

HERE COMES THE NIGHT  
(A Rock Orpheus)

Written by

AL LEFCOURT

Logline: A musician stuck in a dead-end career reunites with an old love and together they embark on a wild rock-and-roll tour that is followed by fans - but stalked by Death.

Alan B. Lefcourt  
9220 Mast Blvd. #23  
Santee, CA 92071  
760-579-3948  
al@lefcourt.com

WGAW #1793343  
Revision of January 28, 2025

FADE IN:

JPUD4 EXT. OLD BRICK WAREHOUSE DISTRICT, ANYTOWN, USA - NIGHT JPUD4  
RAIN. Hard and loud.

From a club down the street, couples trundle off into the night, huddled close against the downpour. It must be closing time.

Drawing closer, the sound of MUSIC leaks into the street, mixing with the sound of the rain: "Here Comes the Night" (Them).

7H4I7 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT 7H4I7

The BACK DOOR of the club bursts open. A MUSICIAN carrying a heavy speaker storms out angrily and the music follows LOUD behind him.

This is ROGER, a bit overweight, approaching 30, scruff of a beard. He seems unused to anger, but his first faceful of rain worsens his bad disposition.

ROGER

Fine! (Dammit.) You don't have to tell me. Why bother?

Another MUSICIAN follows, carrying a small amplifier.

This is FESS. Solid and fit, a good 35 years old. His intense face is captivating, his dark eyes registering determination mixed with discomfort.

FESS

Look, Rog, there's nothing to tell. It's just time to do something else, that's all.

They load the equipment into the back of a van. The music, the rain, and their conversation all roll through...

F4G7Z INT. WORKING-CLASS TAVERN F4G7Z

A large bearded BOUNCER cajoles the eclectic crowd to leave: blue collar, white collar, students, toughs, hipsters, punks, and a smattering of artsy types.

BARMAIDS clear the heavily laden tables. Smoke and crowd NOISE fill the room.

PAI27

EXT. ALLEY

PAI27

Fess and Roger continue moving equipment.

ROGER

Oh, bullshit. Then tell me, Fess,  
why did you wait 'til now to spill  
the news?

FESS

I just... didn't want to ruin the  
night. I didn't want our last set  
together to be like this damn  
conversation. You know?

ROGER

Oh, how considerate. You're such a  
fucking gentleman.

FESS

Listen. Rog. It's not like I'm  
shutting the door forever. I  
mean... who knows, maybe someday...

ROGER

Bullshit, bullshit, bullshit. Just  
help me load the fucking equipment  
and we'll split this shit up  
tomorrow.

LGNTH

INT. WORKING-CLASS TAVERN

LGNTH

Fess mops his wet head with a bar towel. A happily tanked  
fellow and a tousled young woman approach, both hot from  
dancing.

TIPSY FEMALE

Hey, that was great!

WOOZY MALE

Yeah, you guys were cookin'!

FESS

Thanks.

He notices Roger watching and backs away sheepishly.

FESS (CONT'D)

(softly)  
Thanks.

Roger approaches.

ROGER

Ok, Fess, I gotta know. You say  
it's time for something else.  
Something else like what?

FESS

Like I don't know what else.  
Just... not this.

The bouncer lifts a half-conscious BAR PATRON by the  
collar and pushes him toward the EXIT.

FESS (CONT'D)

...Not this.

SZ2RQ

EXT. ALLEY

SZ2RQ

Fess stops working to watch Roger with genuine concern.  
Lingering in the light of a street lamp, Fess appears to  
be a cross between a beatnik, a rodeo rider and the guy  
who fixed your car last week.

He brings to mind every soulful, driven musician from  
Guthrie to Springsteen.

FESS

Want to... go for coffee or  
something?... How about the rest  
of the guys?

ROGER

The rest of the guys... can help  
me finish. You go on for coffee if  
you want. Who cares.

FESS

Yeah, well, ok. You know, I tried  
to make this easy. It's not like...  
Aww... I tried. I'll see ya.

Fess walks off. Roger watches him fade into the night.

ROGER

(to himself)  
Yeah. Shit. See ya.

3I9OZ

INT. CLUTTERED BEDROOM - MORNING

3I9OZ

Fess tosses in a rumped bed.

E3C4K FLASH OF A DREAM IMAGE: INT. CLUB - NIGHT E3C4K

A cluster of PEOPLE in a bar. One tall straggly-haired FELLOW has his back turned.

C93YK INT. CLUTTERED BEDROOM C93YK

Fess tosses.

871ZS DREAM IMAGE - CONTINUED 871ZS

The Fellow suddenly turns, revealing a nightmarish FACE, painted white with black lips and eye sockets, a death mask with a maniacal expression.

E7HCQ INT. CLUTTERED BEDROOM E7HCQ

Fess lurches awake as if he's heard something. A CRASH echoes from somewhere and he winces. He shakes off the dream and plods to the window, kicking clothes and bedsheets as he goes.

He parts the curtains, then closes them quickly against the sunlight.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.C.)

You son of a bitch!

Opening the curtains once more, Fess peeks into a window across a narrow alley. A scruffy MAN in a dingy house yells and waves his arms. Fess closes the curtains.

FESS

(mutters)

Same old shit.

30T0K INT. LIVING ROOM 30T0K

Fess saunters through an old house with old furniture. He stops at the bathroom door before opening it. A FLYER is tacked to it. He grunts, flicks it with a finger, then closes the door behind him. The SOUND of running water.

The closed door reveals the flyer: "True CONFESSions, New Years 1984. Top Hat. \$2 cover."

F2CL7

EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

F2CL7

Fess yawns in the bright sunshine falling on an old woodframe house in a run-down part of a small western town. He notices someone on his neighbors' porch.

FESS

Sherry?

A large, almost beautiful young woman shields her eyes against the midday sun.

SHERRY

Yes? Oh! How ya doin', Fess?

FESS

Great, great! What the heck are you doing here?

They both walk toward the edge of their respective porches and converse across the gap.

SHERRY

Dee Dee and I are staying here at Rob and Jessie's. You know them, don't you?

FESS

(sudden interest)  
Dee Dee?! Uh, yeah, yeah sure, I know them... Dee Dee's here, huh?

SHERRY

Yeah. We're just in town for a couple of weeks.

Sherry nods toward the front door.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

It's kinda weird here right now, though.

FESS

Yeah, tell me about it. Listen... uh... you guys can stay here if you want. I've got an extra room.

SHERRY

Oh. Wow. Well. I don't think these guys would mind at all if we split. Let me ask Dee Dee. She took a walk, to... get out, you know.

FESS

Yeah, OK. You guys are welcome,  
really. It'd be fun.

SHERRY

OK.

(perks up)

OK! See ya.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

MD9CX

INT. FESS' HOUSE - DAY

MD9CX

Fess rushes about, excitedly straightening up the house  
and himself.

- He throws dirty dishes into the sink.

- He throws a spoonful of instant coffee into a cup.

- He checks himself in the mirror and heads toward the  
bathroom, gulping coffee as he goes.

MUSIC UP: "Love on the Wing" (Jesse Colin Young).

- Fess, now shaved, drinks coffee and watches the front  
door, waiting.

- Fess strums a guitar... still waiting.

S536Y

EXT. PORCH - LATE AFTERNOON

S536Y

Fess looks toward a PARK across the street. From HIS POV,  
the park dissolves into...

FLASHBACK:

AYLOY

EXT. PARK - DAY

AYLOY

MUSIC continues over a short soundless scene.

MEN and WOMEN in their 20s surround picnic tables,  
enjoying a sunny day with food and guitars. Fess sees a  
WOMAN with a deeply intriguing face at another table.

She sees him too, and they hold each other's gaze for a  
long beat. Suddenly her arm is taken by a laughing man  
and she is dragged away.

She glances back and they steal one more fleeting look at each other, a look that seems FROZEN in time.

END FLASHBACK

VYXKS INT. FESS' HOUSE - DAY VYXKS

Fess sees a SHADOW move onto the front door screen. He watches in anticipation. The shadow doesn't move.

He opens the door and his eyes meet Dee Dee's. She is the woman from the park. They hold each other's eyes across a chasm of years, decades, eons.

He steps outside.

Y4MX7 EXT. PORCH Y4MX7

DEE DEE

Hi.

Dee Dee's long, curly hair shines in the fading light. She seems to inhabit a cosmopolitan world of outré art and culture. Rather than being IN it, she IS it and brings it with her wherever she goes.

Seeing Fess with Dee Dee, his "hometown" look no longer seems accidental. It is a look he has cultivated to express himself, as valid as Dee Dee's colorful ensemble.

They gradually find their voices.

FESS

Hi. I know you didn't come back to town to see me, but...

DEE DEE

I'm sure we would have run into each other. We did. Right away, in fact... Almost.

FESS

I didn't mind waiting.

Fess pauses to let his double-meaning sink in.

FESS (CONT'D)

So... uh... tell me, where've you been keeping yourself? What about that sweetheart I heard you had?



DEE DEE  
(teasing playfully)  
Oh, so you heard I had a  
sweetheart, eh?

FESS  
I keep my ears open.

DEE DEE  
I'm not sure even where he is now.  
I've been staying with Sherry at  
our folks' house. Giving lessons.  
Trying to save up a few bucks.

FESS  
Not playing?

DEE DEE  
No. Not for some time. (sigh) It  
may be a while before I get back  
on the stage again. It got to be  
too much... the crowds.

FESS  
Yeah. I remember what it was like  
for you all the time. All the guys.

DEE DEE  
Yeah.

She looks down and in close up we see just how beautiful  
she is, despite her sudden discomfort.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)  
One guy in particular for a while  
there.

QDWVS FLASH OF A MEMORY: QDWVS

The same macabre skeletal FACE Fess saw upon waking!

NV2DU EXT. PORCH - BACK TO THE PRESENT NV2DU

FESS  
You're ok, though... Nothing...  
happened?

Dee shakes her head "no."

FESS (CONT'D)  
It wasn't the guy you were seeing,  
was it?

DEE DEE

No, no, not him. Just some weirdo.  
Like the others, just... weirder.

Dee Dee fidgets and smiles unconvincingly.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

I'm ok. So... How about your band?

FESS

The Confessions? Just broke up last  
night. I think I made an enemy out  
of Roger. Maybe the others, too.  
Well look, get your stuff and bring  
it over. Both of you.

DEE DEE

Ok. See you in a minute.

Dee Dee gives Fess a brief kiss before leaving. Fess  
watches her walk in the late afternoon shadows. Her walk  
is eminently watchable and Fess savors the moment.

SFY94

EXT. FESS' HOUSE - SUNSET

SFY94

Fess sits on his front porch, strumming his guitar and  
wearing a smile that's about to break into a laugh. Dee  
Dee bursts out of the front door.

DEE DEE

OK, that's everything. Sherry's  
upstairs unpacking.

She smells the evening air.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

It's beautiful out. That rain...

FESS

Yeah. How about a walk?

Dee Dee nods in agreement.

4D4RA

EXT. PARK - TWILIGHT

4D4RA

Fess and Dee Dee walk slowly in the darkening evening,  
arms around each other.

FESS

Dee Dee, I have to tell you... I'm surprised you're even talking to me right now. I thought I'd totally blown it with you.

DEE DEE

You mean after standing me up that time?

FESS

Well, it wasn't exactly a date.

DEE DEE

No, it was a jam session. Even worse! We were counting on you. What happened?

FESS

I chickened out.

DEE DEE

You?

FESS

Yeah me. (beat) I was afraid.

DEE DEE

What?

FESS

I was afraid of losing myself in you instead of in the music.

DEE DEE

Fess...

Fess stops walking and faces Dee Dee.

FESS

It's true.

DEE DEE

Truth... It kinda scared me too.

She moves close to him.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Fess... I feel kind of like... like I've come back home. Why didn't we ever hold each other like this before? Where were you?

FESS

I was here.

They kiss.

DEE DEE

I wish I'd really known you,  
before.

FESS

Maybe we'll... really get to know  
each other now. If we... have  
time?

Dee Dee doesn't have the answer to Fess' question.

They kiss again. She yawns.

DEE DEE

I'm sorry. Falling asleep. Long  
couple of days.

FESS

So I see. This way.

Fess heads Dee Dee back toward home. She stops him.

DEE DEE

Fess. I do need to sleep. I hardly  
got any for two, three nights.

FESS

I know. I won't...

He stops to make sure she gets his meaning, then cocks  
his head in the direction of home.

FESS (CONT'D)

Come on.

ZIS2J

EXT. FESS' HOUSE - NIGHT

ZIS2J

As Fess and Dee Dee approach the house, they see a van  
parked out front and someone on the porch. It's ROGER.

FESS

Rog!

ROGER

Say, Fess. I think you know why  
I'm here.

FESS

I can guess.

(to Dee Dee)

Go 'head in. I'll be in in a minute.

Dee Dee nods OK and goes inside.

ROGER

You know, I considered bringing the whole band here to beat the living piss out of you.

FESS

Come on...

ROGER

Well, how the fuck would you feel if someone took everything you've been working on for three years, three fucking years, and just threw it away.

FESS

Look, Roger, I only just decided myself. I told you guys practically right away. C'mon, let's get this stuff unloaded.

Fess and Roger go back and forth between the van and the porch, unloading equipment as they talk.

ROGER

Fess, you don't get it. It's just... not fair. You can't decide something like that at the drop of a hat. 'Hey, I'm going to quit the band,' like it's no big deal.

FESS

Who says it's no big deal?

ROGER

It would be different if it were me or one of the other guys. We could be replaced, no sweat. There's lots of musicians who'd love to play in your band.

FESS

My band? Look, we talked about this. It's *our* band, not *my* band.

ROGER

Come off it, Fess. You are the band. You're the guy with the music.

FESS

I told you guys you're welcome to use my material.

ROGER

It's not that we don't have the chops. But it's magic with you, Fess. Everybody knows it. I don't have that. None of us do. Without you...

FESS

Look. Let me tell you where I'm at.

Fess leans against the side of the van. Roger climbs inside the van and moves stuff around as he listens.

FESS (CONT'D)

I ran into this cat, about sixty years old... a country musician. He'd been playing the club circuit forever. That's all he did. He'd hoped for more, but he ended up just traveling to the same places, playing the same stuff to the same crowds... Except the crowds stayed the same and he got older. Just getting all boozed out and wasted, year after year.

Fess reaches into the van to move something.

