

SPILL

Written by

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EXT. OPEN OAKS MOTEL - NIGHT

The neon "VACANCY" sign flickers with a BUZZ. Pink light spills across the empty parking lot. The hotel is dark, save for the faint glow of a small, yellow lamp in the main office.

A run down station wagon churns into the gravel parking lot. It pulls into the space closest to the office. JAKE DWYER, 39, frazzled, eternally stressed, swings out of the car.

He leans against the door and takes a deep, slow breath. He fumbles over his pockets and pulls out a pack of cigarettes. It's empty.

JAKE

Well damn.

He trudges over to the back of the car and pops it open. He yanks out a wheeled trunk and sets it on the ground with care. He leans into the cargo area and grabs a small suitcase and a duffel bag.

Jake slings the duffel bag over his shoulder. He stares across the road into the dense, endless dark. He drags the trunk and the suitcase towards the office.

INT. MOTEL OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jake finagles the door open with his foot.

JAKE

Hello?

Jake drops his bags to the floor with a THUD. A news broadcaster speaks from an unseen television.

BROADCASTER #1

...wanted for killing nine people  
across several states in the past 8  
months...

Jake dusts himself off.

JAKE

Hello? I say, I'd like to book a  
room!

Jake cranes his neck to peek behind the front desk. The phone RINGS - RINGS - RINGS.

SHERMAN, 45, tall and greasy with an over-wide smile and lifeless eyes, shuffles from the back office. He yanks the phone from the hook.

SHERMAN

H-hello? Hello? Well -- no, I-I  
don't think I -- my what? Well, how  
would I get it in th --

Sherman yanks the phone away from his head. Wild laughter CRACKLES from the other line. Sherman slams the phone down and heads back towards the main office.

JAKE

Uh -- excuse me?

Sherman stops in his tracks. He turns to Jake and smiles his odd smile, exposing a row of worn down, yellow teeth.

SHERMAN

Oh. Hah! Didn't see you. Sorry  
about that. Darn kids. Must be --  
must be real bored with summer  
break by now. Hah.

Sherman folds his hands on the desk in front of him and smiles.

JAKE

I'd like to rent a room.

Sherman smiles. He stares right through Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I say -- I'd -- I'd like to rent a  
room? Three nights?

Sherman jolts out of his trance.

SHERMAN

Oh. Hah. Of course.

Sherman whips open a ledger. He scans down a page of room numbers - all empty. He stops at room nine.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Room number nine. Three nights.  
Thank heavens, we haven't had a  
guest in weeks!

Jake nods. He digs into his pockets and takes out his wallet.

JAKE

What do I owe you?

Sherman glazes over.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Excuse me? I say, how much --

SHERMAN  
Twenty-four.

Jake grimaces.

JAKE  
Twenty -- twenty-four dollars?

SHERMAN  
Yes. Well. Three nights, eight dollars a night, so...

Jake fidgets with his wallet. He peels it open and flutters through the bills. Only thirty dollars.

JAKE  
Fine. Twenty-four dollars it is.

Sherman nods.

SHERMAN  
It is. Hah.

Jake and Sherman trade money for room key.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)  
Room number nine.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

The room is simple and clean. A queen sized bed, a bedside table with a lamp, a phone and an alarm clock on it. Keys RATTLE in the door.

The door CREAKS open - Jake tosses the bags onto the bed. He drags the trunk into the room. He sits down on the bed and takes off his shoes.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The HISS of the shower. Steam fills the room. The SQUEAL of the water turning off.

Jake emerges from the shower. He wraps himself in a towel and observes himself in front of the mirror. He checks a bruise on the right side of his torso.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake, in t-shirt and boxers, falls back onto the bed. He opens his suitcase and pulls out a notebook, a thermos and a bottle of wine.

He undoes the cap on the thermos and pours wine into it. He flips through the notebook. He retrieves a pen from the mesh pouch in the suitcase.

JAKE

Easy day. Not a single unit sold.

Jake writes "11/06/1969" in the top, left corner of the page. He drags a bold 'X' across the page. He sighs.

He gulps down the wine. He fills the cup - chugs it - fills it - chugs it. He jerks the phone off the hook and dials.

