel's shoulders.

KYLE

I know the truth. Honest to God. And I never laid a finger on you. You got that. I'll take that to my grave.

Kyle finishes his beer with a belch and then crushes the can again.

NOEL

You know, Otto was right. You don't care about anything but yourself.

Noel turns away to grab his bike.

NOEL

And you don't care all that much about that either.

Before Kyle can even respond, HEADLIGHTS blind the garage as a SPEEDING CAR screeches up to the auto shop entrance and stops.

Panicked, Paula rolls down the passenger side window, engine still running.

PAULA

Kyle! We gotta go. Hurry!
Something's happened at the
stadium. Something bad. Riley's in
the hospital. Come on! Get in!
Let's go!

Kyles drops his can of beer and jumps into the passenger seat.

As the car peels away kicking up dirt and gravel, Kyle leans his head out of the window and shouts.

KYLE

You've got it all backwards, kid!

Noel steps out into the driveway and watches the car speed away into the night.

Noel stands in the center of an INVERTED PENTAGRAM that has been spray-painted across the entire concrete floor of Roscoe's garage.

Noel picks up his bike and rides away into the night.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

With the windows rolled down, Dawn slowly drives around town looking in every direction for Noel.

The THUMP, THUMP of the flat tire is heard.

In the distance, the faint sound of screaming AMBULANCE SIRENS fills the summer night.

CUT TO:

INT. BUSCH STADIUM CONCERT ARENA - NIGHT

DEAD BODIES lie on top of DEAD BODIES, contorted and twisted over seats and railings.

PARAMEDICS rush in, making their way through CONCERT-GOERS, who are either screaming in pain and shock or who mull around, silently injured like zombies.

An AMBULANCE with RED LIGHTS SPINNING is parked on the field. A STRETCHER with a BODY BAG is lifted into the back.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

CANDLES are lit all around the trailer and arranged in little groupings like strange altars.

Otto lies in his recliner, passed out from exhaustion or maybe too much alcohol.

OTTO'S EYES suddenly open as if waking from a nightmare revelation.

Dizzy, Otto gets up and tries to stable himself before he stumbles towards the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAILER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Otto leans over the bathroom sink and splashes some cold water on his face.

He lifts his head up and stares deeply into the half-opened CABINET MIRROR as BEADS OF WATER drip from his face and beard.

OTTO

You really did it this time. Why do you make me punish you like this? Do you like to see yourself suffer? (Pause.) You are too cruel. Why would you ever want to leave? (Pause.) You promised...

OTTO'S RED EYES well up with tears.

Composing himself, Otto clutches the sides of the sink, revealing long SUICIDE SCARS that run up the length of his wrists.

OTTO

It's time once again. Time to move on. This time, though, we'll go somewhere...nice. Somewhere where simple. Where no one has ever heard of us. We'll start all over again. Together. Just you and me.

Otto closed the cabinet mirror, revealing a reflection of LEON, behind him.

LEON is curled up on the bathroom floor. He wears a dirty undershirt and soiled underwear. His hands are bound to the toilet plumbing and pipes with rope.

OTTO

You can try to run away, but your soul belongs to him.

Ashamed, Leon buries his head between his knees. At the sound of loud KNOCKING on the door, Leon slightly raises his head in hope.

OTTO

Ahhh, so you hear it. His sad, sweet song.

With tears in his eyes, Leon begs Otto not to open the door.

LEON

Please...

Otto crouches down next to Leon consoling him. Gently, Otto unties Leon's wrists and caresses his hands.

OTTO

I'm sorry. I get it though. I do. I understand how important is to have our imaginary angels. Ones that will swoop in to rescue us. And give us hope for a better tomorrow.

The KNOCKING continues.

OTTO
But this is your reality. There's
no escaping it. Evil eventually
arrives just as the truth is bound
for betrayal.

Otto pats Leon on the head, as he gets up to answer the front door.

OTTO
In the end, they always tell.

More KNOCKING.

OTTO
It's time for our lesson.

Otto leaves the bathroom, with Leon crying alone.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Otto heads to the front door.