FESS (CONT'D)

He was a mess, Rog. I finally realized I was doing the same thing as him. And if I keep it up, I'll end up just like him. I couldn't hack living the rest of my life like that.

Roger undoes what Fess just did.

ROGER

Yeah, well did it occur to you that maybe the guy just sucked and that's why he went nowhere?

FESS

No, he was good.

ROGER

Well... fear of success then.

Fess stops short, looking uncomfortable.

FESS

Maybe.

Roger stops working.

ROGER

Hm. Well, guess that's all the stuff that's yours.

Roger closes up the van and they walk back to the porch.

FESS

So that's the story, Roger. So go ahead and use my material. God knows I ain't gonna.

ROGER

Yeah, yeah, sure, sure. Hey... Was that Dee Dee just now or was I hallucinating?

FESS

Yeah, it's Dee Dee.

ROGER

Jeez, Fess. Well, I guess that explains everything. You're running off to start a new band with Dee Dee.

FESS

No.

ROGER

Well, then, just running off with Dee Dee. Hey, I would.

FESS

No, she... just showed up. I'd invite you in, but...

ROGER

No need to explain. I may be dumb but I ain't stupid. I better get going. Good luck, hey?

FESS

Yeah, thanks... You, too.

ROGER

Oh, and one more thing I meant to say... Just go fuck yourself, okay?

Roger leaves; Fess goes back inside.

OOG1W

INT. FESS' HOUSE - NIGHT

OOG1W

Fess finds Dee Dee asleep in the dark on a couch. He looks at her for a moment then gently takes her hands and pulls her to her feet.

FESS

Come on. It's bedtime.

Dee Dee wakes with a start and looks at Fess fearfully until her sleepy eyes can focus and recognize his face.

DEE DEE

(Groggy and troubled)

Mm. I was dreaming... about him. That guy. That death guy. That's what he looks like. Like... death. I'm so glad it's you.

She throws her arms around him.

FESS

It's all right. It's all right.

DEE DEE

I thought I'd be over that by now. It was four-five years ago, when I was with the Billies. Last time I played rock.

FESS

Understandable. Come on.

He leads her to the bedroom. She stumbles along, half asleep.

LHIGN

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

LHIGN

Fess and Dee Dee are asleep on opposite sides of the bed. Golden light from the window washes across them and illuminates the one white sheet that covers them.

Fess opens his eyes and sees Dee Dee. MUSIC UP: "Come Softly Darling" (Fleetwoods).



He reaches out and softly touches her cheek. Her eyes open. She smiles softly. They move closer and kiss once testingly. Then again longer and more deeply.

They enfold each other passionately, dizzily, fulfilling the potential of the preceding night, a potential built by years of tentative closeness and missed opportunities.

CIMCN

EXT. FESS' BACK YARD - DAY

CIMCN

Fess sits on a wooden picnic table strumming his guitar. Dee Dee sits on a cheap lawn chair, reading. Sherry pokes around in an overgrown vegetable garden.

FESS

This is great. I've had my own personal gardener for three days now.

SHERRY

Well, I've never had a garden of my own. It's fun.

FESS

You guys up for that party out at Bob's place tonight?

Dee Dee smiles and nods yes. PHONE RINGS. Fess runs to the back door and reaches for the phone hanging just inside. He paces in and out of the door as he speaks.

FESS (CONT'D)

Hello? Hey, Wyatt! Long time! Me? I'm being brutally attacked by my wasted past... Well, my present sucks, I've got no future, so if anything's gonna help me, it's got to be the past.

(looks at Dee Dee)

No... Funny you should ask. I just left that band.

068RK

INT. WYATT'S OFFICE - DAY

068RK

WYATT, a neat, trim fellow with long, flowing blonde hair, a trendy dresser, sits feet up on his desk, phone in hand, with a great view of the New York City skyline.

WYATT

Perfect! I got a little proposition for ya... No, not studio work.

(MORE)

WYATT (CONT'D)

You've told me a million times you won't move to New York no matter how busy I can keep you. But I'm doing a bit more than that now.

Q8846      PHONE CONVERSATION - INTERCUT: WYATT'S OFFICE/FESS' HOUSE

FESS

No kidding. An A&R Man? Artists and repertoire... What an "artist" you are.

(to Dee Dee, hand  
over mouthpiece)

A drummer I used to play with.

(to Wyatt again)

So what do you want from me?

WYATT

A band, Fess, a band. Not a recording band. A show band. Check it out. We just got done producing this new band. Real garbage, but the guys upstairs are convinced it's pure formula success. They bet a lot of our bottom line for 1985 on them.

Wyatt gets up and paces about, fondling a trophy.

WYATT (CONT'D)

The music is real head-banger metal stuff. Full smoke and costume wars. We just did a cattle call for rock-star types and blammo. You may have heard the release: "Eat Your Heart" by the Evil Deed?... Yeah, I know, I know. Well, seems they, that is to say we, need an opening act for a twelve-week tour.

FESS

You're kidding. But I don't even have a band. When? Four weeks!?! You're out of your mind!

WYATT

Look, Fess. It'll be easy. They don't want a band so good they'll show up these Evil Deed idiots. No one with a name, either. The company's just hoping for one successful tour and that's it.

(MORE)

WYATT (CONT'D)

Evil Deed disappears into the  
annals of bad rock history.

FESS

Oh, I get it. You want a bad  
opener, so you call me.

WYATT

No, I want a good band quick, so I  
call you. Between the two of us,  
we can come up with a group and  
enough material in no time. I'll  
play drums and you'll be the front  
man. But I need you to take the  
lead, Fess.

Wyatt puts down the trophy.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Nobody can focus a thrown-together  
bunch of musicians like you can.

FESS

I don't know, bud...

WYATT

C'mon. I just talked them into  
this because we didn't have enough  
material for a solo concert, but  
we didn't have an opener, either.

Wyatt looks out at the view of the city.

WYATT (CONT'D)

I thought it would be a kick. You  
got anything else cooking right  
now?

FESS

(looks at Dee Dee)  
Well, kind of, but not really.  
Look, can I... think about it?

WYATT

Yeah, sure. I don't want to  
pressure you... I just want you to  
do it. Can you let me know  
tomorrow?

O4R4F

INT. FESS' HOUSE - DAY

O4R4F

FESS

Umm... Tuesday. I'll give you an answer Tuesday. Ok. See ya.

Fess hangs up and frenetically bounces around the yard in excitement and confusion.

DEE DEE

What was that?

FESS

Umm... Uhh... Shit. Can I tell you on the way out of town? Damn. We should be getting ready. It's a ways out there. Need some gas. Uhh... Gotta check the tires, too. Damn.

DEE DEE

Whoa, hey, slow down. Whatever it is, relax... tell me about it on the way.

FESS

OK. OK... Thanks.

He kisses her and smiles broadly.

FESS (CONT'D)

This is gonna blow your mind.

He scratches his head uncertainly.

FESS (CONT'D)

I think.

V456C

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF FESS' HOUSE - DAY

V456C

Dee Dee and Fess lean against his car.

DEE DEE

I'm glad Sherry is having fun. You know, she never knew about us.

FESS

I never knew about us. I thought it was just... all in my head.

DEE DEE

We had too many people between us... We did kiss once.

FESS

I remember.

A COUPLE walks by, stealing glances at Fess and Dee Dee. The couple whisper to each other openly after passing. Dee Dee sees Fess is lost in thought.

DEE DEE

You're thinking about that call you got today.

Sherry emerges from the house.

FESS

Yeah. Hey, here's Sherry. Let's go.

F2EQW

INT. CAR - DAY - TRAVELING

F2EQW

Dee Dee and Fess in the front seat, Sherry in back.

DEE DEE

Jesus, Fess. I can't believe the timing.

FESS

I know. I swore to Roger I wasn't starting a new band.

DEE DEE

It's not like you planned this. Besides, why don't you just go with the band you've got?

FESS

No. I've been trying to convince Roger and the guys they can go on without me.

(thinking aloud)

It's only twelve weeks.

DEE DEE

...Is it what you want?

FESS

It's... what everybody wants, isn't it?

JQ77I

EXT HILLSIDE ROAD - SUNSET - TRAVELING

JQ77I

They drive up a dirt road that disappears into the deep woods.

5840D EXT. WOODS - NIGHT 5840D

They stop in a dirt parking area and get out of the car. MUSIC and party SOUNDS from a large secluded HOUSE echo into the dark stillness.

XHIGG INT. PARTY - NIGHT XHIGG

Fess and Dee Dee snake through crowds of trendy people drinking and smoking. An obscure old doo-wop tune is playing, "Just One Look" (Doris Troy). People take notice of them as they pass.

DEE DEE

We must seem to go well together.

Fess smiles.

H1RAD INT. DEN H1RAD

They find Sherry, BOB and BECKY, an artistic-looking couple, drinks in hand and in a party way.

BOB

Ah, there you are! Fess, you know  
Becky, don't you?

FESS

BECKY

(simultaneously)

No...

Yes.

Becky stands and they shake, both embarrassed.

BOB

Sure you know Becky, from her  
paintings.

FESS

Oh, right, *that* Becky! I saw some  
of your portraits. You're selling  
them as posters, right?

BECKY

Well, I'm trying. I did the John  
Lennon one first figuring it would  
sell, but...

FESS

Who else have you done?

BECKY

Oh, Buddy Holly. Janis Joplin.  
Jimi Hendrix.

Dee Dee chuckles.

SHERRY

You know, people who all have a  
certain something in common.

Becky clucks.

DEE DEE

It's a copyright thing, right? No  
royalties for dead people?

BECKY

No, that's not it.

FESS

Well, they *do* have more in common  
than being dead.

SHERRY

C'mon. Their music wasn't the  
same.

FESS

Sure, but they were all original,  
innovative. Like at the museum,  
there's so many different artists -  
Rembrandt, Picasso, Warhol.

BOB

You put Picasso in the same  
category as Rembrandt?

FESS

No, that's just the point.

A sloppy PARTY-GOER offers drinks. Fess shoos him away.

FESS (CONT'D)

They were all amazing artists,  
they just expressed themselves  
differently.

BECKY

Like they were all tapping into  
the same Muse, but in different  
times and places.

Party-goer, who never left, sidles back into the group to  
listen in as the conversation becomes more animated.

DEE DEE  
You mean like, all from the same  
creative gene pool, but in  
different places -

BECKY  
- different circumstances -

FESS  
- still brothers and sisters -

DEE DEE  
- like Children of the Muse -

BOB  
- living in foster homes like...  
like a bunch of orphans.

OTHER party-goers move in to listen.

SHERRY  
Orphans! Orphans of art -

DEE DEE  
- orphans of music.

FESS  
- orphans of trends, and styles.

DEE DEE  
- orphans of life.

Becky indicates the current assemblage.

BECKY  
Orphans of the world!

Bob offers a toast.

BOB  
Ha! Orphans of the world unite!

All toast and dissolve in laughter.

3P16X

INT. PARTY - MAIN ROOM

3P16X

MUSIC - "When You Dance" (Leroy Kirkland) - NOISE and  
LAUGHTER fill a colorful, spacious room. Fess and Dee Dee  
draw attention as they enter.

DANCING COUPLE  
(to Fess and Dee Dee)  
Come on, you guys.



Fess and Dee Dee hit the dance floor. They lip-sync the lyrics as they circle each other, two planets orbiting in mutual gravitation, as a crowd watches.

The MUSIC ends and Fess and Dee Dee run outside, laughing, to cheers and applause.

437NC

EXT. PATIO - NIGHT

437NC

They rush to the patio railing, laughing and hugging. It's a beautiful night.

FESS

Not bad. You should add that to your repertoire.

DEE DEE

You should.

They quiet their laughter and hold each other's gaze closely for a long moment.

FESS

Maybe we should.

DEE DEE

(smirks)  
Oh, should we...

He pulls her closer.

FESS

Orphans of the world unite.

DEE DEE

I don't feel very orphan-like right now.

She kisses him sweetly.

FESS

Did you bring your flute?

DEE DEE

Of course.

FESS

What do you say?

DEE DEE

Just what are you thinking?

FESS

It could be fun.

DEE DEE

Fess... I haven't played rock in a long time. You want to play jazz?

FESS

We can play what we want. With who we want.

DEE DEE

Jazz?

FESS

Well... Let's just get some folks together and see what happens. I'll pick one, you pick one and Wyatt picks one. A six-piece band. Perfect!

DEE DEE

What will we play? How will we sound? It's crazy!

FESS

Sure it is, but Wyatt knew that before he called. He knows what he's getting into.

DEE DEE

But do we?

FESS

(pause)  
...I do.

Fess looks at her longingly. She feels it, too. A long, passionate kiss.

DEE DEE

Are we going to *be* together... or *play* together?

FESS

What's the difference? We're doing both right now. Can you tell where the love ends and the music starts?

DEE DEE

(softly)  
Or where the music ends and the love starts?

Dee Dee shakes her head "no" with quivering lips, looking at him with eyes that are about to swell with tears. Then she nods "yes" and buries her head smiling in his shoulder.

SMASH CUT TO:

MM38S EXT. AIRPORT - NIGHT MM38S

Jumbo JET takes off NOISILY, directly overhead and into the blackness of night.

MUSIC UP over jet noise: "Well Respected Man About Town" (Kinks) and continues through...

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

7KTGF - INT. JFK AIRPORT - TRAVELING 7KTGF

Fess with baggage hustling through the crowd.

DS015 - EXT. AIRPORT CAB STAND DS015

Fess hops in a cab.

OK79E - EXT. HIGHWAY APPROACHING NYC - SUNRISE OK79E

Establishing shots of the CITY from Fess' POV, buildings reflecting the morning sun.

QLU8A - EXT. MIDTOWN APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING QLU8A

DOORMAN helps Fess with his bag. They talk briefly MOS and Doorman hands Fess a set of keys as they enter.

CVEF5 - INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - DAY CVEF5

Fess fumbles with keys, opens the door and enters a trendy apartment with a view.

YOVEH - INT. BEDROOM - DAY YOVEH

He throws his bag on the bed, opens it, pulls out a nice tweed sport jacket and stops to consider it for a moment.

YM8Z7 - INT. BATHROOM - DAY

YM8Z7

Fess adjusts his tie in the mirror, trying to look comfortable in attire that he just doesn't feel comfortable in. He wets his hands in the full sink and his TIE flops right in.

FESS

Shit!

He grabs a towel and dashes out.

P6APF - INT. OFFICE BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

P6APF

Fess, with jacket, SANS TIE, watches the floor indicator tick up, up, up.