He takes a sip of wine. He sets the bottle on the nightstand.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Hello dear. Tussy. Somewhere in Oklahoma. Rural. Ranch town, I'd guess. Yes. It's nice. Clean. Big bed.

Jake looks around the room and nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ah. Well...

He thumbs at the notebook.

JAKE (CONT'D)

A few. Well, a couple. Two.

He closes the notebook.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Well, Jan, farmers -- ah -- farmers don't really need top-of-the-line typewriters. No. No I don't -- well, I can't force them to buy, Jan.

Jake stands up.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm -- listen -- would you listen to me? Please? I'm going into town tomorrow. I'll -- Jan! Please! I'll certainly have better luck there.

Jake cocks his head.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Jan? Jan are you there?

He slams the phone down.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Sone of a bitch!

Jake tears into his duffel bag. He digs through socks and underwear to a carton of cigarettes.

EXT. MOTEL WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jake hunches over the handrail. A small pile of cigarette butts rests at his feet. He stares out into the black night.

Crickets CHIRP, the neon sign BUZZES. Jake takes a long drag and snuffs it out on the handrail. He lets the butt fall to the floor.

Jake nudges the door open.

INT. ROOM 9 - CONTINUOUS

The wine has spilled onto the pale blue blanket on the bed.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

A hammer strikes the back of young man's head.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake bolts into the bathroom and emerges with an armful of towels. He throws them onto the spill.

JAKE  
Damn it, damn it, damn it! God  
damnit!

He checks under the blanket. The wine has soaked through onto the sheets. Jake clears the bedding and crumples it into a wad in the corner.

JAKE (CONT'D)

How?

Jake shrugs. He takes a sweater from his suitcase and lays it over the damp spot on the bed. He stares at it and shakes his head.

He fishes a coat from his suitcase, lays on the bed and lays the coat over himself. He switches off the light. The alarm clock reads '1:02 AM'.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

The room is pitch black. Only the faint green light from the alarm clock, which reads '3:33 AM' blinks in the dark. Jake snores.

A gruff voice MURMERS in Polish through the wall from the next room. It speaks in sharp, terse bursts. Jake groans and shifts in his sleep.

The voice SHOUTS. Jake jolts up from his sleep.

JAKE

W-what? Hello?

The voice quiets down but still speaks in harsh tones. Jake clicks on the bedside lamp. He throws the coat off and sits up.

The voice SHOUTS. It comes from the bathroom, loud and clear. Jake flings himself out of bed. He grabs the empty wine bottle and runs towards the bathroom.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Hey! Hey!

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jake lurches into the bathroom. He wraps his fingers around the edge of the shower curtain. He holds the wine bottle up to strike.

He yanks the shower curtain back. Empty. Jake takes a step back. He looks at the wine bottle.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake flops down into bed. He turns onto his back. He sighs.

INT. ROOM 9 - DAY

The alarm clock BLARES into the room. Jake bursts up from his sleep. He checks the alarm clock - '7:00 AM'.

JAKE

Son of --

Jake rolls out of bed. He gets dressed. He wrangles the wine-soiled sheets. He hoists the trunk upright.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Okie doke.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Jake waddles down the stairs to the lot. He crouches and hurries over to his car. He yanks the cargo space open and stuffs the laundry in.

He heads back up to his room. He emerges with the trunk and carries it down to the car. He slides the trunk into the car and SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The car churns into the parking lot and rumbles to rest in its spot. Jake emerges with a lightness in his step. He saunters to the back of the car and pulls a large paper bag out.

He set the bag on the roof of the car. He reaches back in and unloads the trunk and the briefcase.

EXT. MOTEL WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jake eases the Room 9 door open with ease. He glides into the room.

INT. ROOM 9 - CONTINUOUS

Jake sets the trunk and suitcase onto the floor. He slumps the large paper bag onto the bed and tears into it. Fresh, clean bedding.

He dresses the bed. He pops the suitcase open and pulls out a new bottle of wine. He holds it up.

JAKE  
Sha-tow-doo-pwees Cab-er-nay-saw-  
vin-yaw. Sounds good.

He sets the bottle on the floor.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jake sings in the shower.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake sits up against the wall in bed, his legs extended out in front of him. He scribbles through the notebook. Sale. Sale. Sale - nine sales.

