

THE LIZARD INN

FADE IN:

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

JAKE DISANTIS, 30, stands before the bathroom mirror. He's wild-eyed, drunk and sweating. In his right hand, dangling at his side: a snub-nose .38 revolver.

Jake shoves the gun into his inside jacket pocket. He washes his hands, splashes his face, washes his hands again -- almost methodically.

JAKE (V.O.)
...holy water...this holy water...
and Your Precious Blood...wash away
my sins...

FADE TO BLACK

SOUND OF A CAMERA SHUTTERING;
A SERIES OF SNAPSHOTS FILL THE SCREEN

- A) A frozen pond in the park -- WINTER in New Jersey.
- B) The BAYONNE BRIDGE -- a large steel-arch structure.
- C) A CHURCH with ornate stained-glass windows and a steeple reaching toward the heavens.
- D) The front of a small neighborhood BAR, a painted sign above the window: 'THE LIZARD INN.'

INT. THE LIZARD INN - DAY

An empty, working-class pub.

INSERT - DIGITAL CLOCK ABOVE THE BAR

It reads: 6:13

2)

BEHIND THE BAR

LIQUOR BOTTLES line the back wall; GLASSES hang from an overhead rack; BOBBLE-HEADED SPORTS' FIGURES on a shelf (Knicks, Yankees, etc.). TWO ITEMS tacked to a corkboard:

A weathered POSTCARD -- 'WELCOME TO THE GRAND CANYON' in blue boldface across a panoramic shot of the Grand Canyon; and a yellowed NEWSPAPER CLIPPING of a boxer in a fighter's crouch (shirtless, in green trunks, a gold cross hanging from his neck). The lettering beneath the boxer reads: JAKE 'THE SAINT' DISANTIS.

INSERT - DIGITAL CLOCK

It reads: 12:41

THE LIZARD INN

now peopled with a BARTENDER and THREE PATRONS -- one on each side of the horseshoe-shaped bar (OL' MAN BOB and TOMMY WIZ), and one seated in the middle (JAKE).

A YOUNG MAN is painting the wall near a pool table in the adjoining back room (POET).

SUPERTITLE: 'BAYONNE, NEW JERSEY'

OL' MAN BOB, an antique wearing too-thick, coke-bottle glasses, sips a frothy mug of brew and stares out the front window.

OL' MAN BOB

Look at that fuckin' church, will ya...
It's noth...nothin'!

POET (V.O.)

...last time I saw Jakey DiSantis was
that Sunday afternoon at the Liz...
There was Ol' Man Bob -- older than
God Himself it was said...

TOMMY WIZ, mid-fifties, a mountain of a man in a drab green army jacket, LIGHTS his brown-wood pipe.

3)

POET (V.O.)

Tommy Wiz...Tommy was a Vietnam
vet, knew just about everything,

but only spoke when he really had
something to say...

DAN, late forties, husky, always in motion, wipes a section of
bar, then swings his dish towel high overhead.

POET (V.O.)
...Dan, the bartender...

POET, early twenties, wearing paint-spattered coveralls, paints
a patch of wall in the adjoining back room.

POET (V.O.)
...and me. My name's Albert Patella.
I'm an actor hyphen writer and sometime
handyman for Frankie Footlong -- the
owner of this establishment and a few
others. Everyone calls me 'Poet'.

Jake drains a rum and coke with purpose, howls. He's unshaven,
possesses an ex-lightweight's features -- but he's no palooka.

POET (V.O.)
And, of course, there was Jakey...
Jakey was a thirty year-old former
pug from Jersey City.
(pause)
He once killed a man...unintentionally.

OL' MAN BOB still gazing out the window, a chewed cigar in one
hand, near-empty mug in the other.

OL' MAN BOB
Nobody in there's turnin' water into
wine -- bullshit!

He empties the rest of his mug and sets it on the bar -- his
point made.

4)

KITCHEN ENTRANCE/BACK ROOM

A handsome, fortyish, well-built man saunters toward the bar.
This is FRANKIE FOOTLONG -- well-dressed and freshly-coiffed,
self-assured and successful.

FRANKIE
(to Poet)
See ya later, Po...

Poet turns from the wall he's dutifully PAINTING.

POET
'kay Frankie.

Frankie continues to the bar, stops next to Jake.

FRANKIE
How ya doin', Jakey?

JAKE
Okay, Frankie...You?

FRANKIE
Good, good...Dan the Man --

DAN
What's up, boss?

FRANKIE
I gotta run some errands. Be back
around three.

DAN
Awright, Frankie. See ya later...

Frankie waves.

FRANKIE
See ya, guys...

JAKE
Later, Frank.

5)

Tommy Wiz nods, lifts his drink.
Frankie exits through the front door.

Jake downs another rum and coke, stands, walks out of frame.
A 35MM CAMERA housed in a leather case hangs across the back of
his chair.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT -- NEXT DAY (FLASHFORWARD)

Jake is packing a cardboard box in his small, sparsely-furnished studio apartment. He places a framed photograph of A BLONDE WOMAN and himself on top of A FRAMED PHOTO of himself (he's in a fighter's stance, shirtless, wearing green trunks).

He rummages through the box, pulls out an envelope with his name on it. Slides out the typed note inside and scans it.

INSERT -- THE NOTE

'Jake,

You have let me down for the last time.
It's over.

Lana

P.S. I want you out!'

BACK TO PRESENT

Jake stands in front of the jukebox, searching for song selections.

JAKE

(raises voice)

Hey, Ol' Man -- What ya wanna
hear? 'Mack the Knife' -- What?

(turns)

Tommy, anything? Dylan? Woody?
This land is your land Tom --
and you know it...

Tommy sips his gin and tonic, waves.

6)

TOMMY

I have faith in you, Jakey. Go 'head.

JAKE

Ol' Man? Come on, any requests?

Ol' Man finally turns from the window -- and the church outside.

OL' MAN BOB
Whuh? Yeah, yeah, put some Frankie
on.

JAKE
Ookay, then.

Jake slides a bill in the slot, attempts to select a tune.
Nothing. He grimaces.

JAKE
(to himself)
Didn't take...What's up with that?

OL' MAN BOB
...that fuckin' church, remember goin'
there first got married...

JAKE
(raises voice)
Dan, what's up with the juke -- won't
take my ducket...

Dan, behind the bar placing bottles in the cooler, turns.

DAN
Ah, shit -- must be on the fritz again...

JAKE
(to himself)
Great...the day the music died...

Dan straightens, runs his thumb across his damp forehead.

7)

DAN
Been havin' problems with the ol' girl...
Ay, Poet! Po...

Poet stops painting, turns toward the bar.

POET
Yeah, boss --

DAN
Take a look at the jukebox get a chance...

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