

Elegy

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FADE IN:

- 1 TEXT ON BLACK: 1
 'el-e-gy, n.: a song or poem expressing sorrow or
 lamentation, especially for someone who is dead
- 2 INT. CHAPEL -- NIGHT 2
 Camera is dollying through many lit CANDLES, kept out of
 focus so they look like stars or miniature spotlights, until
 we arrive at a COFFIN where Lee RADCLIFFE lies in peaceful
 death. She is pale but beautiful in the flickering candles.
 She is wearing a SILVER HEART NECKLACE.
 Slowly the SOUNDS OF QUIET CONVERSATION fade in, and we pull
 back to reveal JACK RADCLIFFE kneeling at the coffin. With
 him are TWO FRIENDS. One of the friends, genuinely tearful,
 hugs Jack and the other pats him insecurely on the shoulder.
 Jack nods his appreciation, and his friends turn to go.
- 3 EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD -- NIGHT 3
 A dark silhouette with a COWBOY HAT can be seen driving a
 BLACK FORD FALCON (1960s) through a winding suburban road.
 The radio is blaring with a fiery black Southern preacher
 PREACHER ON RADIO (O.S.)
 ...for He will bring to light what
 is hidden in darkness and expose the
 motives of men's hearts!...
- 4 INT. RECEPTION AREA -- NIGHT 4
 This is the room where the funeral party guests conjoin.
 Everyone is dressed in black. The mood is appropriately
 somber and the camera dollies past them very slowly. A large
 picture of beautiful Lee rests on an easel, surrounded by
 flowers. The TWO FRIENDS from before stroll in and join the
 dozen or so other guests who quietly talking, conversing,
 eating, sipping punch. A mother hushing and telling a little
 BOY to stop SHOVING a little GIRL he is fighting with about
 the last COOKIE.
- 5 INT. CLOWN'S CAR -- NIGHT 5
 The Black Falcon pulls into the front of the FUNERAL HOME
 (we can see through the windshield) where the funeral is
 going on. The radio is still playing

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

5

PREACHER ON RADIO (O.S.)
 ...and now also the axe is laid to
 the root of the trees, therefore
 every tree which brings not forth
 good fruit will be cut down and cast
 into the fire...
 (applause from the
 congregation)

The car and radio are turned off. We still cannot see clearly
 the driver in the car, except for his RED COWBOY HAT.

6 INT. RECEPTION AREA -- NIGHT

6

The time seems late. People are yawning and the conversation
 is dying down as they wait for their host to return.

Suddenly a LOUD HONKEY-HONKEY horn blares in the air.
 Standing at the entranceway is a CLOWN, wearing the red cowboy
 hat and smiling. He's dressed in bright colors and holding
 BALLOONS in one hand and the gag HORN in the other. He waves
 at everybody. The entire crowd is bewildered, indignant.

CLOWN
 (singing)
 It's raining! It's pouring!
 The old man is mourning,
 He bonked his head,
 and then was dead
 and couldn't get up in the morning!

Seeing the faces aghast at this, the clown is not the least
 bit perturbed. Strolling across the room, he stops to give
 a flower to the GIRL but the mother quickly pulls them back.
 The CLOWN strolls off into the Chapel.

7 INT. CHAPEL -- NIGHT

7

POV from behind the coffin looking at JACK who stands over
 the coffin with his back to open door. In the background
 the CLOWN pauses at the doorway for a moment. The CLOWN
 walks without a sound toward Jack, until he stands right
 behind him.

JACK jumps with the fright of being startled and turns to
 see a Cowboy Clown holding balloons at his wife's wake.

JACK
 I'm sorry, what... what is this?

The clown smiles.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Look, I'm not sure I find this
 very funny
 ha, ha, OK, sonny
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

7

JACK (CONT'D)

What, did Andrew hire you?

Sick!

(calling out)

Andrew!

CLOWN

Actually this will do

I much prefer a party of two.

You'll be transfixed

With my bag of tricks

The clown hands Jack the balloons and walks over to Lee's coffin. Putting some more magically-appeared flowers on her chest, he props himself up on the lower part of the coffin as if sitting on a bench.

JACK

Hey!

The clown leans over and sticks his head right down into the open part of the coffin, peering right over Lee, their noses touching.

CLOWN

So young

So beautiful

so... cliche

JACK

Hey!

Get off there,

don't you dare --

The Clown looks back up and smiles.

CLOWN

Oh good sir, do confess

about this princess--

how did she die

and exactly why?

JACK

(getting angry)

What? Wh...? Hey, bozo, beat it--

CLOWN

Nit?