OTTO
Yes, yes... I hear you. Hold your
horses.

Otto stands before the front door and peers out of the peephole. He slowly opens the door, and Noel pushes his way inside.

OTTO
It's late.

NOEL
I know. I'm sorry. But you're the
only one I could turn to for help.

OTTO
What is it? What's wrong?

Noel paces back and forth, struggling to get his words out.

NOEL

It's my friend... The one I told you about. Leon. He's in danger. Real danger. I think something is after him. Something evil.

Noel struggles to emphasize the urgency.

NOEL

Something terrible's about to happen! I think he might hurt himself. I think he might really do it. And no one believes me. No one!

Otto crosses over to a credenza to light another CANDLE.

OTTO

So, we have come to a crossroads... where lies die and innocence is lost.

NOEL

Please, Otto, please. You've gotta help me.

OTTO

(Blowing out the match.) And where is this friend of yours now?

NOEL

That's just it. I don't know. He ran away. He kept humming some strange tune. Over and over again. I think it was some kind of clue or something.

OTTO

And do you remember this tune of his?

Again, Noel struggles to put the correct notes together.

Sensing Noel's frustration, Otto leads him to a seat on the couch.

OTTO

It's okay. Just try. Music is our mirror. And there are two paths we can go by. Harmony or dissonance. Joy or sadness. Fantasy or reality.

Noel struggles to hum the tune. He can't quite remember the exact notes and rhythm.

NOEL

No, no... That's not it. That's not right.

OTTO

Did he tell you any other dark secrets?

NOEL

(Shaking his head 'No'.) He just kept repeating Nataz, Nataz Daz... or something like that, oh, and to play dead.

OTTO

Play dead.

Otto grabs his electric guitar and sits down in his recliner.

NOEL

Yes, he kept insisting to play dead. Just play dead. Play dead.

OTTO

A true musician is like a magician. He can conjure up feelings and fantasies and forgotten memories like some sort of secret... magic... spell...

Slowly, Otto plucks out the notes D-E-A-D on his guitar, letting the notes linger and vibrate.

OTTO

Dead.

NOEL

Holy shit! That's it! That's the
tune. But how did you-?

Otto picks out the tune again.

OTTO

D-E-A-D.

Slowly, Leon enters the room as if summoned by a magic spell.

NOEL

Leon? But where did you - ?

Otto picks out the tune again.

Hypnotized, Leon grabs Otto's acoustic guitar and sits down on
the couch next to Noel.

OTTO

It's time for our lesson. Shall
we?

NOEL

But how did you - ?

OTTO

You see, the notes are only
letters E-A-D-G-B-E.

LEON

(Picking out the strings.) Eddie
Ate Dynamite, Good Bye Eddie.

NOEL

(To Leon.) Can't you hear me?

OTTO

And all instruments rely on this
same common language - a musical
alphabet of sorts.

NOEL

(To Otto.) Why can't he hear me?

OTTO

A note is just a single letter -
EADGBE - but a chord, a chord is
like a word.

NOEL

Why won't you talk to me?!

As if to apologize, Leon slowly turns to Noel.

LEON

If I told you you'd be dead.

Otto plucks out the tune again.

LEON

D-E-A-D.

OTTO

That's it. Now, start to remember...

Otto sets his guitar down and gets up from his recliner.

OTTO

Start to remember the shapes of
the chords.

Otto puts a CASSETTE TAPE into a STEREO that sits on the
credenza beside the candles.

LED ZEPPELLIN'S "STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN" starts to play BACKWARDS.

Otto undoes his ROBE, revealing that he is naked underneath.

OTTO

Start to remember the chords that
will bring your whole song
together.

NOEL

(To Leon.) Just play dead. Play
dead. Play dead.

Aroused, Otto dances before Leon exposing himself.

OTTO

Listen... Can you hear it? His sad,
secret song...

Leon strums his guitar playing a wrong chord, which seems to pull Otto out of his ecstasy.

OTTO

No, no. That's not right. You're not holding it correctly. Here, let me show you.

Otto sits down next to Leon and adjusts the guitar in his hands.