DOOR opens, BELL rings, MUSIC OUT and Wyatt, richly dressed, is standing outside the open elevator door. The two jump into a hug.

V8671 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

V8671

Fess and Wyatt walk briskly through a well-appointed office. Gold and Platinum Record plaques and awards are visible everywhere.

FESS

So what's the scoop, "dude"?

WYATT

The scoop is, everything's coool, man. The Music Meister has it all under control.

FESS

Well, that's good. The Western World sleeps safely tonight.

WYATT

How was the flight?

FESS

I don't remember a thing. So where are we going?

WYATT

We are going... to the offices of the high and mighty. Usually more high than mighty.

Wyatt opens a large door and beckons Fess to enter.

EH395

INT. RECEPTION AREA

EH395

An attractive older RECEPTIONIST welcomes Wyatt and gives Fess an admiring eye.

HTNRI

INT. LARGE OFFICE

HTNRI

Execs LANCE and LEE sit behind an oversized desk, both too old for their huge masses of hair and heavy metal attire. They could be twins.

Fess, in his business attire, gives Wyatt a "why didn't you tell me?" look. He and the execs eye each other with suspicion.

LANCE

So. Wyatt has arrived with our savior.

LEE

You mean our sacrificial lamb, bro.

Both laugh obnoxiously.

WYATT

Gentlemen, this is Fess. Fess, Lance... and Lee.

FESS

Gents.

Lance waves off Fess' attempt to shake.

LANCE

Sit, dude.

LEE

You don't look very West Coast, man.

FESS

Well, I, uh, thought you'd be corporate executive types, so I thought I'd... uhh...

LANCE

Oooo. I like a guy who tries to "fit in." We were expecting more of a cowboy type. Like Fess Parker from the old TV shows.

FESS

No, it's Fess, short for Orpheus.  
Like from the old Greek  
mythologies.

LEE

Well, here, man. Have a wake-up.

Lee pushes cocaine on a mirror toward Fess.

FESS

No, thanks. I've already had my  
allotment for this week.

LEE

Yeah? Like on the plane this  
morning?

FESS

No... In 1972.

Wyatt smothers a chuckle but Fess' meaning appears to be  
lost on Lance and Lee.

LANCE

Is that the last time you played?

Fess smiles thinly and looks toward Wyatt.

WYATT

Look, I've filled you in on Fess.  
He's our guy, believe me.

Lee comes around the desk and puts his hand weightily on  
Wyatt's shoulder.

LEE

He doesn't look like *our* guy,  
Wyatt. But if he's *your* guy,  
that's good enough for me. What do  
you say, Lance, baby?

LANCE

Well... Wyatt's made a lot of  
dough for this company. He's  
always got us the right talent for  
the right price.

WYATT

Guys, Fess and I can put together  
a full hour of material, or more,  
in two weeks flat. With four  
weeks, who knows what we can do.

LANCE

Don't get ahead of yourself, my man. You have a budget. How's it going down?

Wyatt rises and paces, Lee sits on the corner of a desk.

WYATT

We gather in Fess' town. A little eight-track studio ... Cheap hotel rates... We'll be ready for the first date, no problem.

LANCE

Talent?

WYATT

Fess, me, Timmy Jones... you remember T.J. He did those killer leads on the Swannie CD?

LEE

Yeah, I dig T.J. He's our kind of guy.

Fess covertly sneers at Wyatt.

WYATT

And, Fess has a couple people lined up.

FESS

Three.

Lee's hands are on Fess' shoulders now.

LEE

Fess... just remember this. We don't care if you suck. Just so long as you don't suck a really big one.

Fess shows a strained toothy grin at such polished grace.

FADE TO:

95YKO

INT. RECORDING STUDIO SOUND BOOTH - DAY

95YKO

Sherry and Bob stand behind a recording engineer, JOEY, watching through the glass partition as the studio fills with musicians: Fess, Dee Dee, Wyatt, T.J., MILT and HAP.

Joey fiddles with controls and makes notes. We can't hear it, but we can see activity and laughter in the studio as the musicians climb around instruments and stools.

JOEY

Do you know who all these people are? More important, do *they* know who they are?

BOB

We just met them last night. The guy at the keyboards is Milt. One of Dee Dee's gang.

JOEY

A jazz musician, eh?

BOB

Yeah. You probably know Hap. He used to play bass with Fess?

JOEY

Whoa! He looks different. And, on drums, ladies and gentlemen... ?

BOB

That's Wyatt, the guy who put this whole gig together. And that's his guitar player, T.J.

SHERRY

You gonna tape this?

JOEY

Nah. I'm just here to simulate "big concert sound."

IYGC4

INT. STUDIO

IYGC4

We get a good look at each musician in turn as they talk and tune up.

HAP... Hippie-ish, friendly, but not talkative.

T.J... Former guitar-hero heartthrob of a popular band.

MILT... The distinguished gentleman of the group, a mellow black man with close-cropped hair.

T.J.

(to Hap)

Hey, I see you're playing a five-string bass.



HAP

(showing it off)

Yeah. I dig playing those lower notes without having to detune my E string and play out of position.

T.J.

All right.

MILT

(to Wyatt, sitting at a trap set)

Hey, you going to make do with this funky set?

WYATT

Yeah, it'll do for rehearsals, but I've got a pretty cool trigger set I'll be using on tour. Octopads... got some great drum samples.

MILT

Sounds good, man. I'll be happy when my MIDI set-up gets here. This DK-7's okay for now, but... I'll miss my custom patches.

WYATT

Yeah? How many keyboards you got?

MILT

Three keyboard controllers and six modules.

Milt pantomimes walking to a beat and playing a remote keyboard.

MILT (CONT'D)

I've even got a remote keyboard controller if we want to get into doing a real show.

Wyatt and Fess laugh. Fess winks to Wyatt and to Dee Dee who is standing nearby.

FESS

Well, we're certainly going to entertain each other, if nothing else.

Hap begins to thump away softly at a walking blues beat. Wyatt picks up the beat.

Milt hits a couple of staccato chords, laughs, then a couple more and the tune comes into focus: "Green Onions" (Booker T. and the MGs).

Fess joins in with a jazzy rhythm. They play it through once, smiling broadly at what must surely be a joke, and at the top Dee Dee comes in with a perfect accompaniment.

She frames the tune in a flowing lyric and the other instruments build a driving energy underneath. Fess motions to the booth for more volume. He gets it.

Suddenly T.J. comes in with a long, searing, impeccably timed guitar tone, leading into a dazzling rock-style solo that is graceful, tasteful and embellishes the tune.

Everyone is flying high, barely able to believe what is happening.

M3YLT

INT. SOUND BOOTH

M3YLT

JOEY

Shit. I'd give my left nut to have this on tape.

SHERRY

Why don't you?

JOEY

Was not prepared for this.

BOB

Damn.

JOEY

Who knew?

(then to himself)

This is going to be a wild couple of weeks.

IAOAO

INT. STUDIO

IAOAO

Under Fess' direction, they bring the tune to a perfect close and, after the briefest moment of echoing SILENCE, all hoot and laugh hysterically. Fess and Dee Dee hug.

QEC9Y

EXT. FRONT OF CLUB - NIGHT

QEC9Y

A LINE of people wait to get into the club - the same club we saw in the first scene. Roger and ALEX, similar in appearance to Roger, approach the door.

ROGER

Shit. I can't believe this. Going to see Fess play the same club where we were the house band for three fucking years.

ALEX

We still are the house band.

ROGER

Not tonight we're not.

They stop and look up at the MARQUEE. It reads "THE ORPHANS".

ROGER (CONT'D)

What a stupid name. What's it mean?

ALEX

Something Bob Greenwood came up with.

ROGER

(with disdain)

The artist?

From inside the club we hear what sounds like "She Loves You" (Beatles). Roger and Alex cut in front of IRRITATED PEOPLE in line and the DOORMAN sees them.

DOORMAN

Hey, you guys can go on in.

ALEX

Thanks.

ROGER

Hey, what's this? You guys playing Beatles on the sound system now?

The doorman just laughs.

J2VZO

INT. CLUB

J2VZO

Alex and Roger make their way through the crowd. When they see the STAGE, they see it is the ORPHANS who are playing She Loves You. Roger can't believe it.

Fess has the earthy voice of a folksinger. On "yeah, yeah, yeah" and "oooooo", Dee Dee hits it with her flute. The band closes to APPLAUSE.

FESS

(into mike)

Hey, thanks for coming. Not sure we have enough material for a whole night of this but, no problem... We can fake it.

Fess winks to the audience.

FESS (CONT'D)

Back in a few.

He unstraps his guitar and the LIGHTS come up a bit. Roger and Alex take a seat near the dance floor.

Fess sees them and takes Dee Dee to join them.

FESS (CONT'D)

Hey, guys. Glad you could make it.

ROGER

(with sarcasm)

How could we pass up your one and only appearance in town? I'm surprised this cheesy club could afford a big-name act like you.

FESS

Hey, this wasn't my idea. Wyatt insisted on trying it out with a live audience before we hit the road.

ROGER

(feigned  
indifference)

I don't mind. I wouldn't have had anything else to do tonight. Would you, Alex?

ALEX

Yeah... I would, actually.

They are interrupted by Hap and Milt, who seem to be forming a mutual admiration society.

HAP

Hey, you guys, Milt came up with this great shtick.

MILT

It was Hap's idea. You better come check it out.

DEE DEE  
OK, we'll be right there.

Hap and Milt exit.

ALEX  
So what's with the old Beatles  
shit?

FESS  
Simple. It ain't shit... Look at  
us. Six musicians with six  
different sets of material. We  
can't play some of mine, some of  
yours... it would end up like  
garbage. So we play stuff  
everybody knows. But we play it  
*new.*

DEE DEE  
(conspiratorially)  
Deviantly simple, no?

Roger looks enviously at the stage and nods slowly.

ROGER  
Yeah. New.

A drum roll and "YO!" come from the stage. Fess and Dee  
Dee stand.

FESS  
Gotta go.

Alex and Roger silently watch them go.

O9QMS

EXT. FRONT OF CLUB - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

O9QMS

A BUS pulls up and a small crowd of SMOKERS turns to look  
as the air brakes HISS and the engine shuts down.

The bus DOOR opens.

A large grizzly bear of a man emerges, carrying a  
clipboard. He has the stony demeanor of a boxer or biker.

He strides purposefully toward the door and the crowd  
parts. The doorman allows him to enter unquestioned.

KOZOH

INT. CLUB

KOZOH

The man walks toward the stage, head well above the crowd. Wyatt sees him and calls out:

WYATT

Bear! Hey, Bear!

Wyatt jumps down from the stage, rushes to greet him and drags him to the foot of the stage.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Hey, guys! Fess! This is Bear. The best bus driver in the fifty states and Canada.

BEAR

Don't forget Mexico.

WYATT

Who could forget Mexico? I had to pull some major strings to get this guy.

BEAR

(checks clipboard)

We leave Tuesday morning, six a.m.

A round of griping from the band members. Wyatt jumps back onto the stage and kneels at the edge of it.

WYATT

Six a.m. You got it. Taking us home tonight?

BEAR

Of course.

WYATT

Good deal. Hey, did they get a chance to put our name on the bus?

BEAR

For a one-shot tour? Not likely.

WYATT

Damn.

O2V6Z

EXT. FESS' FRONT PORCH - DAY

O2V6Z

Fess, Dee Dee, Sherry, Wyatt and Bear sit with coffee and breakfast plates. The BUS sits at the curb.

A slow, quiet moment gazing at the blank expanse of the side of the bus, then:

BEAR

I think I'll go gas up the bus.  
Check the fluid levels and shit.

WYATT

Hey, let me go with you. I want to  
get used to being on the road.  
It's been a while. Wanna come  
along, you guys?

Dee Dee and Sherry shake their heads.

FESS

Naw, I have to make some  
arrangements with the house and  
stuff.

WYATT

Ok. See ya later.

Bear and Wyatt board the bus.

I2L20

EXT. SMALL TOWN SIDE STREET - DAY

I2L20

BUS rolls down the street. Through the front window we  
see Bear and Wyatt laughing MOS.

MUSIC UP: Hip Hop or Latin instrumental.

They see some KIDS spray painting an elaborate, colorful  
graffiti MURAL on a wall. Wyatt points at them excitedly  
and Bear pulls the bus over.

Wyatt jumps out and the kids scatter. He waves them back,  
pointing to their mural. They approach hesitantly. He  
talks MOS, then points at the bus. They confer then shake  
their heads "no."

Wyatt pulls out some money. The LEADER holds up three  
fingers. Then two. Wyatt holds up two, points to both  
sides of the bus. Leader shakes his head "no."

Wyatt pulls out more money. Leader nods "yes" and they  
all smile and give high fives.

BT903

EXT. FESS' FRONT PORCH - DAY

BT903

The porch is empty. The bus HORN sounds loudly.

Fess, Dee Dee and Sherry run outside, then stumble wide-eyed toward the bus. Emblazoned on its SIDE, in the colorful stylized curves of urban graffiti, are the words "THE ORPHANS."

Fess holds his head in disbelief.

DEE DEE

Oh, my god!

Dee Dee and Sherry laugh hysterically as Wyatt emerges from the bus raising his arms in victory. They all jump on him. Bear watches paternally. MUSIC OUT.

4Q139

EXT. FRONT OF FESS' HOUSE - MORNING

4Q139

A small group of friends are on hand to see the band off. Dee Dee and Sherry hug as others board the bus.

DEE DEE

I'm gonna miss you, sis.

SHERRY

Yeah, me too. Maybe I'll catch you on the tour somewhere.

DEE DEE

That would be great!

SHERRY

But Mom and Dad are looking forward to having me home. They'll be worried about you, you know.

DEE DEE

I know. That's who they are.

SHERRY

You know what I mean.

DEE DEE

Look, tell them I won't be playing anywhere near home and there's no way that creep can find me.

SHERRY

Okay, hon. Have a great time! And watch out for that Fess guy!

Dee Dee laughs and boards the bus.

Fess and Dee Dee hang out the WINDOWS of the bus as it pulls away from the curb.



BOB AND JOEY

Goodbye!

SHERRY

Love you!

SERIES OF SHOTS:

TS7VP - INT./EXT BUS - DAY- TRAVELING TS7VP

MUSIC UP: "King of the Road" (Roger Miller) The BUS rolls down the interstate. Action interspersed with scenic shots.

