

# White Lightning In My Heart

by

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## Cast

**Scott Louis Beausoleil**

Delusional, alcoholic, comic, charismatic and sexy. A Marlboro man gone mad.

**Johnnie Sue Beausoleil**

A good woman who loves her man, a sexy little firecracker.

**Judge Randy Vandenberg**

A Texas courthouse buffoon, decrepit, salacious.

**Rosemary Thyme Beausoleil**

Ten years old, innocent and loving.

One actor to play the following:

**Mr. Prosecutor**

A red-meat district attorney.

**Johnny Jewel**

A sweet guy, gay and sensitive.

**Dr. Dan Terwilliker**

A devastatingly insensitive psychiatrist.

**Guard**

Man in a white coat.

Time: The present

Place: A Texas county courthouse in the mind of Scott Louis Beausoleil

Set: A unit set representing the courthouse and entrance to a rundown bungalow at the edge of town.

(Darkness. Crickets. Distant rolling thunder. The wind whistles. The sound of a car approaching. Car stops. Engine stops. Car door opens and closes. Sound of spurs jingling? A man enters in the darkness. He strikes a match and lights a cigarette. Coyotes in the distance. Lightning strikes and we catch a good glimpse of the man. He is dressed for the rodeo in a pearl button shirt, a kerchief around his neck, dusty old cowboy chaps, spurs on his snakeskin boots and a bleached-out straw cowboy hat that is precisely folded and creased for effect. He is a classic beat-up hardworking Marlboro Man. We also catch a glimpse of an electric power transformer, a hulking electrical contraption and next to it a metal powerline pole with a ladder going up one side. The man has a map in his hand. Thunderclap follows the lightning. The cowboy takes out a flashlight, consults his map and his surroundings. Lightning strikes again followed by thunder. It's getting closer. The transformer hums and glows a ghostly blue. The man climbs up the ladder on the powerline pole. He howls like a wolf. The transformer zizzes and pops a few times giving off sparks. Lightning and thunder again getting closer together. The man calls out a name. "Johnnie Sue!" Lightning and thunder at the same moment. The stage is filled with light. The man cries out, falls from the top of the ladder out of sight. The sound of thunder becomes the sound of the judge pounding his gavel on his desk. A woman enters carrying a bag of groceries in one arm. There is a girl at her side with one arm around her holding her tight. They cross to the red front door of a rundown bungalow. There is a black Everly Brothers style guitar on a stand outside the door.)

JOHNNIE SUE

Come on now baby girl. Almost there.

ROSIE

Momma, there's Daddy. I think I see him.

JOHNNIE SUE

Honey baby, I think I see him every day of my life, but it's only one a them filthy bums lookin' at my backside and droolin' like a hound dog.

ROSIE

Is Daddy gonna get rained on, Momma?

JOHNNIE SUE

Don't you worry about him, honey. He can take care of himself.

ROSIE

But it's lightning in the sky!

JOHNNIE SUE

Baby girl it's always lightning in his sky.

(She opens the door and they exit. The cowboy reappears, goes to the door and beats on it.)

SCOTT LOUIS

Let me in. Johnnie Sue. Please let me in.

JOHNNIE SUE

(She comes to the door but doesn't open it.)

You get on out of here Scott Louis.

SCOTT

Please open this damn door. I miss you so much.

JOHNNIE SUE

I miss you too, Scott honey but I got a court order says you can't come in here no more.

SCOTT

Please baby it's raining out here.

JOHNNIE SUE

You got a hat, don't you?

SCOTT

I smell lightning, Johnnie Sue. You better come on out here.

JOHNNIE SUE

It ain't no lightning in the sky, Scott. You settle down and go away.

SCOTT

Please, honey. You know I can't help myself. You know what it does to me.

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott Louis, you get on out of here. Before I have to call me a trooper.

ROSIE

(Rosie comes to the door.)

Momma don't leave him out there in the lightning. I'm scared, Momma.

JOHNNIE SUE

It's ok darlin'. Don't be scared.

SCOTT

Rosie?

ROSIE

Daddy?

ROSIE

I don't like it when it's lightning in the sky.

JOHNNIE SUE

Settle down now Rosie.

ROSIE

Daddy's gonna get hit, Momma.

JOHNNIE SUE

Now look what you done. You scared your little girl.

SCOTT

Then let me come inside and I'll sing my song for you and Rosie girl.