Jake digs into the suitcase for a leather pouch. He unlocks the zipper to reveal a huge wad of money. Jake thumbs through it.

JAKE  
Two-hundred for me.

Jake slides a small stack of bills out of the pouch.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Fifty for Jan.

He slides another small stack out. He notates the count, zips the bag up, locks it and tosses it into the suitcase.

He gulps down a whole cup of wine.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake paces around the room with the phone pinned between his ear and his shoulder.

JAKE  
Jan. Hon. That's eleven-hundred  
dollars! And some change! Yes.  
Really.

Jake stops in his tracks.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Yes. I -- what? Of course I really  
did. Why would I -- what good would  
it do to lie? Jan? That's -- why  
can't you be excited about this?

Jake sits on the bed. His shoulders slump.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
 Fine, Jan. Yes. Yes. Three more  
 weeks. Okay. Goodnight.

He hangs up the phone.

EXT. WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jake leans over the rail and pulls hard on a cigarette.  
 Sherman appear behind him.

SHERMAN  
 Hello --

Jake tenses up. He spins around to face Sherman.

JAKE  
 Jesus christ! You trying to kill  
 me?

Sherman stares into Jake.

SHERMAN  
 Hah. Uh -- no.

Jake settles catches his breath.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)  
 Just wanted to see how you were  
 enjoying the room. Hah.

Sherman smiles his over-wide grin.

JAKE  
 It's just fine. Just fine.

Sherman nods.

SHERMAN  
 Good. Long day?

JAKE  
 Ah. Yeah, but good. Good day. Good  
 sales.

SHERMAN  
 Ah. Hah. Yes. Sales. Good sales.

Sherman turns to leave.

JAKE

Ah -- say, uh --

Sherman stops. He keeps his back to Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)

W-what's your name?

SHERMAN

Sherman.

Jake nods. Sherman towards back to face Jake. His grin holds across his face.

JAKE

Well, Sherman. Uh -- is -- is the  
guy in eight -- is he doing okay?

Sherman cocks his head.

SHERMAN

How do you mean?

Jake leans back on the hand rail.

JAKE

He was getting real worked up last  
night. About three A-M. Shouting  
real loud. Christ, sounded like he  
was in the room with me!

Sherman smiles. He furrows his brow.

SHERMAN

N-nobody else -- hah. Nobody else  
here. You're the only room, Jake.

Jake takes a slow drag from his cigarette. He pauses. He scratches the back of his neck.

JAKE

Sure. Right. Yeah, you'd -- you'd  
said that. Hm. Must've been a bad  
dream. Too much wine.

Sherman nods and walks away. Jake pushes into his room. The wine bottle lays out on the bed. Wine soaks into the fresh bedding.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Jake lunges onto the bed. He yanks the wine bottle off. He stares at it - shakes his head - sets it on the side table. He swings off of the bed and pulls the blanket off.

He pulls the sheets. The wine has soaked through to the mattress.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. DINGY MOTEL - NIGHT

Leather gloved hands pull a rope tight against a man's throat.

A fist mashes into teeth.

A hammer plows into a mangled face.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

Jake cleans up what he can. He set the bed up with his sweater and a jacket for a blanket. He lies down, still in his clothes.

Jake checks the clock - '11:38 PM'. He turns off the light.

INT. ROOM 9 - NIGHT

The clock reads 3:33 AM. A COUGH fills the room. Jake shuffles awake.

JAKE

Hello?

A figure stands in the far corner of the room, hidden in shadow. The faint moonlight gives just enough to show a wide, narrow smile - its grey eyes catch a small glint of light.

Jake turns the light on. The figure is gone. Jake swings out of bed and shuffles to the bathroom.

Jake PEES. A mottled, grey and black hand spider-crawls out from under the bed. It creeps up the side of the bed, trailed by a thin arm. Jake emerges from the bathroom and climbs into bed on the opposite side.

The hand slithers back under the bed. Jake reaches for the lamp. He freezes.

The front door hangs wide open. Jake leaps out of bed and plants himself in the middle of the room. Crickets CHIRP from the endless dark outside.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Sherman?

CRICKETS. In the far distance, a dog BRAYS.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
You out there, Sherman?

Wet, heavy FOOTSTEPS race towards the door. Jake lunges forward. He slams the door shut and locks the deadbolt, then the knob. He backs away from the door.

