

MOONSHINE CHAPEL

WRITTEN BY

MAND PASKUSKI

COLD OPEN:

EST. MAGGIE VALLEY NORTH CAROLINA - DAY

The YEAR is: 1903.

SOUND: A BANJO PICKS PITCHY STRINGS in a happy tune.

INT. BARN - DAY

EMMITT CLOCK (10), JUMPS from a high beam into a mound of HAY.

DUNCAN CLOCK (9), JUMPS next.

Emmitt wails.

EMMITT (O.C.)
(from inside hay)
You clipped m'arm, you fool!

INT. INSIDE HAY MOUND - SECONDS LATER

DUNCAN
Sawry Emmitt.

Emmitt looks down. A strange OBJECT is underneath his butt.

EMMITT
What the...?

A TRAP DOOR with a large METAL LOOP HANDLE.

Emmitt tugs but it's HEAVY. Duncan helps but still the door won't budge.

SOUND: A mechanical rhythm, odd instruments land on a repetitious beat congruent with the banjo.

EMMITT (CONT'D)
Shh...listen...

The boys lay their ears down overtop the trap door: A mellifluous cacophony of a rhythm and beat erupts to their and our delight.

INT. CELLAR - DAY

TWO JUGS TOOT like bass guitar strings that vamp between two notes. It keeps a steady rhythm: BEE-BOOP, BEE-BOOP, BEE-BOOP, BEE-BOOP.

A NOZZLE ZIZZES like a high hat: TSS'T-T, TSS'T-T, TSS'T-T.

WATER BOILS: B-BUDDLE-D-DUDDLE, B-BUDDLE-D-DUDDLE.

STEAM like CRASH CYMBOLS: K'SHH! SWOO'T. K'SHH! SWOO'T.

A ROPE CREAKS like a washboard: REEE-R-RUH, REEE-R-RUH, REE-R-RUH!

A SPOUT FLUTES like a harmonica: FWAA---ONG, FWAA---ONG.

INT. BARN - DAY

Emmitt and Duncan poke their heads out of the hay.

DUNCAN

What'dya think he keeps down there?

EMMITT

I don't know.

A BOOT steps forcefully down next to them. It's attached to a holey-jeaned leg. The leg belongs to:

JOHNNY BOY CLOCK a.k.a GRAMPUH JOHNNY a.k.a JBC (60's). A BROWN CIGARETTE climpt in his lips. He's handsome despite the wear and tear.

He towers over the boys, and at first we're scared until..he smiles and it's the sweetest goddamn smile you ever saw in your days.

He squats down to meet their eye level.

JOHNNY BOY

Guestomizations?

DUNCAN

Hobos! Round up and strung over by the ankles! Keep bangin in to one another tryin to 'scape!

JBC nods and looks to Emmitt for his guess:

EMMITT

Mudpie Trolls! They came to life by magic last night and now they've formed a travelin band! They're down there practicin for the show.

JBC gives us that awesome smile again and in it you can see who his favourite is.

JOHNNY BOY
Go on, now. Or you'll miss your
Daddy's sermon. G'one git.

The boys stand and walk towards the barn door.

EMMITT
Y'not comin?

A shared look between the two. Instead of no, he says:

JOHNNY BOY
G'one.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

The boys exit the barn.

CARS pull up and park. People in their Sunday best hop out.

In place of a house is CLOCK CHAPEL. Home sweet Holy-House.

REVEREND JOHN CLOCK II (40's) stands and greets people as they enter. His expression is pleasant and happy until he spots Emmitt.

He and Emmitt make eye contact. The Reverend's gaze is mean and hateful.

He scoffs and turns away into the chapel, a man concerned more with his own business than his spawn.

Emmitt looks back through a crack in the barn door. A peek of JBC as he opens the trap door and descends into the Cellar.

Duncan pulls Emmitt by an OVERALL STRAP into the chapel.

FADE TO TITLE CARD: MOONSHINE CHAPEL.

EXT. CLOCK CHAPEL - DAY

EIGHTEEN YEARS LATER. YEAR: 1921.

EMMITT, now twenty-eight, sits in a PEW. Alone.

He looks ahead at an OPEN CASKET and a pulpit with a large sign that reads: REVEREND JOHN CLOCK II 1850 - 1921.

Sound of FOOTSTEPS from behind.

DUNCAN, now twenty-seven, removes his HAT. Sits down.

Emmitt doesn't turn his gaze from the casket.

Duncan pulls out a JAR OF MOONSHINE, unscrews the LID and hands it over.

DUNCAN

Before the Devil knows you're dead.

EMMITT

The Devil done died, Dunk.

(beat to drink)

Jesus, that's smooth as metal. What is that in it?

DUNCAN

Yumph, don't know. Spicy-sweet kinda ain't it?

Emmitt drinks again.

A beat to stand on ceremony.

EMMITT

Did you know the bastard made obdurate amendments to his last will and testament just b'fore he croaked? Two to be exact. Sonofabitch was adamant.

DUNCAN

Adamant?

EMMITT

Made uncompromisin alterations in the effect of finance. Namely in relation to his relations.

DUNCAN

Emmitt, spit it out.

EMMITT

Apparently we been emancipotated.

DUNCAN

Wus that mean?

EMMITT

Disinheritization.

DUNCAN

I don't think that's a word, Emmitt. Dis-in-hair-itized. Dis-in-

EMMITT

Means we get jack shit! Means we're
goddamn broke! Means our Holy
Father left us with not so much as
a communion cracker to our name!
Need I spell it out for yuh, little
brother?

DUNCAN

Clock Chapel?

EMMITT

Sold it. To the City...day before.

A moment for Duncan to realize the gravity.

DUNCAN

What's two?

EMMITT

Two what?

DUNCAN

What's two, you said there was two
amendments.

Emmitt belly laughs, a man with a touch of hysterics.

EMMITT

The second amendment dear brother
is in regard to burnt or rather
boilin blood. The modification is
as thus: We, as his only remainin
kin, in care of his afterlife flesh
and remains are not to burn his
body on account that it may confuse
our Dear Lord into thinkin he
belongs in Hell!...Fire and all
that, reads less of cherubs and
angels...apparently our paw didn't
wanna take any chances upon his
pre-emptive enterin of the pearly
gates.

They drink.

DUNCAN

Gotta hand it to him, he sure knew
how to think like the Devil so that
God would listen.

Emmitt's eyes light up.