

ANNIE

You...you dirty bird. She can't be dead. Misery Chastain cannot be dead! How could you?

PAUL

Annie, in 1871, women often died in childbirth, but her spirit is the important thing, and Misery's spirit is still alive--

ANNIE

(screaming)

I DON'T WANT HER SPIRIT! I want HER! And you MURDERED her!

PAUL

I DIDN'T...

ANNIE

Then who did?

PAUL

No one--she just died--she slipped away, that's all.

ANNIE

(screaming)

She slipped away? She slipped away? She didn't just slip away. You did it. You did it. You did it. You did it. You murdered my Misery. I thought you were good, Paul, but you're not good, you're just another lying old dirty birdie and I don't think I better be around you for awhile.

(she crosses to the door, then stops)

And don't even think about anybody coming for you, not the doctors, not your agent, not your family--because I never called them. Nobody knows you're here. And you better hope nothing happens to me because if I die, you die.

PAUL, watching as she closes the door behind her. Then there is a RATTLE OF A KEY and the sound of the door to his room LOCKING.

ANNIE

What are you doing on the floor?

(crossing to the bed)

It's my fault. If I'd had a proper hospital bed, this never would have

ANNIE (cont)
happened. Here, let me help you back
in.

(She lifts him back into the bed, which causes considerable pain)

I know this hurts, but it'll only
take a few seconds. There you go.
Comfy?

PAUL
(in pain)
Perfect.

ANNIE
You're such a kidder. I have a big
surprise for you. But first there's
something you must do.

PAUL
I don't suppose I could have a little
snack while I wait for the
surprise?

ANNIE
I'll get you everything you want,
but you must listen first. Sometimes
my thinking is a little muddy, I
accept that. It's why I couldn't
remember all those things they were
asking me on the witness stand in
Denver.

ANNIE
But this time I thought clearly. I
asked God about you and God said "I
delivered him unto you so that you
may show him the way."

PAUL
Show me the way?

ANNIE
Yes.

PAUL
When I mentioned a snack, I was
thinking more along the lines of a
cheese and crackers kind of thing.

ANNIE
Paul, this is no time for jokes. You
must rid the world of this filth.

She hands him the box of kitchen matches.

PAUL

You want me to burn my book?

ANNIE

(she nods)

Yes.

PAUL

You want me to burn my book?

ANNIE

I know this may be difficult for you, but it's for the best.

PAUL

This isn't difficult, my agent's made dozens of copies. There's gonna be an auction on this, and every publishing house in New York is reading it now. So if you want me to burn it, fine. You're not ridding the world of anything.

ANNIE

(quietly)

Then light the match, Paul.

PAUL

No big deal.

ANNIE

So you've indicated. Do it. I know this is the only copy, Paul. When you were twenty-four you wrote your first book and you didn't make a copy, because you didn't think anybody would take it seriously. But they did. And ever since you've never made any copies because you're superstitious--it's why you always come back to the Silver Creek Lodge. You told that story to Merv Griffin eleven years ago.

PAUL

You know, Annie, this book never would have survived without you. When it gets to new York, there will be a big auction, and whatever it brings we can split.

(pause)

God knows you're entitled to it.

ANNIE

Oh, Paul. This isn't about money. It's about decency and purity. It's

about God's values.

PAUL

You're right. You're right. I don't know what I was thinking. I'll tell you what. It doesn't have to be published. Nobody ever has to see it. I'll just keep it for myself. No one will ever have to know it exists.

ANNIE

As long as it does exist, your mind won't ever be free. I think you should light the match, Paul.

There is a long silence. PAUL doesn't move.

ANNIE

Can't you see it's what God wants?

ANNIE

You're so brilliant. I would think you'd certainly be able to see that.

(More drops fall on
the bed)

We're put on this earth to help people, Paul. Like I'm trying to help you.

PAUL watches as the fluid continues to drop on the bed.

ANNIE

Please let me help you.

CUT TO:

PAUL. His hands shaking. Almost robot-like, he strikes one. It flames.

ANNIE

You're doing the right thing, Paul.