JOHNNIE

You get on out of here. Go back to your filthy hovel in the park.

(Lights out on the bungalow.)

A VOICE

Coahoma County Courthouse, Sovereign State of Texas now in session. All rise for the honorable Judge Randy Vandenboghagen.

SCOTT

(Scott turns back to the courtroom.)

Judge Randy Vandenboghagen?

(Lights up on the courtroom. The judge at his desk.)

JUDGE RANDY VANDENBOGHAGEN

Be seated. Counsel for the defense please approach the bench.

SCOTT

Damn it, Johnnie Sue. Open this door.

JUDGE

Son!

SCOTT

Your honor?

JUDGE

Set down. Counsel for the defense to approach the bench.

SCOTT

That's me, your honor, Judge Randy Vandebogehagen.

JUDGE

No, son. You are the defendant.

SCOTT

Judge Randy Vandebogehagen, your honor, sir. I wish to represent myself in this case.

JUDGE

Come here, son. Approach the bench. Mr. Prosecutor. You too.

SCOTT

(Scott approaches tentatively.)

Your honor? Is that a microphone right there, sir?

JUDGE

That is my microphone. But I don't use it unless I got something real important to say.

SCOTT

I have to be very careful with electricity, Judge Randy Vandebogehagen, sir.

JUDGE

Is that right.

SCOTT

I been electrocuted twice in my life, sir. Touched by the Lord and left for dead. You ever been dead, your honor, Judge Randy Vandebogehagen sir?

JUDGE

What kind of question is that?

SCOTT

I didn't think so.

JUDGE

Son it is my duty to advise you...

SCOTT

First time electricity touched me I was sixteen years old swimmin' in the town pool when the powerline come crashing down and slid into the water

JUDGE

Son...

SCOTT

and suddenly there was this white light, see, just filled the whole world, just filled it up.

JUDGE

I have to advise you....

SCOTT

And I saw Jesus sitting next to me on the bottom of the deep end underneath the diving board.

JUDGE

Advise you that a man....

SCOTT

...and I said, Jesus what are we doing down here on the bottom of the deep end of the town pool...

JUDGE

A man who represents....

SCOTT

And I was scared cause I was leading a sinful life and so I said, Jesus I am scared because I am leading a sinful life.

JUDGE

...who represents himself in court....

SCOTT

...and he said, "It's ok, I forgive you Scott Louis, That's life,"

JUDGE

...has a fool....

SCOTT

"You didn't know no better, "

JUDGE

(He bangs his gavel.)

...has a fool.....

SCOTT

“This here life is just a test and you passed it.”

JUDGE

(He bangs the gavel again.)

Son, you close your mouth. Has a fool for a client.

SCOTT

“Didn’t get no A plus but you passed it, now you come along with me.”

JUDGE

NOW YOU LISTEN TO ME SCOTT LOUIS BEAUSOLEIL! This here is my courthouse and I run this courthouse and I run it right. And I will not tolerate you runnin’ your mouth off whenever you damn well please. You want to run your mouth off you go run for office. Is that clear?

SCOTT

Yes sir, perfectly clear.

JUDGE

Well good.

SCOTT

And then the EMS boys got their fedibrilate, defiberate, defibradate, defibrillator! and they shocked me back to life sir.

JUDGE

Son, will you --

SCOTT

Right back to my miserable hell of a life.

JUDGE

Shut up shut up shut up!!!!

SCOTT

So that’s my point, your honor. First electricity killed me, then it clean saved my life. So I have a deep appreciation for electricity, Judge Randy Vandenbopenhagen, sir. Thank you for lettin’ me speak my piece. Judge Randy Vandenbopenhagen, sir.

JUDGE

Son. (Long pause) You do not have to call me Judge Randy Vandenberg every time you address me. Your Honor will be just fine.

SCOTT

I know that, Judge Randy Vandenberg, sir. But I really like your name, sir so if you don't mind I'll just keep on callin' you Judge Randy Vandenberg, sir. It's got a real nice ring to it, sir. (Judge Randy Vandenberg.)

(The prosecutor steps forward.)