- The band is on board and having great fun.
- They wave to kids in passing cars.
- They make faces at Winnebagos.
- They run around picnic tables at a rest stop.
- They play cards.
- They race to be first in line at a fast food joint.
- They plop back into their seats, exhausted.

G9UBS INT. BUS - NIGHT G9UBS

MUSIC OUT and all is quiet, DEE DEE slumped asleep in her bunk.

GZG3L EXT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT GZG3L

BUS pulls to a stop. Bear emerges with a thermos and walks toward a DINER.

S8YP6 INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - NIGHT S8YP6

Bear eats at a counter amongst an assortment of midnight travelers: truckers, businessmen and one lone long-haired HIPPIE with a backpack, nursing a cup of coffee.

This is GEORGE. Other than his sad, dejected expression, George looks as if he could be on his way to Woodstock.

George sees the new customer and ambles over to stand beside him. Bear silently ignores him. George is intimidated but his need overcomes his fear.

GEORGE  
Say, man, which way you heading?

BEAR  
South.

GEORGE  
You on a bike?

BEAR  
Nope.

A pink-uniformed WAITRESS with a beehive hairdo comes to the counter. She refills Bear's cup and presents him with a freshly-filled thermos. She gives George a sour look.

GEORGE  
I've been trying to get a ride out of here since sundown.

Bear turns to look at George for the first time.

BEAR  
Can you be quiet and not wake my passengers?

GEORGE  
Sure!

BEAR  
(considers)  
Ok, but just 'til morning. Then out.

GEORGE  
All right!

George scampers to get his pack.

UL43D

INT. BUS - NIGHT

UL43D

All is STILL. Dee Dee stirs at the SOUND of the bus door opening. From HER POV, only SILHOUETTES can be seen.

George's thin, long-haired shape stretches its arms, and Dee Dee jerks to attention, shaking with fear. A STARTLING IMAGE flashes over George's silhouette:

A skeleton-thin, bare-chested man with wild black hair; his whiteface make-up and deep-set eyes transform his face into a DEATH mask.

His arms are raised threateningly, matching George's silhouette. Dee Dee gasps.

Suddenly, Bear turns on a LIGHT and Dee Dee sees George's innocent yawning face. She is relieved, but still shaken.

GEORGE  
(wide-eyed in the  
semi-darkness)  
Wow! Are you guys like... a band?

BEAR  
Shhh!

GEORGE  
Far... out!

George throws his pack NOISILY to the floor and BAND MEMBERS begin to stir.

FESS  
Hey, you guys. Look what Bear found.

They raise their heads to look.

T.J.  
Oh, my god... A relic. Is he coming with us?

BEAR  
It's OK, right?

MILT  
Has he been fumigated?

Laughter.

GEORGE  
Wow, a band... living on the road.  
Just like the old days.

Loud groans of disapproval as heads go back down to pillows. Bear turns out the light, starts the engine and George takes a seat.

Fess notices Dee Dee softly sobbing. They whisper:

FESS  
Dee Dee. Are you all right?

DEE DEE

Yes. I... the guy Bear brought in.  
I thought for a second he was that  
weirdo. The one I told you about.

FESS

That stalker?  
(riled up)  
Is this the guy?

DEE DEE

No, no, relax, it's not him.

FESS

Okay. You know, we probably don't  
have to worry. This is a whole new  
gig. There's no way he'll find  
you.

DEE DEE

Yeah. I guess you're right. (sigh)  
Good night... Fess...

FESS

Hmm?

DEE DEE

Thanks.

They clasp hands tightly across the aisle.

3KQGD

INT. BUS - MORNING

3KQGD

Over breakfast, George's excitable disposition, bright  
smile and dancing eyes are the center of attention.

GEORGE

So let me get this straight. You  
guys never played together and now  
you're going on a national tour?

FESS

Twelve weeks worth, man.

GEORGE

Whoa. Pretty strange. Where ya  
going?

WYATT

We're starting in the middle, then  
going west coast, east coast.

GEORGE  
Where's the first gig?

WYATT  
Austin. We'll be there tomorrow.

GEORGE  
Cool, I've got lots of good people  
there.

Fess and Wyatt eye each other at his having invited  
himself along.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
So like you guys must be like  
famous, right? To get a national  
tour right away like?

T.J.  
Ever hear of studio hype?

GEORGE  
Naw, not you guys. You guys are  
heavy.

HAP  
Oh, yeah, dig it, not us. We're  
heavy.

MILT  
Hey, don't interrupt. This is our  
first rave review.

GEORGE  
No, I mean it. This is more than a  
twelve-week gig, man. Something  
heavy's going down here.

DEE DEE  
(cautiously)  
What do you mean?

GEORGE  
I don't know... It's like...  
something is happening... Can't  
you feel it?

Milt gets up to leave.

MILT  
Uh oh.

WYATT  
What? What is happening?

GEORGE

I don't know...

George shrugs and displays a broad quizzical smile.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I don't know.

CTA1A EXT. STAGE DOOR OF UNIV. OF TEXAS FIELD HOUSE - DAY CTA1A

The BUS pulls up in back of the building. A CREW is busily unloading equipment from a truck, helped by STUDENTS and watched over by university POLICEMEN.

LAMNA INT. FIELD HOUSE LAMNA

Fess and Wyatt walk briskly through a beehive of activity as workers build the stage for the night's performance.

Wyatt finds a swarthy, athletic MAN with intense eyes and black hair pulled back severely into a ponytail.

WYATT

There he is. Hey, Curt!

CURT

Wyatt!

They clasp hands.

WYATT

Fess, this is Curt, our road manager.

CURT

Hey. Welcome aboard. Hold on...

Curt is interrupted by a beeper and yells to a stage hand.

CURT (CONT'D)

Bobby, get up to the light booth and give me a shout when you're at the board.

Curt waves his walkie-talkie to the helper, then returns to the conversation.

CURT (CONT'D)

Look, we're running behind. Your dressing room is back that way.

(MORE)

CURT (CONT'D)

Relax a while. Call isn't till six-thirty.

FESS

Uh, what time is our sound check?

CURT

Shit. Listen, this is our first gig this trip and we've still got some glitches to work out. We have to spend what time we have on Evil Deed.

WYATT

Whoa, wait a minute. We've been locked in a damn studio for weeks. Our only live gig was at a 200-seat club. We need some sound time, too.

CURT

Well... after your set-up's on stage... if we have time...

WYATT

We'll need a half hour at least, to go through -

A stage hand interrupts and hands Curt a clipboard. Curt scans it quickly and signs the bottom.

CURT

- Look, Wyatt, my first responsibility is Evil Deed. Your band is... not very important as far as the company's concerned.

WYATT

Hey, Curt, let's not forget who's vice president of this company. I don't want to lay a power trip on you but...

CURT

You can't. When we're on the road, I'm the captain of this ship.

WYATT

Yeah, yeah, I know, I'm the one who wrote up your damn contract, you hard ass. I just don't want the opening act to be a total embarrassment, you know?

CURT

OK, OK, we'll squeeze you in. Be ready at six.

WYATT

You got it. Six.

Curt turns to leave but Wyatt grabs his elbow.

WYATT (CONT'D)

Uhh... one more thing. We've got some guests coming. A guy named George and some friends.

CURT

Comps, Wyatt? Really?

WYATT

C'mon, Curt, they're the only fans we've got.

Curt shakes his head and throws up his hands in exasperation.

CURT

No more special favors, OK?

Curt departs and immediately begins to bark instructions to an equipment handler.

FESS

Jeez. Looks like you got demoted.

WYATT

Yeah. Worst part is, I did it myself.

XSUFT

INT. FIELD HOUSE

XSUFT

Thousands of leather-clad, long-haired YOUTHS mill NOISILY on the floor of the arena.

The LIGHTS go down and the crowd CHEERS.

ANNOUNCER (V.O)

Welcome to the University of Texas Field House and the first Lone Star appearance of... Evilll... Deeeed!

Loud cheers and rowdiness from the audience.



ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

First, a new band from the Great Northwest... The Orphans.

RESTLESS CROWD

Boooo! We want Evil Deed!

One loud, localized CHEER. It's from George and his friends, a splash of color amid the heavy metal types.

FOOTLIGHTS come up dimly to reveal FIGURES on stage.

A SPOTLIGHT falls on Fess as he lightly strums the opening chords of "Once I Was" (Tim Buckley).

His strumming gradually grows louder and more forceful, as does his voice. GROANS and HOOTS from the audience.

Dee Dee comes in on flute after "once I was a lover" to play the harmonica part and a SPOTLIGHT falls on her too.

The MUSIC becomes truly dynamic and the crowd stills. Fess' singing reveals a rawness of power and feeling.

Fess' voice and Dee Dee's flute fade the final harmony together, and... SPOTLIGHTS OUT.

The band stands perfectly still on the darkened stage as they receive some polite APPLAUSE from the crowd and robust CHEERS from George's gang.

KQYSX

INT. BACKSTAGE

KQYSX

The Orphans enter the concrete backstage area from the wings, sweating from their performance.

T.J.

Jesus Christ! We did it!

MILT

We did, huh? I don't know if I'm ready for twelve weeks of this.

Dee Dee gives Fess a big kiss and hug.

DEE DEE

Hey! Let's go out in the audience and watch the Evil Deed show.

FESS

Yeah? Well, OK. With all the pyrotechnics they set up, it should be good fireworks, if nothing else.

AN87V

INT. ARENA

AN87V

Loud hard ROCK MUSIC, indistinguishable from any other minor heavy metal band of the 1980s.

Fess, Dee Dee, Wyatt and T.J. stealthily find a spot where they can see the stage but remain fairly hidden. Some kids notice them and Dee Dee draws a wolf whistle.

On STAGE, four rangy, long-haired MUSICIANS in tight pants, leather arm bands, flowing headbands and high boots lurch about amid SMOKE and FLASHING LIGHTS.

DEE DEE

Jesus. This music sucks. Who wrote it?

WYATT

I did.

DEE DEE

Come on.

WYATT

I did! It's pretty basic shit. A simple three-chord tune... throw in some two-four bars to make it interesting. I had to keep it simple for these guys.

EVIL DEED

("singing")

I got the deed to your soul/  
Got the deed to your soul/  
The deed to your...

Screaming guitar solo.

FESS

We should rename this tour the Wyatt Logan tour. You did everything.

WYATT

And look where it's got me. A neglected side man in a throw-away opening act.

T.J.

Yeah, but wait 'til you get back to your office in twelve weeks and check your bank account.

WYATT

True, true.

GEORGE and his friends emerge from the crowd. They are not all as lost in the sixties as George is.

GEORGE

Hey, you guys were great!

ASSORTED FRIENDS

Yeah! Great!

FESS

Thanks.

One of George's friends in an open trenchcoat and ponytail steps forward from the back of the group.

HIPSTER

I hear you're going to play New Orleans.

WYATT

Yeah, two shows.

ANOTHER FRIEND

We got lots of friends down there. We'll make sure they all show up.

WYATT

Oh, that's OK, I think they can do without *this*.

He indicates Evil Deed.

GEORGE

Hey, it's worth it to see you guys!

FESS

Thanks!

GEORGE

We're gonna head out now before this shit kills us.

DEE DEE

Thanks, you guys.

They wave goodbye and the Orphans smile to each other. The Hipster lingers a bit before being dragged along. Dee Dee notices some guys in the audience ogling her.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

OK. I've had enough. How about you?

FESS

One more song? I want to hear just how bad a tune Wyatt can write.

DEE DEE

(shows discomfort)  
I gotta go.

FESS

You OK?

DEE DEE

Yeah... I'm just not used to this again yet.

Dee Dee shakes her head and pulls him up the aisleway.

XQ9MX

EXT. FIELD HOUSE - NIGHT

XQ9MX

With a loud GRINDING of gears and ROAR of the engine, the BUS pulls out and heads into the night.

MUSIC UP: "Heat Wave" (Martha and the Vandellas) as performed by The Orphans.

NXR0N

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - TRAVELING

NXR0N

The BUS speeds through nighttime highway headlights, keeping up with the hot pace of the instrumental intro.

A strong female VOICE begins to sing, propelling the music and the bus forward simultaneously.

MID-VERSE, CUT TO:

O15XP

INT. - DALLAS' STARPLEX AMPHITHEATRE

O15XP

The Orphans on stage. Dee Dee really belts out the lead vocal and the band cooks. Despite themselves, the heavy metal audience responds to the irresistible beat and the unabashed fun the band is having.

MONTAGE:

"Heat Wave" continues as the Orphans perform at a series of venues, to ever-increasing acceptance as they go.

- EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - TRAVELING

The bus rolls through the Texas countryside.

- INT. THE SUMMIT, HOUSTON, TEXAS

The band and the audience enjoy the song even more.

- EXT. NEW ORLEANS HIGHWAYS AND STREETS - DAY - TRAVELING

The bus rolls into town and nears the LAKEFRONT ARENA.

- INT. LAKEFRONT ARENA

A few pockets of PEOPLE, who look like the group George brought to the first concert, jump and cheer. Even the rockers around them respond with enthusiasm.

One fan in particular seems transfixed... the HIPSTER in the ponytail and trenchcoat.

The Orphans receive genuine APPLAUSE at the end of the song. Dee Dee waves and takes a gracious bow.

END MONTAGE

K5OI1

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

K5OI1

The DOOR of a small, crowded dressing room bursts opens and Curt sticks his head in.

CURT

Hey, guess what, you guys. Your public wants you.

T.J.

An encore?

MILT

Dream on, man.

CURT

No, a local jock wants to put you on the air.

DEE DEE

An interview?

Curt shrugs. He can't understand it either.

T.J.

Cool!

YECI3

INT. SMALL SPARE ROOM

YECI3

A large, rotund MAN with a beard greets them at the door.

JOHNNIE

Hi, I'm Jumpin' Johnnie from KXYX.

MILT

Jumpin' Johnnie, eh?

JOHNNIE

Yeah. Just don't ask me to jump.  
Ha, ha, ha.

He leads them to a row of four chairs behind a table upon which sits a tape recorder.

WYATT

OK, guys. Tell him anything but  
the truth.

T.J.

No shit.

WYATT

(aside to Curt)  
What the hell's going on here?

CURT

We had this press room set up for  
Evil Deed. This is the only  
interviewer who showed and... he  
wants to talk to you guys 'til  
Evil Deed is ready.

T.J.

Oh, boy. The warm-up band even  
gets to warm up the local disk  
jockey. What the fuck are we gonna  
say?