JACK

--get off my wife's coffin right now--

CLOWN

Wow.

JACK

-- and get the hell out of here!

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

CLOWN

Fear?

(beat)

Such emotion you elicit.
 But I cannot leave,
 my contract is explicit,
 you have it all wrong
 I did not come
 To "get the hell out of here"
 but, my good chum,
 to bring you hell austere

Jack begins to approach the clown to grab him, but as he does so, a sudden WIND blows out most of the candles. Something about the clown and his confident smile unnerves Jack, and he stops. He turns to go to the RECEPTION AREA to get some friends help him. As he reaches the door, it SLAMS shut in front of him and we hear the CLICK of a deadlock. Grabbing the door knob, he tries to turn it but it won't move. Whirling around, he sees the clown waving his hand like a conductor and SINGING Rock-A-Bye-Baby. Jack runs to the side door, which also SLAMS shut right before he reaches it and it locks.

CLOWN (CONT'D)

(singing loudly)

when the bow breaks,
 the cradle will FALL,

A loud CRASH as a CHANDELIER near Jack drops from the ceiling. Jack, now terrified, begins to pound on the locked door and scream for help.

8 INT. RECEPTION AREA -- NIGHT

8

The RECEPTION AREA is completely empty. Not a single person remains, only the signs of the party: food, plates, drinks, Lee's picture. The muffled SOUNDS of Jack pounding and hollering. Rock-a-bye-Baby music. We hear another LOUD CRASH from the chapel.

9 INT. CHAPEL -- NIGHT

9

CLOWN

(singing at a fever pitch)

AND DOWN WILL COME BABY, CRADLE AND
 ALL!

JACK

(simultaneously with the singing)

Stop it! Please, whatever this is,
 stop!
 What do you want?
 Please leave me alone...

(CONTINUED)

CLOWN

Whee-doggie! Time to atone!

All gets quiet suddenly. As the clown begins speaking, the LIGHTNING changes and the room gets dark except for a circus-type SPOTLIGHT that comes over the clown and coffin. The Clown looks phatasmagoric in the bright light, while we can barely see Jack outside the luminous circle.

CLOWN (CONT'D)

The time for leaving has expired
Class in session, attendance required.
I've a story to tell that's sure to
excite
And now you must help to tell it
right.
So one more time
My warning in rhyme
How so did death come
upon this one so young?

Jack steps into spotlight, shielding his eyes.

JACK

You sick bastard. Why do you want to
know how my wife died?

CLOWN

Nothing to hide?

The Clown sighs and looks up at the ceiling as if searching for more things that he could make crash down.

JACK

(feigning sincerity)
No. She died in a hiking accident.
That's what happened. You happy?

The Clown smiles.

CLOWN

Scrappy?

JACK

It was an accident!

CLOWN

To some extent,
but does she consent?

JACK

She slipped and fell.

CLOWN

That's all to tell?

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Does every single one of your stupid
freakin' melodramatic lines
have to be in rhyme?

The Clown stares at Jack. He then stares at Lee. Jack stares at Lee. The Clown looks back at Jack. Jack holds up his hands as if to say "what?"

CLOWN

The devil is in the details
what you are omitting entails
my reason for arriving.

(in a mock reporter
voice, pantomining a
microphone)

sir do you wish to ammend
your statement then?

(pause)

No?

(putting his head
down on Lee's mouth)

How about you ma'am, Mizz Verti-go?

The Clown pertrends to hear something with his ear on Lee and mockingly says "ah, I see, yes... yes".

Jack looks pale.

JACK

You son of a bitch,
I loved my wife with all my heart!

CLOWN

Shhhh! Quiet please, the movie is
about to start!

As he says these words, the Clown sits up and with a wave of his hands, like a mime, traces an animated TELEVISION which apparates, floating in front of him, towards Jack.

The television flickers on. The clown hops down and sits like a kid, cross-legged on the floor to watch TV. He pats the ground next to him to motion Jack to sit. The sound of static and then MINOR KEY LOONEY-TOONS MUISC is heard from the TV. The clown, apparating a bowl of popcorn turns to Jack

CLOWN (CONT'D)

Popcorn?

Jack with a sense of dread moves slowly to where he can see the TV. A CARTOON SHOW is playing. The Cartoon show has a Jack-caricature and a Lee-caricature. They are laughing, loving, playing. Then the scene shifts to them walking up a mountain trail. A close-up of cartoon-Jacob with an angry look of rage about the explode. Lee-cartoon looking sad.

(CONTINUED)

They have just had another fight.

