

SIDE 7: Annie and Buster

(Outside, BUSTER approaches. He's all business, with a sense of urgency, and is about to knock on the door when ANNIE opens it.)

ANNIE. Heard you drive up. All these visits and I've never invited you in, my manners. I can make you coffee, cocoa, whatever.

BUSTER. I'm the only one still thinks there was something strange about Paul Sheldon's death. The snow has thawed, and there's no body. He came to the Lodge to write, but there's no manuscript. Not to mention, whatever the FBI says, that car sure did look pried open. Now, I was just in the General Store, nosing around, and Pete told me Annie Wilkes has become the biggest customer he ever had for typing paper. Can you explain that to me?

ANNIE. You must never tell anyone what I'm about to tell you.

BUSTER. Depends if you're breaking the law.

ANNIE. You be the judge. When you told me you'd found Paul Sheldon's car, that he was most likely out there, was probably going to freeze to death or worse, I got down on my knees. And I begged for it not to be true. And I prayed harder than ever in my life for Paul Sheldon. And while I was down on my knees, God answered me. God told me to get ready.

BUSTER. For what?

ANNIE. To try and be his replacement. No one gave more pleasure to as many people as Paul Sheldon did. God told me that since I was his number one fan in all the universe, I should make up new stories as if I was Paul Sheldon. I said to God, 'I don't think I can do that. I've never once in my life thought I could tell stories.' And God said to me, 'You must try.' (she is so moved now) So I've been trying. I went to town and I bought the same kind of paper that Paul Sheldon wrote on. And a clunky old typewriter that didn't even have an 'N' -- and every day, Buster, I have been working so hard. I know the kind of words he used. I know the kind of stories he told. But I have no talent! I spend day after day trying -- I've written two hundred pages and it's agony.

BUSTER. That many?

ANNIE. Want to read them? Maybe you could help me.

BUSTER. Never been much of a critic.

ANNIE. I could have made people so happy. Help me, Buster -- when will God say 'enough?'

BUSTER. Sounds like you're a lot closer to Him than I am. (He's getting ready to leave) And you sure are Paul Sheldon's number one fan.

(ANNIE walks back inside her house, closes the door, walks out of sight. Now BUSTER nods and exits slowly in the direction of his car.)