Curt shrugs and leaves the room. Milt, Fess, Dee Dee and Wyatt sit, T.J. and Hap stand behind them. Johnnie sits opposite with a mike which he aims at whoever speaks.

JOHNNIE

(in his DJ voice)  
This is Jumpin' Johnnie and I'm  
live backstage at the Evil Deed  
concert and I have here with me  
the exciting new band that opened  
tonight's show, The Orphans.  
(MORE)

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)

You guys were just fabulous out there tonight. How long have you been performing together?

Band members all look at each other and try to suppress their laughter.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)

Come on, now. You guys weren't shy out there on stage and our KXYX listeners want to hear all about you.

Wyatt finally bites the bullet.

WYATT

Well, I'm not gonna lie to you, Mr. Jumpin'. The first time we all played together was five weeks ago.

JOHNNIE

Ha ha ha! Now, now. I heard songs tonight I haven't heard since I was a kid and I'm not as young as I look. Ha ha ha!

WYATT

Well, that's not to say we haven't been around either.

FESS

We must have a hundred years of music sitting here.

MILT

Two hundred.

T.J.

At least.

HAP

Dig it.

JOHNNIE

I see. Let me get each of your names for our listeners now. First over here we have I believe the man on the keyboards.

MILT

That's me. Hiya kids, I'm Uncle Milt.

JOHNNIE

Ha ha ha! And next, the lead singer.

FESS

Ooh, lead singer. I'm Fess.

JOHNNIE

And our female vocalist...

FESS

And flautist.

JOHNNIE

(mocking the word)  
And flautist.

DEE DEE

Dee Dee.

JOHNNIE

Yesss... Let's see now, next we have...

HAP

Dig it, I'm Hap, bass guitar.

WYATT

Wyatt. Drums.

T.J.

Give the drummer some!

JOHNNIE

Ohh-kay. And on lead guitar, last but not least...

T.J.

That's creative, Johnnie, but not entirely true. I'm T.J. But you can call me T.J.

(leans into the mike)  
Or if you're cute, you can call me whatever you like.

T.J.'s remark draws a round of HISSES.

JOHNNIE

Now, I'm only guessing here, but it seems the leader of the band would be Fess here. Am I right?

General agreement over Fess' modest acceptance of the role.



JOHNNIE (CONT'D)

Fess, I have to ask you this because I know every one of our female listeners is going to want to know. Fess... are you married?

LAUGHTER as Fess and Dee Dee peek at each other while hiding their faces.

JOHNNIE (CONT'D)

Aaahh... I see some looks floating across the room... He's shaking his head... No? Is that a no? It's a no. Now... Dee Dee... I know I'll get hate mail from all the guys if I don't ask. Are you married?

DEE DEE

(feigned kewpie-doll cuteness)

Why, no, Jumpin' Johnnie, I'm not married. I'm waiting for some big, strong football player to ask me. Or maybe some famous disk jockey from a famous radio station like... like, uhhh...

DOOR suddenly swings open and Curt looks in.

CURT

They're ready now.

Johnnie jumps up, all business.

JOHNNIE

(returning to his normal voice)

Hey, thanks guys. I gotta get ready for Evil Deed.

FESS

That's it, eh?

The band members get up and begin to file out.

MILT

Some interview. More like roll call at the Mickey Mouse club.

T.J.

Make way for the kings. The peasants shall depart. Whose idea was this anyway?

DEE DEE

Hey, I didn't hear anybody  
objecting when we were brought in  
here.

JOHNNIE

(offended by remarks)  
Good point, young lady. I will try  
to get this on the air before  
tomorrow's show. And I meant what  
I said. You guys gave a hell of a  
performance tonight.

FESS

Johnnie. Thanks.  
(shakes his hand)  
We'll be listenin' for ya.

As Fess, Dee Dee and Wyatt pass through the doorway, the  
four EVIL DEED performers enter. The two groups squeeze  
past each other, eyeing each other suspiciously.

In the HALLWAY, the Orphans hear O.C.:

JOHNNIE

Hello, gentlemen.

SNOTTY EVIL DEED

(Fake British accent)  
Piss off!

ANGRY EVIL DEED

You don't know us well enough to  
call us gentlemen.

The door SLAMS shut.

FESS

Jesus Christ, Wyatt. Did you hire  
these Evil Deeds?

WYATT

Yeah. But I should have listened  
to the woman at the casting  
agency.

DEE DEE

Why, what did she say?

WYATT

She said watch out what you ask  
for. You just might get it.

K8K7C

EXT. STAGE DOOR - NIGHT

K8K7C

Fess and Dee Dee exit the stage door and find a small group of people waiting for them.

DOTING FAN

Hey, it's Fess and Dee Dee!

FANS press closer with adoring chatter. Dee Dee notices their attire.

DEE DEE

I'm betting you're friends of George.

COOL FAN

Hey, how'd you know?

DEE DEE

He warned us.

All laugh. Fess wraps an arm around Dee Dee.

FESS

So, guys, Dee Dee and I are gonna go enjoy some time off alone. Hope you don't mind.

COOL FAN

Hey, enjoy. Been to N'orleans before?

FESS

(simultaneously)

No.

DEE DEE

Yes.

Both laugh and set off to walk the city streets, happy to get away from the heavy metal atmosphere.

MONTAGE:

MUSIC UP: "Find" (find) as performed by The Orphans.

Fess and Dee Dee enjoy the sights and sounds of New Orleans.

END MONTAGE

J101U

EXT. NEW ORLEANS RIVERFRONT - NIGHT

J101U

Fess and Dee Dee, a few feet apart, lean against a railing overlooking the river.

FESS  
Beautiful, huh?

DEE DEE  
Yeah.

FESS  
Y'know... I've never played in  
front of crowds this big before.

DEE DEE  
Me neither.

Fess moves close to her.

FESS  
You getting used to it?

DEE DEE  
Workin' on it.

FESS  
(beat) Me too.

PMDU4

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - NIGHT

PMDU4

Fess and Dee Dee walking. They turn a corner and a tall character in a Mardi Gras SKELETON costume suddenly appears. Dee Dee SCREAMS in terror.

The skeleton dances about, purposefully scaring her and she shrinks sobbing into Fess' arms.

FESS  
Hey, asshole, you've had your fun,  
now push on.

The skeleton cocks his head quizzically then silently moves on down the street. Dee Dee is severely shaken up.

FESS (CONT'D)  
It's okay now, it's okay. (beat)  
Him again, right? You thought it  
was him.

Dee Dee just sobs. Fess holds her.

U7CIQ

EXT. SIDEWALK CAFÉ - NIGHT

U7CIQ

Fess and Dee Dee pick silently at their meals. She looks only at her plate; he seems concerned.

TYJZQ

INT. LAKEFRONT ARENA - NEXT DAY

TYJZQ

Fess and Dee Dee join the rest of the Orphans backstage.  
Curt enters.

CURT

Hey, guys, that interview you did yesterday? Been getting a lot of play today, one clip after another. That was the number one local station, you know. Pretty funny.

T.J.

Funny? Like they're making a joke of us?

CURT

No, funny like they're supposed to be promoting Evil Deed, and all they talk about is you!

Milt spreads his arms, indicating the assemblage.

MILT

Well... who can blame them?

HAP

Dig it!

All laugh.

5SV8Z

INT. LAKEFRONT ARENA STAGE - NIGHT

5SV8Z

The ORPHANS are on stage performing.

Acting imperious, EVIL DEED enters the proscenium to watch, causing a stir among the crew backstage, some of whom trade "something's up" looks.

OT97D

INT. AUDIENCE

OT97D

The CROWD, now more colorful than ever, is picking up on the Orphans.

AWESTRUCK KID

Who are these guys?

PROUD KID

I heard them on the radio this morning. They're awesome!

The band gets really hot and the crowd goes with it. The festivity begins to resemble a carnival atmosphere.

They play a hard rock version of "Runaway" (Del Shannon). Fess goes big on "I'm-a walkin' in the rain," and Dee Dee kills on flute in the instrumental break.

Fess and Dee Dee have a rare magic on stage that has a huge impact on the audience.

JMDDP

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

JMDDP

The Orphans pile into their bus, all smiles.

T.J.

Where to next, Bear?

BEAR

Kansas City.

HAP AND MILT

(break into song)

We're goin' to Kansas City, Kansas  
City here we come.

Bus takes off into the night.

2AH63

INT. KANSAS CITY MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM ARENA - NIGHT 2AH63

The Orphans are on stage and the atmosphere is even more festival-like. They seem to be drawing their own crowd.

Dee Dee sings "You Don't Own Me" (Leslie Gore) and stomps her feet emphatically to the beat on the chorus: "Don't. Tell. Me. What to Do."

0EQ20

INT. BACKSTAGE DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

0EQ20

AL, an excitable, conservatively dressed man in a toupee, enters and pumps their hands enthusiastically.

AL

Hey. Orphans. Glad to meet you.

Al. Al Jacobs.

Random muffled greetings.

AL (CONT'D)

I'm the guy who booked you here  
tonight. And the next three stops  
as well.

WYATT

Oh, yeah, thanks, Al. I'm Wyatt.  
We spoke.

AL

You - you're Wyatt Logan?

WYATT

Yep. And actually, if you'll  
recall, you were booking Evil  
Deed. These guys are the side  
dish.

AL

Some side dish. Enough to make you  
forget the entree. Look, my job is  
getting butts in seats and we have  
an opportunity here to really pack  
'em in. The Evil Deed fans already  
have tickets, but I can sell a  
whole lot more by promoting you  
guys to a whole different  
audience.

FESS

Yeah? How ya gonna do that?

AL

Up 'til today, you were just an  
unknown name to fill out the bill.  
Meant nothing to me or anyone  
else. But you just leave it to me.  
I know how to play this game.

Al leaves.

MILT

Uhhh, Wyatt... About our  
arrangement...

T.J.

Our... *financial* arrangement...?

WYATT

Don't worry. I'll make sure  
there's some recognition after we  
make our nut.

High fives all around. Except for Dee Dee, who appears a  
little worried. Not what she was expecting.

MONTAGE SET TO  
ORPHANS MUSIC:

- Orphans' bus rolling down the highway
- St. Louis Arena - Marquee gives second billing to the Orphans
- Al, minus toupee, on the phone in a cramped office
- Orphans' bus rolling down the highway
- Cincinnati Riverfront Coliseum - Similar Marquee
- Al pulls a sheet out of his printer and admires it
- INT. BUS - DAY. Bear tunes in the radio.

DJ (V.O.)

Hollywood's not the only place with surprise summer hits. We have one coming right here to Cleveland this week in the form of the new hit band The Orphans, touring with powerhouse metal band Evil Deed. They may not be a household name yet, but if you're not at the Richfield Coliseum Tuesday night, you'll regret it when someone asks "where were you when."

Band members rejoice.

- Orphans look out the bus window at an Evil Deed billboard with a poster pasted onto it: "Now Added - THE ORPHANS!"

END MONTAGE

QIRBF                    EXT. CITY STREET - DAY                    QIRBF

The Orphans' colorful bus rolls down a city street and when people see it, they wave.

NP550                    INT. CLEVELAND RICHFIELD COLISEUM STAGE - NIGHT                    NP550

The Orphans hear the crowd BUZZING before they take the stage. The LIGHTS come up, they step out and the crowd ROARS.

Again, the trenchcoated HIPSTER is in the audience, enraptured.



One EVIL DEED stands in the wings and nods approval to T.J., who accepts it deferentially, then turns and giggles in ridicule.

MILT takes his place and sees a YOUNG GIRL in the audience looking up at him with complete adulation and worship.

He locks eyes with her for a moment and then looks away, uncomfortable and embarrassed.

4BE10 EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO STREET - DAY 4BE10

EVIL DEED band members enter a high-end hotel lobby.

ZWMZT INT. CHICAGO HOTEL LOBBY ZWMZT

JENSEN, the front man of the Evil Deed, picks up the Chicago Sun-Times and opens to the entertainment section.

JENSEN

What the holy fuck?

He shows the cover to the others: "The Orphans Find a Home on the Stage." They gather around to look at it.

SNOTTY EVIL DEED

What about us, man?

ANGRY EVIL DEED

Where'd they get these pictures?

SNOTTY EVIL DEED

I don't know man, that Dee Dee is pretty hot.

JENSEN

You think? Hm. Maybe.

FQYN8 EXT. CHICAGO ARIE CROWN THEATRE - DAY FQYN8

Evil Deed approaches the theater and sees The Orphans name on the marquee along with their own. Their faces reveal their displeasure.

4G15T INT. CHICAGO ARIE CROWN THEATRE - WALKWAY - DAY 4G15T

Dee Dee turns a corner and runs into Jensen, who was apparently waiting for her.

DEE DEE

Oh! Jeez you scared me.

JENSEN

'oo? Little old me?

DEE DEE

Yes, you.

Dee Dee looks him up and down.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Look at you.

JENSEN

Millions do. You know, millions could be looking at you, too.

DEE DEE

Well, the tour's going well, but...

JENSEN

No, I mean... if, say, you were keeping company with someone... I don't know, more in the spotlight.

DEE DEE

Oh. I see.

JENSEN

I mean... your band... They're okay, but they're not going anywhere, really. No backing. No... show!

DEE DEE

We manage without the pyrotechnics.

JENSEN

Why?

DEE DEE

I guess we don't need the distraction.

Dee Dee turns to leave but Jensen follows after.

JENSEN

You find that old crap hard to play?

Dee Dee hits him with a cold glare.

DEE DEE

I mean we don't need to distract  
*the audience*, who believe it or  
not, are actually listening.

JENSEN

(baffled, but presses  
on)

So look, really, maybe after this  
tour... you and I can make the  
scene. You. Me. Media bait.

DEE DEE

(insincere)

Aw. The sweetest proposal ever.

JENSEN

You know, we don't even have to  
wait 'til the end of the tour.

DEE DEE

Thanks, but save it for the  
fawning "millions."

JENSEN

I don't make proposals like this  
often. Or twice.

She turns to leave.

DEE DEE

(to herself)

That's a relief.

Jensen continues following after.

JENSEN

I guess you're taken with that  
Fess character.

She looks him up and down again over her shoulder.

DEE DEE

He *is* a character... At least he's  
not a carica-*ture*.

JENSEN

Remember this moment. Life regret  
number twenty-two.

DEE DEE

(to herself)

Not likely.

