

## **Black Snake Moan**

**GILL**

What happened?

**RONNIE**

They been keepin' a folder on me cuz of my stomach. Like how it was just before we'd play ball back in school. Thought it was just some tic I got or ulcers like my daddy had.

(takes a drink)

I can't... shoot. Target practice I'm a pro. I tag between the numbers each time but...

(feels a stomach cramp)

But when there's really loud noises around me... somethin' happens. I get shaky and... I lose my breath. They called it anxiety. Severe anxiety. It can be fixed and all...just not in time for....

(another drink)

It's a long process but... they sent me home.

**GILL**

I guess it could be worse. You could be comin' back in a body bag.

(Gill doesn't know what to say next.)

**RONNIE**

I can't get Rae on the phone. She's wasn't at home... none of her friends seen her anywhere.

**GILL**

She's around. Always is.

**RONNIE**

I don't know. She's gettin' crazy, like she gets. Begged me not to go. Got real down. I just think somethin's happened like she run off with someone. You'd tell me if you knew somethin', right?

**RONNIE**

Rae?

(Gill enters. the trailer is the same as it was the day he picked up Ronnie, nothing is different.)

**RONNIE**

This don't feel right. Kitchen looks just like I left it. I know, cuz I cleaned it.

**GILL**

She ever tell you she was thinkin' of taking off?

**RONNIE**

I just been so mixed up lately, Gill. And, you know, with her history, I can see how she could get scared..... and run.

(Gill is disturbed by Ronnie's sudden flood of emotion and tears. He crosses to the pantry, already knowing which cupboard to pull the liquor out of. He pours himself & Ronnie a drink)

**GILL**

Drink. Come on, drink some.

**RONNIE**

Her momma works down at the grocery, down on the square. Maybe she seen her.

(Gill stands over Ronnie, looking down on his pitiful face.)

**GILL**

Ronnie, you can't see cuz you're too close to it. These nervous spells you get. You never had that shit back in school...

**RONNIE**

That's not right, really, cuz I...

**GILL**  
(continuing)

You joined up in that monkey troop cuz you had a plan for yourself. Army'd pay for school. You were gonna get a degree, maybe somethin' in business or agriculture and you were gonna make somethin' of yourself.

(His words are painful to Ronnie. Gill doesn't hold back.)

**GILL**

And then you had to fall in love with the school slut.

**RONNIE**

Now wait...

**GILL**  
(continuing)

With all she was doin'. With all the shit she *kept* doing!  
You stayed stuck to that bitch's ass and you wouldn't let go.

**RONNIE**

I know about how she was like. But we was different. I's the only person she talked to about it. How she's abused. Terrible things, Gill, just terrible...

(Rage suddenly fills Gill and he grabs Ronnie.)

**GILL**

YOU HAD A PLAN! YOU HAD A GOD DAMN LIFE!  
AND SHE JUST FUCKED THE GUTS OUT OF YOU!

**RONNIE**

It's not her fault, Gill. She's had to take care of me all this time, cuz I'd just start throwin' up... choking. Just losin' my grip. And she listened. She listened to me.

(Gill releases Ronnie and walks away)

And...I got better. I don't get nervous like I used to. And since we been together... she been faithful to me. Put all that junk behind her...

**GILL**

The only thing that cunt's had behind her is me and half the town fuckin' her . . .Your first night away, I come over and drop off the spare keys like you wanted me to. You weren't gone two hours and she was aching to get me inside her. Like she was havin' some kind'a fit.

**GILL**

(Gill holds up the whiskey bottle.)

Don't you think it's funny how I know where everything in your house is? I don't care if that hurts you or not. Truth is I don't know who you are anymore. So fuck it.

(Gill turns away. Ronnie pulls a gun on Gill and retrieves the keys from his front pocket.)

**GILL**

You gonna steal my truck?

**RONNIE**

Make yourself at home. You done it already.