The figure stands behind Jake. Its mouth hangs wide. Hundreds of tiny, crooked teeth line black and rotten gums. Its eyes gloss over in a murky, yellow-grey.

The figure backs into the shadows and melts into the darkness. Jake turns. The figure is gone.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Jesus -- good lord.

He sits down on his trunk and shifts to face the door.

INT. ROOM 9 - DAY

Sunlight pours into the room. Jake sits, sagging shoulders, on the trunk, his head in his hands. His eyes are red and dry as he stares at the door.

A KNOCK. Jake startles up from his seat. A KNOCK.

Jake backs away from the door.

JAKE  
Who is it? What do you want?

SHERMAN (O.S.)  
(muffled)  
It's -- it's me. Jake? It's  
Sherman.

Jake sighs. He puts his hands on his knees and laughs. He opens the door.

Sherman is dressed in an ill-fitting, grey tux. He clutches a platter with a full breakfast spread on it. Eggs, bacon, toast, hash browns, sausage, two pancakes a bagel with cream cheese, tall glass of orange juice, large carafe of coffee, chilled cream, strawberries and peach slices.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

It's -- hah. Tradition. We always offer our guests a free meal on their last morning...

Jake cocks his head. He eyeballs the breakfast.

SHERMAN (CONT'D)

Ah -- here! On their last morning at the motel. Hah.

JAKE

Christ. Sherman. I'm sorry. Was up all night. Stress dreams, you know?

Sherman smiles at Jake. Jake takes the platter.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Thank you. Sorry again.

Sherman nods and trudges off. Jake keeps the door open. He sets the platter on the trunk and slides it to the foot of the bed. He sits down and digs in.

The phone RINGS. Jake ignores it and gulps down a cup of orange juice. He reaches for the coffee - the phone RINGS.

Jake grumbles and strains for the phone.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Hello.

A raspy, sharp and shrill voice responds...

EVIL VOICE

ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-FIVE-SIX-SEVEN-EIGHT-NINE!

Jake's hand shakes.

JAKE

Who is this?

EVIL VOICE

ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-FIVE-SIX-SEVEN-EIGHT-NINE!

Jake slams the phone down on the hook. He backs away from it.  
It RINGS.

RINGS.

RINGS.

Jake yanks the phone off the hook.

JAKE  
Listen you cocksu --

SHERMAN (V.O.)  
Jake?

JAKE  
Sherman?

Jake rubs his eyes.

SHERMAN (V.O.)  
I just wanted to apologize for --  
hah -- for startling you with the  
breakfast.

JAKE  
Oh. No. No, it's fine. Like I said,  
long night.

Jake checks the clock - '8:15 AM' - his eyes go wide.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Listen, I have to run but -- did  
you just -- did you call the room  
just a second ago.

SHERMAN (V.O.)  
Hah. No sir. Just this call now.

JAKE  
Ah. Someone -- I think someone  
pranked the room.

Jake fumbles for his shoes.

SHERMAN  
Oh. Yes. Hah. Some kids stole the  
room number log and have been  
pranking. I'm trying to get the  
numbers changed but --

JAKE  
Yeah. That sounds like a real  
sonofabitch.

Jake hangs up. He gathers his things and heads out the door.  
The evil voice, now in the room, louder...

EVIL VOICE  
ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-FIVE-SIX-SEVEN-  
EIGHT-NINE!

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jake's car grinds into the lot. He exits. Leaves the trunk  
and the suitcase in the cargo space.

He marches up the stairs.

EXT. WALKWAY - NIGHT

Jake fumbles with his room key. Sherman ambles out of the  
room next door with a cart of cleaning supplies.

SHERMAN  
I can't imagine working as long as  
you do. You always do seven to  
nine?

Jake pauses.

JAKE  
Hm? No? It's -- isn't it eight?  
Last stop was at seven thirty,  
takes me a half hour to get here  
from town...

Sherman shakes his head. He holds his watch up.

SHERMAN  
Nine on the nose. Hah.

Jake shakes his head and scowls.

JAKE  
Goodnight, Sherman.

Jake pushes into his room. The bed is completely drenched in  
deep, dark red. Jake hurries to the bed and looks closer.