MR. PROSECUTOR

Your honor the sovereign state of Texas, Coahoma County charges Scott Louis Beausoleil with the crime of murder in the first degree. For the monstrous premeditated taking of an innocent life the state can only ask for one penalty for this brutal monster. We ask for Death, your honor, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. We ask for a river of poison to flow through his veins which will paralyze his body and strangle his breath and blacken his face and freeze his heart till he is almost dead. And then we will just let him sit a spell so's he can think about the evil he has done and the pain he is in and the righteousness of his punishment. And when we have had our fill of that and he is good and gone, we will say a prayer for his immortal soul.

JUDGE

Is that all?

MR. PROSECUTOR

Well, no your honor, we could resuscitate him back to life and kill him again.

JUDGE

No I mean are you finished.

MR. PROSECUTOR

Oh! Yes, your honor. The people have spoken.

JUDGE

Son you are charged with the heinous crime of murder in the first degree with malice aforethought. How do you plead?

SCOTT

Your honor I am not aware of any crime that's been committed, so first of all I plead there ain't been no heinous crime. And second of all I plead if there was a heinous crime, which there ain't, I didn't do it. And third of all I plead if I did do it, which I didn't, cause there ain't been no crime, then I will provide an ironclad alibi and failing that I plead extenuating circumstances of a Highly Electrical Nature, your honor, sir, that's how I plead.

JUDGE

Son, you cannot have it every which way. Now you are makin' me mad.

SCOTT

I ain't no monster. I'm a just a poor fool been struck by lightning one time too many.

JUDGE

(About to bang his gavel.)

I find the defendant guilty as hell.

MR. PROSECUTOR

Randy.

JUDGE

Guilty as sin.

MR. PROSECUTOR

Randy!

JUDGE

Guilty as charged!

MR. PROSECUTOR

Randy! Hold on there Randy. I got to make my case. You got to let me get in my licks before you can convict this man.

JUDGE

Mr. Prosecutor, step forward please and refresh me on this point of law.

(Judge and Mr. Prosecutor confer. Lights down on courtroom. Lights up on the bungalow. Scott goes back to the bungalow door and starts banging on it again. He has a bouquet of flowers.)

SCOTT

Johnnie. Johnnie Sue. Open the door, Johnnie Sue. Why don't you open the door?  
Johnnie Sue!

JOHNNIE SUE

(Johnnie Sue comes to the door.)

Go 'way, Scott Louis.

SCOTT

Please let me in. I'll be good. Just want to see you, Johnnie. An' my little girl, Rosie.  
My yellow rose of Texas.

ROSIE

Daddy! Hi, Daddy!

SCOTT

Rosie! That's my girl. Open the door, honey and let your ol' Daddy in so he can give you a great big hug, sweetheart. You are my sun moon and stars, little girl.

ROSIE

I can't Daddy on account of Momma said so.

SCOTT

Johnnie Sue. What are you tellin' that little girl? Why are you turning her against me? I never meant you no harm.

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott Louis. Have you been drinking?

SCOTT

Come out and dance with me, honey. I hear music in the air.

(We hear a Texas two-step or a waltz.)

JOHNNIE SUE

Did you say dance?

SCOTT

Yes, ma'am. Dance with me.

(The bungalow door opens. Johnnie Sue stands in the door dressed for dancing in cowboy boots and a short cowboy dress with petticoats.)

JOHNNIE SUE

You want to dance with me, honey?

SCOTT

I got flowers for you. Johnnie Sue.

JOHNNIE SUE

Then dance with me, Scott Louis. You are full of surprises.

(They start to dance.)

You dance divinely.

SCOTT

Oh come on. You know I can't dance to save my life.



SCOTT

Judge Randy Vandenberg sir. (Thank you.) And I intend to prove beyond a shadow it's just some wino keeled over in the park. And there ain't been no heinous crime.

JUDGE

Fine!

SCOTT

And if there was I did not commit it.

JUDGE

No no no no no.

SCOTT

And if I did I got an ironclad alibi.

JUDGE

HEY!

SCOTT

And if I don't I got extenuating circumstances....  
(He mimes lightning striking his head.)

JUDGE

Goddammit, you are giving me a headache. Proceed!

SCOTT

I call my first witness, Jesus Christ, the son of God.  
(He sings.)  
Jesus loves me! This I know,  
for the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong.  
They are weak, but he is strong.