3812V INT. CHICAGO ARIE CROWN THEATRE - DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 3812V

Phone RINGS. Curt picks it up, then paces as he talks.

CURT

(on the phone)

Curt... Oh, hi. You saw that, eh?  
Not what we expected... Uh huh...  
Uh huh. No kidding! Whoa! What's  
the angle?

Wyatt saunters to his side, looking curious.

CURT (CONT'D)

When? I'll make sure it's okay.  
You got it... See you there.

Curt hangs up.

WYATT

What was all that?

CURT

You ready for this? That was  
Rolling Stone. They're going to  
have a reporter meet us in  
Minneapolis for a mid-tour  
interview.

WYATT

All right! I'll go let the Evil  
Deed guys know.

CURT

No! Not Evil Deed. The Orphans!  
They saw the piece in the Trib and  
got all excited over the "back-up  
band that outshone the  
headliners."

WYATT

What? No shit? Holy crap, they are  
going to freak!

CURT

Yeah, I bet Fess and them never  
expected this.

WYATT

No, not the Orphans. Evil Deed!  
They are gonna freak!

J7EFA EXT. MINNEAPOLIS - DAY - TRAVELING J7EFA

Orphans' bus on the road approaching town.

POOVL INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - DAY POOVL

Milt, Hap and T.J. are fairly jumping out of their skin as a photographer and assistant set up for a shoot.

T.J.

Holy crap, can you believe this?

HAP

No. Not really.

MILT

Be cool, my brothers. Remember, they are here for us, not the other way around.

HAP

Dig it.

Wyatt and Fess stand just outside the door, looking in.

WYATT

You ready?

Fess hesitates.

FESS

I guess. I just never thought...

He trails off.

They enter.

MILT

What's the word, gentlemen?

WYATT

Well, guys, there's something you should know.

Band gathers around.

WYATT (CONT'D)

There's some reasons this is happening that have nothing to do with you. Uh, us.

DEE DEE

Like what?

WYATT

Rolling Stone's been getting a lot of shit lately for being such a tool for the major labels.

T.J.

Seems you'd be fine with that, bud.

Wyatt stops short, then chooses to ignore the comment.

WYATT

Yeah, so they want to promote some unknowns to counteract the criticism. Also to show who's boss. The editor wants the labels to know exactly who's ass they need to kiss.

T.J.

His.

WYATT

Exactly.

FESS

But I think some people say it's gone too eighties. They want it to return to its roots. Be independent. Cutting edge.

T.J.

Yeah, I heard that too.

WYATT

True as well.

FESS

So guys, let's not get all distracted by this political shit. We're here for a reason. As crazy as it is.

MILT

Yeah, like I said, they're here for us. Even if they're using us to kill three birds with one "Stone."

Others groan at the pun.

Dee Dee enters. Photographers notice.

WYATT

Maybe they're here for some of us more than others.

HAP

Dig it.

MILT

Consider it dug. (beat) But listen. I gotta tell ya. As much as I'm enjoying this, and I am, I have to confess I'm having a real out-of-my-comfort-zone experience with all this.

FESS

All what?

MILT

On stage the other night. There was this chick in the audience. She was looking up at me, like she'd just seen Jesus. Such adulation. Mindless worship. Scared the shit out of me.

Fess and Dee Dee look at each other. The others look silently at Milt, who just shrugs.

A JOURNALIST joins the group, pen and pad in hand.

SELF-IMPORTANT JOURNALIST

Thanks for taking the time for this. We're gonna want a few pics to choose from. The editor really liked the live tape he heard and wants to bump up the story. He felt you guys really have something to say musically.

FESS

Well. Okay. So I guess we'll see if we have anything to say verbally.

Laughter.

MONTAGE:

Photo shoot with Curt looking on. Dee Dee shies away from the bright lights at times, but deals with it like a trouper.

END MONTAGE

6E9N6

INT. GREEN ROOM - DAY

6E9N6

DEE DEE

(on the phone)

Sherry! Hi! You'll never believe what we just did. You heard? From Roger? He's been keeping tabs, huh.

Fess, Wyatt and Curt enter.

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

Oh, no, not just the Chicago paper. We're going to be in the next Rolling Stone!

Dee Dee continues call MOS in BG.

CURT

That went well, guys.

WYATT

I'd hate to think what would have happened if they tried to interview Evil Deed.

FESS

Come on, one of them must have half a brain left.

CURT

No ear drums, but maybe a little brain.

Dee Dee, done with her call, rejoins the group.

DEE DEE

I just got off the phone with Sherry. She says your old band broke up, Fess.

FESS

Oh. Shame.

Fess looks down, then perks up.

FESS (CONT'D)

Say, Wyatt, Curt. We're... doing a little more than pulling our weight around here now. What would you think of bringing in a road manager just for us. An assistant road manager. To help you out.



Curt looks quizzical.

FESS (CONT'D)

My old lead guitarist. He's pretty sharp. He'll be a good addition.

Wyatt and Curt look at each other and shrug.

CURT

I wouldn't mind a little help.

WYATT

Me neither. Not sure if it's in the budget, but let's do it.

FESS

Thanks, guys, I'll give a call and talk him into it. He can meet us in Seattle.

LE6S2

INT. SMALL OLDER HOUSE - DAY

LE6S2

Roger is on the phone, Alex sucks on a pipe.

ROGER

Me? Yeah, I guess you heard. I'm not doing shit. Yeah. Okay. I'll meet you in Seattle.

Roger hangs up.

ALEX

What was that?

ROGER

Fess. Having pity on me, the bastard.

ALEX

Whuh?

ROGER

He's "letting me" come along to share in his glory.

ALEX

You gonna join his band?

ROGER

Yeah... as assistant road manager.

ALEX

What the fuck? You gonna do it?

ROGER

Why not? Maybe I'll manage to drop  
a speaker on his toe, the fucker.

XCKKH

EXT. SEATTLE - DAY

XCKKH

Orphans' bus rolls into a scenic view of town.

MONTAGE:

MUSIC UP: "Find" (find) as performed by The Orphans.

Band members in a park and other typical tourist  
locations.

END MONTAGE

SOBIH

EXT. FERRY DECK - DUSK

SOBIH

Four band members sit on benches, enjoying the view.

MILT

Twelve weeks of this, huh? Rough.

T.J.

You looking forward to the end?

MILT

Heck no. You?

HAP

Nope. Are we sure it has to end?

T.J. looks toward Fess and Dee Dee, who are nestled along  
the railing.

T.J.

Not sure that's up to us.

HAP

So how come you signed up for this  
trip anyway, T.J.? Seems you'd  
want a band of your own.

T.J.

Wyatt asked. His label owns most  
of my old stuff, so I gotta play  
nice. Plus... it's a gig.

MILT

I just came to be with Dee Dee.  
I'd follow that gal anywhere. So  
what's your excuse?

HAP

I just needed the cash, man, dig  
it.

MILT

We can *all* dig that.

High fives.

MILT (CONT'D)

But still... I can't get over the  
feeling Wyatt is doing some double  
dealing here.

HAP

I know. He's got to be bringing  
down more than the rest of us.

T.J

Maybe the rest of us combined.

MILT

But what can we do? He called the  
shots.

T.J

Nothing we *can* do.

HAP

True. But he's a damn good  
drummer, right?

T.J

That's for sure.

Fess and Dee Dee nestle along the railing.

FESS

Beautiful, huh?

DEE DEE

Yeah. The guys are sure enjoying  
it.

She indicates Milt, et al.

FESS

We might have a pretty mellow show  
tonight after all this.

DEE DEE

Think they're starting to wind  
down?

FESS

I don't think so. Are you?

DEE DEE

No. I think I'm getting used to  
the spotlights, finally.

FESS

And I'm getting used to the  
crowds. Not like playing the Top  
Hat.

DEE DEE

That's for sure.

FESS

I guess I never thought...

DEE DEE

I know. I know. Maybe... maybe it  
doesn't have to end.

FESS

Maybe. And what about us? Do we  
have to... end when this is all  
over?

T.J. interrupts the moment.

T.J.

Hey guys!

They turn just in time to be hit by the flash of T.J.'s  
camera.

T.J. (CONT'D)

Gotcha!

In the flash, from Dee Dee's POV, T.J. takes the shape of  
the skeleton man for one split second. She turns away.

DEE DEE

OH!

FESS

You okay, babe?

DEE DEE

Oh, dammit, it was him again.

T.J.

Me? What did I do?

FESS

No, not you.

(holding Dee Dee)

It's okay. She's fine.

(unconvinced)

She's fine.

XIROD

INT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT XIROD

Dee Dee is cleaning her flute and hears a knock on the door. She looks up to see Sherry sticking her head in. The sisters run to embrace, screaming.

DEE DEE

So glad you could come!

SHERRY

You kidding? My sister, the official Rolling Stone rock star of the month? I wouldn't miss it!

DEE DEE

Oh, stop it. It's all just a bunch of hype.

SHERRY

No, your interview was great!

DEE DEE

Thanks, Sherry.

SHERRY

Even Mom liked it.

DEE DEE

Oh, god. (beat) I guess *everyone's* seen it.

Fess enters.

FESS

Hi, Sherry. Roger said you'd be coming over with him. Where is he?

SHERRY

He's around somewhere.

FESS

Okay, I'll go find him. Glad you're here.

Fess kisses Sherry on the cheek and departs.

DEE DEE

So... how are the folks?

SHERRY

Oh, well... kinda worried with you out on stage again and all.

DEE DEE

Still worried. Did they ever...

SHERRY

No. No one's ever seen that stalker guy since you stopped performing. It's like he just... disappeared.

Dee Dee looks down.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Dad's been poring through his psychology texts of course. He told Mom

(in his voice)

"it's probably just some fan-boy with an unhealthy fixation."

DEE DEE

That doesn't help much.

SHERRY

That's exactly what *she* said.  
(pause) Dee Dee... are you okay?

DEE DEE

(uncertainly)

Yes.

(perking up)

Yes, of course. The tour is going great!

SHERRY

I never told you, but I tried to go to the cops once about that guy.

DEE DEE

You didn't!

SHERRY

Well, nothing came of it. They asked about threatening letters or phone calls and of course I had nothing.

DEE DEE

No, nothing but a crazy sister.

SHERRY

Dee Dee...!

Curt suddenly bursts in, Roger in tow.

CURT

Meeting! Band meeting! Ten minutes, down the hall and to the right.

DEE DEE

What's up?

CURT

A meeting.  
(turns and leaves)

1LDGG

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

1LDGG

Wyatt and Lance & Lee from the record company are already seated as the others arrive. Curt and Roger stand to the side. Wyatt waits for all to be seated before beginning.

WYATT

Okay... Guys, I think you've noticed who's getting all the headlines on this tour, and it ain't Evil Deed. We-

LANCE

(interrupting)  
Let me cut to it. You guys have managed to blow the coming out party for our biggest investment.

LEE

Now, we understand, there's no accounting for public taste, and it's not your fault. Maybe we just bet wrong.

Orphans raise their eyebrows to "fault."

LANCE

Yeah, I guess you never know when an instant success is going to happen. And to who.

Milt smooths his balding head.

MILT

(softly)

"Instant" success, huh?

Other Orphans chuckle.

FESS

Guys, we have literally decades of experience here in this group.

WYATT

Yeah yeah, we're not here to make light of your - uh - *our* accomplishments. But you need to know... I did this with all good intentions. And to do the right thing. Legally.

DEE DEE

Uh oh.

WYATT

I registered the Orphans name under the ownership of the company, as a pro forma part of the tour deal.

T.J.

Great.

(continues quietly to Hap)

We per-forma, they pro-forma.

WYATT

It was all standard operating procedure. No one predicted this craziness. Not even you, Fess.

FESS

No, I sure as hell didn't. So what does that mean?

LANCE

It means we own the name The Orphans.



LEE

Now we're not in the business of screwing our talent. But we are in the business. We want to sign you to a long-term contract.

T.J.

Long-term?

MILT

Contract?

LANCE

Look, it'll be better to work with us, because if you try to sign with anyone else, you're gonna end up having to work through us anyway.

LEE

And after all this instant success, anyone *else* wants to work through us... it won't be cheap.

The Orphans all look at one another in silence. Finally...

FESS

We're going to need some time to talk among ourselves.

WYATT

Of course. I already told Lance and Lee to expect that. To expect an answer... before the tour wraps up.

MILT

That's just a few days.

LANCE

That's correct.

DEE DEE

And which side of the table will you be sitting on then, Wyatt?

WYATT

Well, I'll do my best to be a fair go-between. It's kinda awkward for me.

T.J.

Yeah, real awkward, having to make money whatever happens.

FESS

Guys, there's no decisions made yet, so let's just chill. As a group, well, we may not be a group after the tour ends.

MILT

That's right. We agreed to a twelve-week tour and that's all we're committed to.

LANCE

But we do own the name.

FESS

So you do. But it's worthless without us. So, we'll talk. And we'll get back to you.

LEE

Before the end of the tour.

Fess shrugs a noncommittal "maybe." The Orphans get up to leave. Wyatt too, but not Roger.

A72D3

EXT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM STAGE DOOR

A72D3

Roger is speaking with a YOUNG LADY with too much make-up, then lets her in the stage door.

Fess approaches Roger awkwardly from outside, latte in hand.

FESS

Hey, dude.

ROGER

(just as awkward)  
Hey, Fess. Thanks for bringing me on.

FESS

Well, I heard you were available.

ROGER

Yeah, funny thing about that.

FESS

You meet with Curt yet?

ROGER

Yeah, we're all squared away. I've got my assignments and we're good.

FESS

Coming in?

ROGER

No.

(indicates his station)

This is my first assignment.

FESS

Oh. Okay then, we'll catch up later.

ROGER

Later. Oh, there's a surprise for you in your dressing room.

6RHZX

INT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM DRESSING ROOM

6RHZX

The young lady from the stage door is admiring herself in the mirror. Looks like a groupie. Fess enters.

PAINTED GIRL

Oh my god, it's you.

FESS

Yeah, its me. Who are you?

PAINTED GIRL

Me? Well, I guess you could say I'm the entertainment.

She nuzzles up close to Fess, slides her hands down his front then starts to slide down herself. Fess stops her.

FESS

Oh, no. No, no, no. How did you get in here?

PAINTED GIRL

Your friend at the door let me in. At least he said he was your friend.

FESS

Yeah, well, he is, but you're not. You gotta leave.

PAINTED GIRL

But I just came in here to, you know, make you feel good.