Blood. Sinew. Hair. Chunks of flesh.

Jake rushes back to the door and yanks it open.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
SHERMAN!

Crickets CHIRP. A dog BRAYS in the distance. Something CLANKS from the bathroom.

Jake turns towards the sound. He makes his way, one step at a time, to the bathroom. A SHATTER from the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

A hammer lies on the floor surrounded by chunks of porcelain. Jake leans in. Human teeth. Hundreds of human teeth, bloody and rooted, cracked and broken.

The lights go out.

EVIL VOICE  
(whispering)  
...six-seven-eight-nine....

Jake pats around his pockets. He lights his lighter. Yellow light flickers around Jake.

INT. ROOM 9 - CONTINUOUS

The front door hangs wide open. Jake charges for it. It SLAMS shut.

Jake wrenches the knob. It does not budge. He drops the lighter.

JAKE  
HELP! HELP ME!

EVIL VOICE  
ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-FIVE-SIX-SEVEN-  
EIGHT-NINE!

Jake punches at the door. He kicks it. It does not open.

Jake turns to face the room.

JAKE  
Whoever you are -- I -- I have a  
gun and I will shoot you.

Nine booming KNOCKS pound on the door. Jake charges for the bathroom. He tumbles to the floor.

He scrambles for the hammer. He holds it close to his chest and lights the lighter. The light flickers its orange glow.

The figure oozes from the shadows behind Jake. It drools thick, black sludge that drops to the floor with a PUNCH. Jake trembles.

THE FIGURE  
ONE-TWO-THREE-FOUR-FIVE-SIX-SEVEN-  
EIGHT-NINE!

Jake leaps to his feet.

INT. ROOM 9 - CONTINUOUS

Jake tumbles out of the bathroom and barrels for the door. He swings the hammer at the knob. He swings again.

The figure crawls out of the bathroom. It wriggles towards Jake in a series of jagged, convulsive twitches.

Jake smashes the hammer into the knob again. The figure lurches up right behind Jake. It unfurls and rises to its feet. It towers over Jake.

The doorknob snaps off of the door. Jake plows his shoulder against the door and tumbles through. He catches himself on the handrail and bolts for the stairs.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jake stumbles down the last few steps. He throws himself at his car, yanks the door open and starts it.

The door to Room 9 hangs open. The lights are on. The room is empty.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jake peels out of the parking lot. He takes a wild turn down the road. He mashes down on the accelerator.

Jake checks his rearview - nothing behind him. His shoulders ease, but his hands stay white-knuckle on the wheel. The clock glows from the dashboard - '3:35 AM'.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - NIGHT

Jake slumps in the driver's seat. He shakes his head and smacks his hands on his cheeks. The clock in the dash reads - '5:48 AM'.

Jake clicks on the radio.

## NEWSCASTER

...Still on the hunt for the mysterious killer known as the 'Red Wine Slayer' - wanted for the brutal murder of nine men across state lines from Philadelphia to Chicago. The odd nickname due to the fact that he always leaves an empty bottle of wine at the scene. Reports say he uses a hammer to --

Jake turns the radio off.

## EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

The car hurdle's along into the black horizon.

## EXT. CHAIN HOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

Families bustle in and out of a large, sprawling chain hotel. Jake's car lurches into the lot and finds a space. Jake tumbles out, disheveled and red-eyed.

## INT. CHAIN HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Jake stumbles to the desk. His eyes are beet red. He clears his throat.

The DESK CLERK, 34, stares at him with a practiced smile.

## JAKE

I need a room. One night.

## DESK CLERK.

Okie dokie, sir. One night is sixteen dollars and seventy-eight cents. Do you have a preference of room ty --

## JAKE

No. Yes. Close to an exit.

The desk clerk flips through a huge, leather-bound ledger.

## DESK CLERK.

Alrighty. Room three thirty-three.

She steps over to the key rack. Jake pants a wad of cash and coins on the desk. He yanks the key from the clerk's hand.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY

Jake ambles down the empty hall.

JAKE

Three thirty. Three thirty one...

He comes to his room. He sighs.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Get some rest. Head home. Confess.

Jake slides the key into the lock. He pushes the door open, walks in and locks the door behind him. He turns to face the room.

A bottle of wine is spilled on the bed.