OTTO

Hold it like this, only tighter. That's it. Just like that.

LEON

(Whispering to himself.) Play dead, play dead, play dead...

Otto slides down on his knees before Leon, and places his hands on Leon's waist, revealin LONG, POINTED FINGERNAILS.

OTTO

Tighter...

Otto pulls down the waist band of Leon's underwear.

NOEL

Just play dead, play dead, play dead...

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

A CASSETTE MIX TAPE spins in a large boombox.

LED ZEPPELLIN'S "STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN" blasts BACKWARDS.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Dawn slowly pulls her STATION WAGON with its FLAT TIRE into the driveway and parks.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Kneeling between Leon's legs, Otto lifts his head looking at Leon with the YELLOWISH-BROWN EYES of a GOAT.

OTTO

This will be our little secret...
hidden in the music.

Searching for strength, Leon turns his head to Noel.

Noel and Leon stare at each other face to face, their eyes full of TEARS.

NOEL

Never odd or even...

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - NEVER ODD OR EVEN

NOEL (V.O)

(Repeating.) Never odd or even.
Never odd or even...

-- CHILDREN in the park run and play backwards on SWINGS, SEE-SAWS, SLIDES, and MERRY-GO ROUNDS.

-- NOEL and LEON balance side by side on the railroad tracks.

LEON (V.O.)

You had it all backwards.

-- Noel spray-painting an ENCIRCLED PENTACLE on the floor of Roscoe's garage.

-- Noel slashing the TIRE on Dawn's STATION WAGON.

-- Noel spray-painting an ENCIRCLED PENTACLE at the park on the foundation of the pavilion.

LEON (V.O.)

From the very first moment...

-- Leon playing air guitar in his room, rocking out in front of a mirror - Noel is his REFLECTION.

LEON (V.O.)
From the very first moment we met.

-- DARKNESS

-- In park pavilion, Noel lights a cigarette. The flame from the lighter casts an EERIE GLOW against his face.

-- At the bottom of a TRAIN TRESTLE, Leon slides up a steep embankment.

-- Noel spray-painting a RIGHT-SIDE UP CROSS under the railroad trestle.

-- Leon walking alone along the railroad tracks. The FREIGHT TRAIN behind him barrels backwards in reverse.

-- Leon biking backwards past a CHURCHYARD, A ZIG-ZAG of LIGHTING strikes upwards into the stormy sky.

-- Noel stealing the CASSETTE at Darkside Records.

-- Mirroring each other, Leon and Noel slowly raise their fingers in the "SCOUT'S HONOR" shape.

END MONTAGE - NEVER ODD OR EVEN

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Leon clutches his face and screams.

LEON
SAD SATAN! SAD SATAN! SAD SATAN!

Seething with rage, Noel grabs the ACOUSTIC GUITAR out of Leon's hands.

NOEL
You twisted, sick motherfucker.

Noel swings the guitar and smashes it across Otto's head. BLOOD SPLATTERS as the guitar neck snaps and the strings make a sick sound.

Otto keels over, hitting a credenza and knocking over some CANDLES.

The candle WAX and FLAMES ignite the carpet and soon flare up to catch the CURTAIN/SHADES on FIRE.

The FIRE spreads quickly, fanning out across the ceiling.

Noel stabs Otto with the BROKEN NECK of the guitar, twisting the stake deep into Otto's gut.

NOEL
You sad, sick Satan.

Otto crawls up against the wall, injured, BLOOD DRIPPING down his face from the large gash on his head.

OTTO
The devil is always hidden
somewhere inside the truth.

Otto feels his wounds, choking on his blood.

With most of the trailer now consumed in FIRE, Noel recognizes the dangerous, out-of-control situation.

NOEL
(To Leon.) Run! Get out of here!

Otto struggles to stand.

OTTO
We are only the forgotten shadows
of our dreams and what-could-have-beens.

Noel grabs Leon's arm, and they run for the door.

OTTO
Scream! Scream at the top of your
lungs! No one will hear you,
because no one is listening!