FESS

I do feel good. I feel great. Now, please...

Young lady leaves just as Dee Dee enters. They squeeze past, eyeing one another.

DEE DEE

What was that?

FESS

That was Roger being funny. He let her in to "surprise" me.

DEE DEE

Oh? Is that what you brought him here for?

FESS

No! Not at all. In fact, I'm really pissed at him right now.

9BN41

EXT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM STAGE DOOR

9BN41

Young lady exits and eyes Roger sorely.

PAINTED GIRL

You didn't tell me she was his girlfriend.

ROGER

You didn't ask.

She "humphs" over her shoulder as she leaves. Roger "humphs" also, obviously disappointed.

EWO2H

INT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM

EWO2H

The Orphans are performing in a carnival atmosphere for a colorful audience, representing every rock style ever.

WYATT attempts to make eye contact with other band members, as they always do, but none of them acknowledge him.

A YOUNG MAN appears in the crowd. No shirt, bony frame, white-painted face, heavy black eye make-up and long straggly black hair.

He dances through the crowd, putting his death-like face into others' to get a reaction.

Dee Dee spots him and gets extremely agitated.

DEE DEE  
(screaming to Fess  
over the music)  
It's him! It's him! It's Death!

Dee Dee moves quickly out of the spotlight.

Fess looks for Death out among the crowd, but he slides down into the sea of people at the foot of the stage.

Dee Dee refuses to get back into the spotlight and continues playing in semi-darkness.

Fess is visibly agitated and not sure how to handle it. He sees Death for a split second but returns to his mike to end the song.

R919X

INT. SEATTLE CENTER COLISEUM BACKSTAGE

R919X

Evil Deed and Orphan band members pass one another while the stage crew changes the set. Jensen shoots disapproving looks at Dee Dee as she hurries past.

JENSEN  
Freak-out.

Jensen shakes his head at Fess.

JENSON  
Unprofessional, man.

Fess searches backstage, but does not find Dee Dee. He heads to the back door and exits.

G3MGM

EXT. SEATTLE CENTER AREA ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

G3MGM

Fess rushes out into the rainy night. He finds himself in a dark service road, lit by a single lamp. He hears Dee Dee sobbing.

FESS  
Dee Dee! Dee Dee, is that you?

Dee Dee is sitting on the wet pavement, her knees curled up beneath her. Fess rushes to her side.

FESS (CONT'D)

God, I found you!

DEE DEE

(sobbing)

It's no use. It's no use.

FESS

What was that? Was that... him?  
Did you see *him*?

DEE DEE

Yes, yes. It was... Death. I don't  
know what else to call him. It's  
what he feels like. Death.

FESS

Look, Dee Dee, I know it can be  
scary in the spotlight, believe  
me. But...

DEE DEE

No, dammit! I knew that damned  
photo session would do this. He  
found me! He found me again!

Dee Dee collapses into this arms, sobbing.

FESS

Come on, Dee Dee. We can do this.  
You... me. Together. Come on.

DEE DEE

You don't believe me! You think  
I'm making the whole damn thing  
up!

Fess coaxes her to her feet.

FESS

I *do* believe you. I saw him too.

DEE DEE

I don't know if I can do this any  
longer.

FESS

It'll be okay. Really. You're not  
alone up there, you know.

DEE DEE

(calming down)

It's not that much longer, right?  
The tour?

FESS  
No, not long at all. And I'll be  
with you. The whole damn trip.

DEE DEE  
(softening)  
You promise?

FESS  
Promise.

DEE DEE  
Promise?

FESS  
Promise.

They kiss passionately in the rain.

67UTB

EXT. SEATTLE STREET NIGHT

67UTB

Dark, wet streets; little traffic, few cars.

Fess walks alone. A few people pass by and he looks at  
them carefully.

A block later, more people, more careful looking.

A block later he sees a slender long-haired character  
walking far ahead of him. He picks up his pace.

The character turns a corner and Fess runs to catch up.

Fess turns the same corner and sees the man halfway up  
the block, crouching in a doorway like a dog, looking  
back toward Fess.

From a distance, he looks like Death. Fess' face  
registers unsure recognition.

FESS  
Hey, you!

The man straightens up and takes off running. Fess gives  
chase.

Death crosses the street diagonally and disappears around  
another corner.

Turning the corner, Fess sees no sign of him. Fess  
continues following, at a slower pace.

As Fess passes a doorway, Death jumps out at him. For an instant, Fess sees his death mask close up and to his shock he discovers it's not make-up!

Death pushes Fess down and runs away at almost superhuman speed. Fess gives up in exasperation.

FESS (CONT'D)

Shit.

BMILJ

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - TRAVELING

BMILJ

The Orphans' bus rolls down the road, green forests on both sides. Bear is happy, but Dee Dee sits in the far back gazing forlornly out the window.

The bus rolls across the Golden Gate Bridge.

LCOF4

INT. SOME SAN FRANCISCO VENUE - DRESSING ROOM

LCOF4

The Orphans are in the room. Roger enters.

ROGER

Hey, guys.

MILT

Don't bother *us*, man, we're way too hot and trendy.

Milt displays ROLLING STONE cover and we see the headline: "The Orphans' Fess and Dee Dee - It's the singers, not the song".

T.J.

(to HAP)

How 'bout I'll be hot and you be trendy.

HAP

Dig it.

ROGER

Yeah, well, it just keeps on coming. You have a media session right now.

T.J.

Now? Shit.

Fess and Dee Dee look disapproving.



ROGER  
(not looking sorry)  
Sorry, I forgot to mention it.

SY87R INT. SAME SAN FRANCISCO VENUE - INTERVIEW ROOM SY87R

A few people mill about watching, mid-interview. The Interviewer seems only interested in Fess and Dee Dee and the rest of the band stands back silently.

The Interviewer eyes Dee Dee as he addresses Fess.

SUGGESTIVE INTERVIEWER  
So, Fess, how come you only play  
love songs?

FESS  
Stay tuned. We may have a surprise  
for you tonight.

SUGGESTIVE INTERVIEWER  
(to Dee Dee)  
You like surprises?

Dee Dee surveys the onlookers with some trepidation.

DEE DEE  
No. I don't really...

FESS  
(to the rescue)  
Well, this whole tour has been a  
surprise, but again, we'll have a  
surprise for you during the show  
tonight.

SUGGESTIVE INTERVIEWER  
Can't wait. Thanks, everyone!

Interviewer leaves.

DEE DEE  
(to Fess)  
Surprise?

FESS  
I was just trying to get him to  
pay attention to our set list. We  
don't just play love songs.

DEE DEE  
So you made that up.

FESS

I made that up.

Dee Dee shakes her head.

TYZOX

INT. SOME SAN FRANCISCO VENUE

TYZOX

Echoes of the Orphans' previous number blend with the crowd noise. They break into "Ballad of a Thin Man" (Bob Dylan) to a cheering, writhing audience.

Dee Dee looks apprehensive. She retreats upstage out of the spotlight whenever she can and scans the audience fearfully.

On "Something is happening here..." the HIPSTER with the trenchcoat from George's group in New Orleans looks up from the audience in total awe and admiration.

WYATT is still getting the cold shoulder on stage from the other band members.

VMNKO

EXT. PARKING LOT

VMNKO

The Hipster hops into his VW bus. He pulls a tape recorder from his trenchcoat, places it on the seat next to him and punches a button. It whirs, then he punches it again.

FESS

(on tape, singing)

Something is happening here but  
you don't know what it i-i-is, do  
you, Mr. Jones.

The Hipster gazes into the distance.

HIPSTER

Got that right.

He sees the Orphans bus roll put of the parking lot and he starts up his engine.

HIPSTER (CONT'D)

Got that right.

MONTAGE:

"Ballad" continues throughout:

YOWNY - EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - TRAVELING YOWNY

The Orphans' bus rolls along.

Z6ART - INT. SOME OAKLAND VENUE - STAGE Z6ART

Dee Dee continues to shun the spotlight. Fess tries to bring her back into the light with occasional success.

7LWSX - EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT - TRAVELING 7LWSX

The Orphans' bus rolls.

HCFFD - INT. SOME LOS ANGELES VENUE - STAGE HCFFD

Orphans wrap up "Ballad" as Dee Dee continues to shun the spotlight. Fess and others wave to the cheering crowd and exit the stage.

END MONTAGE

U9ADQ INT. SAME LOS ANGELES VENUE - BACKSTAGE U9ADQ

Dee Dee rushes toward the back of the theatre.

FESS

Dee Dee! Dee Dee, wait!

She doesn't and he runs after her.

FESS (CONT'D)

Come on, hon, you can't still be worried about that guy. He's obviously not here.

DEE DEE

How would you know?

FESS

The guys are all worried. They won't say it, but I can tell. They think you're bringing the whole performance down.

DEE DEE

And what do you think?

FESS

I think the audience loves you. They want to see you out there.

Dee Dee sighs.

FESS (CONT'D)

We only have a couple more dates  
in L.A., then back east, then we  
can take some time off, okay?

DEE DEE

You seem pretty okay with all this  
attention...

FESS

Well... I guess success isn't as  
scary as I thought it would be.

DEE DEE

For you maybe.

FESS

I'll tell the guys we'll regroup  
after a month or two then decide  
where to go from there. Okay?

DEE DEE

(begrudging, but  
trusting)

Okay.

They head off further backstage and we see ROGER has been  
there in the shadows all along, listening.

NBO3S

INT. SOME LOS ANGELES VENUE - GREEN ROOM - DAY

NBO3S

Fess and Dee Dee are having coffee while Milt and Hap  
kick back with hats over their eyes.

FESS

I hear we got a big gate tonight.

DEE DEE

(unimpressed)

That's nice.

FESS

You gonna be okay? Listen, Dee  
Dee. I guess there's always gonna  
be some crazies when you're in the  
spotlight like we are now.

DEE DEE

I don't *want* to be in the  
spotlight now. It scares me.

(MORE)

DEE DEE (CONT'D)

And that guy was after me before we even started this gig. This was supposed to be simple. And small.

FESS

I know, I know.

5YACP

INT. SAME LOS ANGELES VENUE - NIGHT

5YACP

The audience sways to a romantic tune. The Orphans are grooving.

Jensen watches from the wings, Curt and Roger beside him.

Suddenly DEATH appears in the audience.

He rises out of the sea of dancing bodies, then sinks back in and rises again elsewhere, dancing and coaxing reactions from those around him.

Dee Dee sees Death watching her, sinking, rising, getting ever closer to the stage.

She gets faint with fear, steps back out of the spotlight and almost destroys the number.

Fess rushes to her side and looks out toward where she is looking and sees him too. He signals the band to cut the number short.

FESS

Thank you everyone, and thank you for sticking with us.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

We love you guys!

FESS

(laughs)  
We love you, too.

Fess looks back at Dee Dee.

FESS (CONT'D)

We've got one more for you tonight, then we'll turn you over to those wu-wu-wu-wonders, the Evil Deed.

Mixed reaction from the audience.

Fess scans the crowd. Death is nowhere to be seen, and he counts the band into the next song.

CF1P0

INT. SAME LOS ANGELES VENUE - WINGS

CF1P0

JENSEN

What the fuck was that? Wu-w-wu-wonders?

ROGER

Don't worry. He'll get his.

Curt looks at Roger with surprise, then follows Jensen backstage.

W1EVM

INT. SOME LAS ANGELES VENUE - BACKSTAGE

W1EVM

Fess rushes to catch up with Dee Dee who is hurriedly heading toward the dressing room.

FESS

Dee Dee! Are you okay?

DEE DEE

No, I'm *not* okay. Did you see him?  
Did you see him out there?

FESS

Yes. Yes, I did.

DEE DEE

What are we going to do? What am I  
going to do?

Fess has no answer. She turns away and continues toward the dressing room.

I6RLW

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

I6RLW

The Orphans (minus Dee Dee), Bear, Sherry and Curt sit in lawn chairs bus-side over coffee and donuts.

FESS

Look, you guys. You saw what happened last night.

CURT

You mean Dee Dee losing it in the middle of a number?

FESS

Yes, exactly. And did you see why?

Fess looks to other band members for support. They shake their heads, except for T.J.

T.J.

I think I saw some freaky cat out there for a second, dancing like a sick motherfucker. It's like Sherry told me.

All look at Sherry.

SHERRY

It's true. She had some weirdo following her for months. She finally had to quit performing.

FESS

Has to be the same guy. So look, we're going to need some extra security.

CURT

Come on, isn't that a little bit paranoid?

FESS

Call it what you want, but she can't go on like this. We can't go on like this.

CURT

I don't know. I don't think we have the budget for that.

WYATT

Screw the budget. Safety first. Executive decision. Hire some rent-a-cops or the bus stops here.

BEAR

I can pull double duty. No extra charge. I don't like people fucking with my passengers.

CURT

Have it your way. The company wants to keep you guys for the long haul, so I guess we'd better make sure there *is* a long haul. Extra security it is.

IQYOL

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - TRAVELING

IQYOL

MUSIC UP: "Find" (find) as performed by The Orphans.

The Orphans' bus rolls down a grade and into the hot DESERT. Rippling heat waves rise across a vast expanse of bright emptiness as the bus diminishes in the distance.

QE1KY EXT. BACK PARKING LOT - GAMMAGE CENTER, PHOENIX - DAY QE1KY

Bus pulls up to the stage door and a crowd of fans and photographers await them.

2C236 INT. BUS - DAY 2C236

Bear rises from his seat.

BEAR

Okay, gang, time to run the gauntlet.

Dee Dee recedes to the back of the bus.

DEE DEE

I'll... catch up with you guys in a bit. Okay?

Fess reluctantly nods agreement.

OOW46 EXT. BACK ENTRANCE TO GAMMAGE CENTER - DAY OOW46

Band members, minus Dee Dee, walk through the crowd, led by Bear.

EAGER PHOTOGRAPHER

Where's Dee Dee?

FAN

Yeah, we want Dee Dee.

Fess is tight-lipped, but T.J. responds.

T.J.

She's, uh, trying to stay out of the spotlight for a bit, folks.

EAGER PHOTOGRAPHER

Good luck with that!

Others laugh. The Orphans file through the door and it closes behind them.



ZF79M

EXT FRONT OF GAMMAGE CENTER - DAY

ZF79M

Bear leads a long line of MEN, off-duty police officers and night watchmen, past the ticket line and inside.

DISGRUNTLED MAN  
(to man behind him)  
Geez. What are they expecting? A  
biker invasion?