Jack looks at the TV in horror. The Clown munches loudly on popcorn and giggle as if it is an old Bugs Bunny 'toon.

CLOWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(soundtrack on the
cartoon)

Jack and Jill went up the hill
to learn he had a daughter
Jack went mad
and Jill fell down
and Jack denied the slaughter

Back to the TV, we see Jack-cartoon screaming in a fit of rage to Lee. Lee-cartoon looks away. Jack-cartoon grabs her to look at him. Lee-cartoon pulls away. Jack-cartoon, screaming at her, whips her towards him again. She tries to pull away, and in a fit of rage, Jack-cartoon starts shaking her violently like a doll. As she struggles to get out of his grip, he pushes her towards the edge. Time freezes as Lee flails her arms trying to keep her balance on the edge of the cliff. Jack-cartoon stares in horror and tries to grab her arm but is it too late. The look of horror on Lee's face as she falls, falls, falls. As she is falling, the cartoon shows a baby girl, suckling her thumb, in Lee's womb.

The TV show ends and the Clown jumps up and claps madly, while suddenly BRIGHT COLORED LIGHTS and GAME-SHOW TYPE MUSIC blare all around. The Clown looks at Jack, as if to say "Nice show?". Then the Clown and TV disappear. The lighting returns back to normal. Candles are lit again. Jack looks around, agitated, shaken, guilty, angry. During, this monologue, Jack is toiling with grief and guilt while trying to justify himself. He alternates between teary and angry.

JACK

It was not my fault!
Things happen, it was just a hitch
She was also was being such a bitch!
I didn't mean to hurt her,
That's not murder
Yes, she's dead; but I'll be fine.
And that baby, was that mine?
She didn't tell me about the baby
that's her own damn fault.
I lost my wife
But I won't let this ruin my life.
Go to hell,
this isn't even real!

He begins to weep but gets a hold of himself. Looking around, thinking this episode is over, he turns to the coffin to view his wife one last time. The coffin is EMPTY.

Jack yelps and whirls around to run. Whip-pan to the CLOWN standing right in Jack's face.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (4)

9

CLOWN

Let's test that theory with a taste
of strife.
I want to tell you how Lee got
splayed;
It will require a demonstration, I'm
afraid.
First she broke her right leg, or
was it a sprain?
In any case, incredible pain.

10 EXT. BOTTOM OF RAVINE

10

(this scene overlapping the Clown's dialog). Flash of Lee's
body coming down onto the ground, her ankle hitting a rock
first with...

11 INT. CHAPEL -- CONTINUOUS

11

...the SOUND of an ankle-bone being shattered as JACK SCREAMS
in pain and falls clutching his angle

CLOWN

The sound of your back breaking
is something that lingers
but no time to think
as rocks smash your fingers

12 EXT. BOTTOM OF RAVINE -- CONTINUOUS

12

In slow-mo, Lee's body crashing down and a flash close-up of
her back about to hit a series of sharp rocks and her hand
smashing into a stone...

13 INT. CHAPEL -- CONTINUOUS

13

POPS AND FLESH SOUNDS of backbones being sheared. JACK
screaming again with his back horribly contorted. Blood on
the side of his face and spurting from his mouth.

14 EXT. BOTTOM OF RAVINE -- CONTINUOUS

14

Flash slow-mo close-up of Lee's head about to crash down on
rocks.

15 INT. CHAPEL -- CONTINUOUS

15

CLOWN

Her body a little wreck
with a boulder through her neck.
Laying there slain
she felt the pebbles
in her brain.

The SICKENING SOUNDS of brains, blood and a skull being
triturerated with sharp pebbles. JACK is now barely alive,
emitting gurgling heavy gasping sounds.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

The CLOWN steps near JACK standing over him.

From JACK's POV we can only see the silhouette of the clown head and cowboy hat, backlit. The only detail we can see on the clown is a SILVER HEART NECKLACE glimmering around its neck.

CLOWN (CONT'D)

And fading to the end
she watched the face of her friend,
her lover,
fulfiller,
and killer

As the Clown says this, he bends down so his face comes into the light. It is no longer the Clown's face but Lee's face finishing these last words. JACK's final look of horror. Lee with sadness leans down further and kisses him.

16 EXT. LAKESIDE -- DAY

16

An middle-aged WOMAN in heavy makeup sits on a park bench contemplating the scenery dreamily and grimly. Into the frame come some balloons. The woman turns around and it is the Clown, who hands her a balloon. The Clown sits down next to her and offers her some CAKE to share.

CLOWN

Here dear lady, have some cake
While we talk about why
Your hubby's at the bottom
Of this lake

FADE OUT.