

DIXON looks at him, eyes welling up. He nods, and leaves before he starts crying.

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INT. GIFT SHOP - DAY

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A pick-up truck pulls up outside. MILDRED, reading a magazine, watches as a well-built, CROP-HAIRED GUY, late 20's, enters, kinda stares straight at her a moment, then ambles around the shop, looking at knickknacks he obviously has no use for.

MILDRED

Anything I can help you with, just gimme a holler.

CROP-HAIRED GUY

(pause)
Give you a what?

MILDRED

A holler?

He stares at her again, then continues with the knickknacks.

CROP-HAIRED GUY

A holler, huh?
(pause)
Give Mildred Hayes a holler. Okay.

MILDRED

You know me?

CROP-HAIRED GUY

Only from the TV, and the radio. How much these here 'Welcome to Missouri' rabbits go for?

MILDRED

Seven bucks. It's writ right on 'em.

GUY tosses a glass rabbit against a distant shelf, where it, and the things on the shelf, shatter, startling MILDRED.

CROP-HAIRED GUY

Guess he ain't seven bucks now.

MILDRED

What the Hell was it you come in here for?

CROP-HAIRED GUY

What did I come in here for? Well, maybe I'm a good friend of Willoughby's, how about that?

MILDRED

Are you?

CROP-HAIRED GUY

Or, y'know... maybe I was a friend of your daughter's or something. How about that?

MILDRED

(pause)

Were you?

CROP-HAIRED MAN

Or, uh, y'know, maybe I was the guy who fucked her while she was dying? How about that?

They stare at each other a while.

MILDRED

Were you?

CROP-HAIRED GUY

Oh... Naw. I would've liked to. I saw her picture in the paper there.

Door bell tinkles, as ANNE enters, dressed in black.

CROP-HAIRED GUY (CONT'D)

Saved by the bell, huh?

GUY turns to leave.

MILDRED

You owe me seven fucking dollars for the rabbit.

CROP-HAIRED GUY

Guess you'll have to get it off me next time I'm passing through, huh Mildred?

MILDRED

I guess I will.

GUY exits. ANNE, who she's never seen before, comes up.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

You don't know how glad I am to see you.

ANNE

What?!

MILDRED

That guy was scaring me.

ANNE

I wouldn't have said you scare easy.

MILDRED

I ain't the worst. What can I do for you, ma'am?

ANNE

My husband left this for you before he shot himself in the head last night.

ANNE hands her the letter, as MILDRED just stares at her.

MILDRED

I'm sorry, Mrs Willoughby...

ANNE

Are you? Are you really?

MILDRED

Of course...

ANNE

Surely it's the perfect ending for you, isn't it? It's proof that they've been successful, these billboards of yours, isn't it, a dead policeman? It's quantifiable now.

MILDRED

Are you blaming this on me?

ANNE

No, I'm not blaming this on you. I just came to give you the letter. Now, my two little girls are out in the car, so I'd better not stay and chat. I'm not sure what we're going to do for the rest of the day. It's hard to know what to do the day your husband kills himself. It's hard to know what to do.

ANNE leaves. MILDRED looks out as she drives away - and sees POLLY and JANE looking back at her thru the rear window.

MILDRED rests her head on the glass door a second, the broken 'WELCOME TO MISSOURI' rabbit on the shelf beside her, its head split in two. She opens the letter in her hand and starts reading, as dusk falls on the street outside.

WILLOUGHBY

Dear Mildred, Dead Man Willoughby here. Firstly I wanted to apologise for dying without catching your daughter's killer. It's a source of great pain to me, and it would break my heart to think you thought I didn't care, cos I did care. There are just some cases...