Man turns and sees Bear's face.

DISGRUNTLED MAN (CONT'D)  
Oops.

B372Q

INT. CLASSROOM SETUP

B372Q

Men are in seats. Bear is at the podium, finishing up.

BEAR  
Okay, that's the story. We're  
counting on you men.

One man raises his hand to ask a question.

MAN WITH A QUESTION  
Well, honestly, this guy sounds  
like a million of these kids. How  
will we know it's him?

BEAR  
Sorry we don't have a photo, but  
the face paint should be a dead  
give-away. You see this bastard,  
you bring him to me. OK, let's get  
out there.

The men SCRAPE their chairs loudly as they get up.

QVCDW

INT. REAR OF ORCHESTRA

QVCDW

Roger stands near the side exit doors, sulking. Bear and his men trudge by and Roger listens soberly as...

BEAR  
You two at that door. You two in  
the center, and you two...

SOBER GUARD  
On the right, we got it.

Roger heads toward the stage.

UGWSL

INT. BACKSTAGE

UGWSL

Fess walks down a corridor and runs into T.J.

FESS

Seen Dee Dee?

T.J.

Nope.

Fess opens a door and calls out:

FESS

Dee Dee?

Complete darkness inside. But as Fess pulls the door closed he hears a MURMUR. He opens the door again slowly.

FESS (CONT'D)

Dee Dee?

He turns on the LIGHT and sees Dee Dee's FACE for an instant before she covers it and yells:

DEE DEE

No! Turn out the light!

Dee Dee looks awful. Pained, tired, lifeless.

Fess turns out the light.

FESS

Dee Dee. What are you doing here in the dark?

DEE DEE

It's the only place I can be.

FESS

Come on out. I'll take care of you.

DEE DEE

No. When it's time to go on, I'll come out then. Close the door now. Please.

Fess slowly closes the door then leans back against it, looking helpless and close to tears.

5MRA5 EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE OF ARENA - TWILIGHT 5MRA5

NOISY CROWDS swarm into the arena doors. GUARDS stationed on either side of the gateway survey the crowd.

FNUTF INT. CROWDED, BUSTLING LOBBY FNUTF

Bear eyes each pair of guards in turn, then the crowd. Two kids snake through the throng, one is the HIPSTER in open trenchcoat and ponytail, the other a sidekick.

SIDEKICK

Jesus. The Gestapo is out tonight.

HIPSTER

No shit. As long as they don't frisk me, I don't care.

Bear senses activity off to one side. One GUARD signals him as ANOTHER hustles through the crowd after someone.

Bear shoves his way through the crowd and he and the guard take off running after the guard who left.

They catch up with him just as he grabs a KID who resembles Death. They turn the kid around and... no face paint. It's the wrong kid.

Bear shakes his head, disappointed.

BEAR

Sorry, kid.

Bear gets back to his station and looks toward the other guards. They all shrug; they've had no luck.

SPLFJ INT. ARENA - UNOCCUPIED WALKWAY SPLFJ

Roger pops a cigarette out of a pack and heads for an exit door. He backs the door open as he lights the cigarette and turns into the darkening twilight.

7ZYIN EXT. DESERTED ALLEY 7ZYIN

Roger swings the door open and finds DEATH looking right into his face, wide-eyed and startled.

Roger jerks back against the door gaping in astonishment and loses his cigarette.

Death crouches down like a trapped animal that doesn't know whether to pounce or flee.

He makes a short, quick tentative move toward the half-open door and Roger moves to block it.

They eye each other carefully. Death moves again. Roger doesn't. A stare-down.

A demented grin parts Death's face.

Roger turns his face to the door and, head down, opens it wide. Death darts inside.

After a moment's hesitation, Roger looks up and down the alley, peeks inside the door, then closes it from the outside. He leans against it and breathes deeply.

49VSZ

INT. ARENA

49VSZ

CROWD IN MID-ROAR. The Orphans mill about on a dimly footlit stage, basking in the applause for their previous song and preparing for the next.

FESS

Thank you, thank you.

JU2H6

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

JU2H6

Roger enters in an agitated state and grabs a seat.

TECHIE

Where the fuck have you been? You missed the whole first song!

ROGER

I went out for a smoke and got trapped in the crowd.

TECHIE

(mollified)  
Pretty mobbed out there, huh?

ROGER

(distractedly)  
Yeah. Pretty mobbed.

YVWYN

ARENA

YVWYN

Fess begins to softly strum what seem to be random chords. As he strums more deliberately, the others join in, one by one.

Gradually, the MUSIC finds form and direction, volume builds, and ALL assume their stage positions for the first four bars of "To Love Somebody" (BeeGees).

The LIGHTS come up and the crowd ROARS.

The last chord of the opening phrase ECHOES, then Fess begins to sing soulfully with his earthy, folksy rasp.

BPOJZ

ON STAGE

BPOJZ

On the chorus, Dee Dee steps up to the mike and is hit by the SPOTLIGHT. She recoils from it instantly, an involuntary reaction as if she'd touched a hot stove.

She recovers and slowly re-enters the spot. After the chorus, she retreats rapidly out of the light.

GK7LB

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

GK7LB

TECHIE

Shit. She doesn't want the spotlight.

ROGER

Keep her in the light! Keep her in the light!

TECHIE

I'll try. The stars need that spotlight.

K455E

ARENA

K455E

The music is moving the audience. On "You don't know what it's like," and "the way I love you," the Orphans make it clear they are singing to and referring to the audience.

On the second chorus, Dee Dee reacts even more violently to the SPOTLIGHT but stays within it.

3D104

ORCHESTRA

3D104

DEATH suddenly surfaces near the front of the crowd.

He tosses his long straggly hair into the air, then raises his arms, looks up, and howls madly.

The people around him try to move away but are restrained by the crush of the crowd.

0G18J ON STAGE 0G18J

Dee Dee sees Death and runs from the spotlight in fear. She stumbles, sobbing, into a darkened area upstage near a bank of amplifiers. The spotlight stays fixed on her abandoned mike stand.

TXMPF INT. LIGHT BOOTH TXMPF

TECHIE

What the fuck is going on?

Roger leans forward for a better view of the stage.

ROGER

Just keep the light on her stand.  
She'll come back to it.

TECHIE

Yeah, okay.

5BPMJ ON STAGE 5BPMJ

Fess sees Death and points at him for the security guards.

2XTHF ORCHESTRA 2XTHF

A guard bulls his way through the crowd toward the spot.

Death sinks below the surface of heads just before the guard arrives.

TQJ0L ON STAGE TQJ0L

Still playing, Fess strolls upstage to comfort and strengthen Dee Dee.

RAVL3 ORCHESTRA RAVL3

Death suddenly resurfaces, even closer to the stage, dancing, his bony arms swaying in the air.

The guard spots him and moves toward him.

Just before the guard arrives, Death quickly re-submerges beneath the sea of dancing people. Barely a ripple can be seen in the people among whom he stood.

QF7Z6

ON STAGE

QF7Z6

Fess signals the group to continue jamming. He and Dee Dee shout face to face over the music.

FESS

Dee Dee... You can't let this guy destroy you.

DEE DEE

(almost hysterical)  
Destroy me? He's got me already!  
I'm locked back here where he can't see me. Where *no one* can see me.

FESS

Dee Dee. Listen. The music. The music. The same power that *attracts* this guy will keep him away.

Dee Dee smiles lovingly as if at a naive child and strokes Fess' face briefly. She dashes to her mike stand and drags it back into her dark corner.

DEE DEE

Let me play back here, Ok? No lights.

FESS

(giving in)  
Ok. No lights.

Fess gets back to his stand in time to begin the next verse and soon gets lost in the joy of the music.

IY71E

ORCHESTRA

IY71E

Among the crowd, Death is nowhere to be seen.

YNWI9

ON STAGE

YNWI9

Dee Dee begins a solo from her place in the dark.

JCAAL

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

JCAAL

ROGER

(excitedly)

Get the light on her! Get her!

TECHIE

I can't. The only follow spot is  
on Fess.

ROGER

Damn.

The light crew watches and listens, transfixed, as Dee  
Dee gets into a remarkably inventive and lyrical riff.

QB2V4

ON STAGE

QB2V4

Fess also listens in admiration, unable to resist the  
beauty of it. He winks mischievously at his follow spot  
and beckons it to follow him as he approaches Dee Dee.

Dee Dee plays with her back to the audience, unaware that  
Fess and the follow spot are approaching.

78K5G

INT. LIGHT BOOTH

78K5G

TECHIE

This is great. What a showman.  
It's like he knew what we wanted  
up here.

Roger smirks.

UIZ9Q

ON STAGE

UIZ9Q

Dee Dee convulses when she sees her SHADOW hit the  
equipment behind her. She TURNS and sees she is in the  
LIGHT.

DEE DEE

(screams)

No!

A PISTOL SHOT rings out, hard to discern amidst the  
music. Dee Dee lurches backward from the impact of a  
direct hit.



BS01E INT. LIGHT BOOTH BS01E

Roger lurches to the front of the booth in panic and shock. The rest of the crew is in pandemonium.

TECHIE  
House lights! House lights!

Roger dashes out.

G5E08 ON STAGE G5E08

Fess looks out horrified toward the source of the shots.

VCJT2 ORCHESTRA VCJT2

Death stares back, his eyes wild, glazed saucers.

NBTDM ON STAGE NBTDM

Pandemonium.

MA3RF ORCHESTRA MA3RF

Death holds his INDEX FINGER to his lips like a gun barrel and blows across it cowboy-style. A WISP OF SMOKE emanates from his mouth.

He continues staring at the stage as he sinks slowly beneath the crowd.

Some of the AUDIENCE cranes to see the stage while others hold their ears and mouths in shock as they flee.

BEAR  
(into walkie-talkie)  
Shot fired! It's that guy! Find him!

74QMO ON STAGE 74QMO

Dee Dee lies limp and lifeless, her upper torso thoroughly soaked with blood. Fess kneels above her, sobbing uncontrollably.

FESS  
(whispers)  
Eurydice. My Eurydice.

YE6CE ORCHESTRA YE6CE

Death sinks quickly again into the crowd.

Guards and policemen shove through the melee toward the front of the stage, but too late. Death has disappeared.

Crowds crush toward the back of the auditorium.

ETGS8 LOBBY ETGS8

A POLICE OFFICER holsters his walkie-talkie amid a ROAR which emanates from within the arena.

He waves directions to the guards, then moves toward an arena door which OPENS toward him as he nears it. CROWDS pour out and he and the guards try to slow them down.

LOUD OFFICER

Walk, people, walk! No one gets hurt!

Guards try to scan the crowd for the shooter but they fail miserably as sobbing and panicked teenagers push right past.

Q8HQJ ON STAGE Q8HQJ

A wide CIRCLE of band members, stagehands, and police quickly gathers, but they respectfully keep their distance.

Sherry tries to break through to her sister but is restrained.

Outside the circle stands Roger, wringing his hands in disbelief and grief.

As Fess kneels over Dee Dee, something catches his eye.

DEATH peeks out from behind sound equipment far upstage, then darts out of sight.

Fess bolts upright and rushes to where he saw Death hiding.

He sees Death climb a scaffold in the proscenium. He chases after.

A3WFX LOBBY A3WFX

Floods of people pour into the lobby. The guards give up the attempt to scan them. One who's backed up against a wall by the crowd shakes his head sadly as he talks into his walkie-talkie.

OAS2U ABOVE STAGE OAS2U

Death scampers along a catwalk high above the stage. He looks back to see Fess still in pursuit, then turns a corner.

Fess turns the corner and sees Death waiting for him in the next corner of the catwalk. Fess stops and stares, hands on the rails on both sides of the catwalk.

Death appears to be holding a limp female body in his arms.

Fess charges. Just as he reaches the corner and lunges to grab Death, both Death and his burden vaporize.

Fess tumbles from the high catwalk. There was no railing where Death had been standing!

BGAHX ON STAGE BGAHX

Fess lands right across Dee Dee's body, dead on impact.

SHERRY breaks through and runs to touch both of them.

She looks up and sees Death high above, with the missing piece of railing raised above his head in triumph.

XTRYX ABOVE STAGE XTRYX

Death, victorious, vaporizes again and the rail he was holding plummets. It turns slowly end-over-end as it falls, gradually settling into a straight downward trajectory like a spear.

703R0 BACK OF AUDITORIUM 703R0

A harrowing scream from the stage.

The last of the fleeing crowds stop in their tracks. The pony-tailed Hipster in a trenchcoat and his sidekick slide into an unoccupied row to see the stage.

They linger in view of a grotesque scene - what looks like a lance sticking straight up out of two dead bodies.

HIPSTER  
Holy crap. Holy crap.

The shocked crowd continues toward the exits.

NVDDY

ON STAGE

NVDDY

The bodies of Fess and Dee Dee lie lifeless on the stage. The WEEPING of those around them echo in the hall.

SLOW FADE TO:

9LHYH

EXT. FRONT OF ARENA - NIGHT

9LHYH

The crowd slowly filters away in various directions, many in tears. The Hipster elbows his sidekick as they cut across a walkway.

HIPSTER  
I got it. I got it!

SIDEKICK  
Yeah? Did it come out okay?

HIPSTER  
Check it out.

He pulls his tape recorder out of his trench coat and presses a button. It plays The Orphans performing "Here Comes the Night."

A nearby girl gasps and a small group gathers around, listening reverentially.

SIDEKICK  
Damn, you can get a fortune for this.

HIPSTER  
Screw that. I just recorded this so's I can learn how to play this stuff.

SIDEKICK  
You?

HIPSTER  
Yeah me.

MUSIC continues as we SLOW ZOOM IN OVER HIS SHOULDER onto the tape recorder.

SLOW ZOOM OUT and the RECORDER is sitting on his bedroom dresser, still playing "Here Comes the Night."

The hipster sits on his bed, strumming along on a guitar. He stops strumming and gazes at the window, listening.

The WINDOW is dark, steamy and heavily streaked with rain, which can be heard pattering on the window.

THROUGH THE WINDOW, the STREETS are glistening in the dark. The sound of RAIN blends with the MUSIC.

A couple scurries through puddles toward the neon lights of a club down the street.

Another couple joins them.

Further down, a small group turns the corner and also joins the continuous stream of bodies trundling through the rain toward the music.

The FRAME FREEZES, the MUSIC takes over, and the CREDITS begin to roll.

FADE OUT.

P1S24

THE END

P1S24

Revision of: 1/28/25