On the entry wall, the PHOTOS of PETER and PAST STUDENTS catch FIRE, CURLING UP and blowing away in ASH and CINDERS.

OTTO
All of our screams silenced...
drowned by the tears of all his
fallen angels.

Otto stumbles against the wall and falls down.

OTTO
It is only in darkness that are
true selves are revealed.

Otto's robe catches on fire.

OTTO
Let his music transform you! Let
it possess your soul!

Quickly, Otto becomes consumed by the flames. He SHRIEKS out in pain.

Noel shoves Leon out of the trailer door before a PIECE OF THE CEILING collapses between them.

CUT TO:

EXT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Leon tumbles down the stairs as the outside of the trailer becomes engulfed in flames and partially collapses.

CUT TO:

INT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

The FIRE mesmerizes and seduces with DAZZLING FLAMES of RED and ORANGE.

From the fire, Otto charges towards Noel screaming hysterically, his mouth wide opened.

With his ROBE on fire, OTTO embraces Noel in WINGS OF FLAMES.

All of Otto's hair has burnt away revealing a BALD, BLISTERING HEAD with HORNS.

OTTO
(Whispering in Noel's ear.)
Nataz Daz!

As Otto and Noel burn together, they morph into animation.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANIMATION - HELL FIRE

-- BLACK SMOKE and FLAMES of RED and ORANGE and BLUE.

-- The BLACK SMOKE transforms into BLACK WINGS.

-- A FEROCIOUS DEMON of SMOKE rises from the FLAMES and then
DISINEGRATES in the INFERNO.

-- The FIRE spreads in intensity from an EXPLOSION of SMOKE and
FLAMES.

END ANIMATION - HELL FIRE

CUT TO:

EXT. OTTO'S TRAILER - NIGHT

Leon watches the trailer as it burns down to the ground. SPARKS
LEAPING and CRACKLING.

As MORNING BREAKS across the charred remains of the trailer,
Leon slowly turns away and walks home.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

A CASSETTE MIXTAPE still spins in a large boombox.

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - EARLY MORNING

Exhausted, Dawn enters the home. CHAOTIC SOUNDS blast from the
bedroom upstairs.

DAWN

Leon?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Dawn walks by the living room. Stunned, she drops her purse and keys in horror when she notices an ENCIRCLED PENTACLE spray-painted on the living room wall.

DAWN

Leon!

Dawn charges up the stairs to Leon's bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - EARLY MORNING

Dawn races to the bedroom door. She pounds on the door and jiggles the locked door knob.

No answer, just a WALL OF SOUND.

Using her shoulder, Dawn forces the door open.

CUT TO:

INT. LEON'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Hysterical SCREAMING.

LED ZEPPELLIN'S "STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN" blares backwards through the SPEAKERS:

OH, WOAHHH

Among the shadows in an open CLOSET, the DEAD BODY of LEON hangs from a noose. His face is severely BURNED, CHARRED beyond recognition.

THERE'S NO ESCAPING IT,

On the floor, an ACOUSTIC GUITAR lies BROKEN, smashed - its neck snapped and splintered.

The whole bedroom is ransacked, as if some violent struggle occurred.

NOR HIS WOES...SO HERE'S TO MY SWEET SATAN
THE ONES WHOSE LITTLE PATH WOULD MAKE ME SAD,
WHOSE POWER IS SATAN

Large spray-painted LETTERS spelling SAD SATAN are graffitied across the length of the wall.

HEAVY METAL ALBUM POSTERS are RIPPED from the walls and hang like TORN skin.

HE WILL GIVE THOSE WITH HIM 666
THERE WAS A LITTLE TOOL SHED WHERE HE MADE US SUFFER,
SAD SATAN

The BOOMBOX sits on a BOOKSHELF/DESK that is littered with shoplifted CASSETTES, COMICS, and SNEAKERS...

OH-OH-OH-OH-WOAHHH

A HAND turns down the VOLUME. The HAND presses stop, and the CASSETTE WHEELS come to a halt.

The CASSETTE MIXTAPE rests in a large BOOMBOX.

THE END