JUDGE

Order in the court. There will be no singin' about Jesus in this courtroom. We got the separation of Church and State in this courtroom. We got Western civilization and the Constitution of the United States of America. You want to sing about Lord Jesus, you can sing that song in school or you do not sing it at all! Don't waste my time or I will lose my patience with you. Scott Louis Beausoleil,  
(A flash of lightning as he says the name.)  
you are hereby charged with the crime of murder in the first degree with malice aforethought in the brutal slaying of one –

(The Judge bangs his gavel and there is a clap of thunder. We don't hear the name of the deceased.)

SCOTT

Nooooooooooooo! Don't say that name. I cannot hear that name.

JUDGE

How do you plead in the killing of ---

SCOTT

(Thunder and lightning.)

Noooooooooooooo!

(Lights out on courtroom. Lights up on bungalow. Scott goes to the door. He has the bouquet again.)

Johnnie, Sue please open this door. I want to see my little girl.

(Johnnie Sue opens the door. She stands in the door with Rosie who is dressed for traveling with a suitcase.)

JOHNNIE

Are you drunk, Scott Louis? Are you violatin' the terms of your court order?

SCOTT

Why is she dressed like that? All dressed like that. I want to take her for a walk.

JOHNNIE

She can't. She can't go for no walk with you. She's going on a trip. And you can't come.

SCOTT

Where is she going?

JOHNNIE

I can't tell you where she's going. It is of no concern to you. And you will not find her where I have sent her.

SCOTT

Why not? Why can't I come? I ain't no monster. I want to be with my girls.

(Rosie steps out from the door.)

Hey, little girl, tell me why you are all dressed up like that?

ROSIE

I don't know. I guess cause I'm goin' on a big trip.

SCOTT

Where to?

ROSIE

I don't know but Momma says I got to.

SCOTT

Hey sweetie, guess what? I'm writing a song for you?

ROSIE

You are?

SCOTT

Yeah I'm writin you a love song. Well actually it's for you and Momma both. Cause I love you both.

ROSIE

Will you sing it for me?

SCOTT

Well I just started workin' on it honey. There ain't much to sing yet.

JOHNNIE

Rosemary Thyme you come inside this minute. We have got to be goin'.

ROSIE

Daddy, please don't get hit by no lightning. It makes me cry every time it rains.

SCOTT

Honey it ain't nothin to cry about. It's just a big ol' thunderstorm is all. I wouldn't let no lightnin' touch you.

JOHNNIE SUE

We have got to be goin'

SCOTT

These are for you.

(Scott gives Rosie the flowers. Johnnie Sue pulls Rose inside and closes the door. Lights out on the bungalow.)

That's right. I had some flowers and I gave them to Rosie. Or was it Johnnie Sue?

(Lights up on courtroom. Scott turns back to the Judge.)

And then they killed that ol' wino, your honor and then they took me away. I mean he keeled over in the park. Or did they kill him? Hell, I don't know. I'm just a space shot,

sir, ain't got no gyroscope to speak of, my retrorocket's broke, my parachute's disintegrated and I am comin in for a hard hard landing. But I ain't no monster.

JUDGE

Then how do you plead?

SCOTT

I plead innocent, your honor. Innocent. (To himself. Sing song.) And there ain't no crime. And I didn't do it. And you can't prove it. On account of my alibi. And extenuating circumstances (of a Highly Electrical Nature).

(He mimes being struck by lightning.)

JUDGE

Mr. Prosecutor, you may call your first witness.

MR. PROSECUTOR

Call Ms. Johnnie Sue Beausoleil.

(Lights up on the bungalow. Johnnie Sue enters from her front door and crosses to to the witness stand.)

SCOTT

Hi, baby.

JOHNNIE SUE

(As they pass she stops and gives him a good hard smack.)

What are you doing in a courtroom?

SCOTT

I don't know

JOHNNIE SUE

Well it must be something. It's always something with you. So what is it this time?

SCOTT

I don't know

JOHNNIE SUE

Well you better find out.

SCOTT

I will but you and Rosie gotta help me get to the bottom of this, so I can establish my innocence. And my ironclad alibi. And my extenuating circumstances.

(She sits at the witness stand.)

JUDGE

Mr. Prosecutor?

MR. PROSECUTOR

Now Ms. Beausoleil....

(The lights dim and Scott Louis is in a spotlight, all alone in his head as he stands on a streetcorner. During the following he takes off all his clothes until he is wearing nothing except a ragged torn filthy pair of pants and his cowboy boots.)

SCOTT

I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness and I say unto you...

(He grabs his left side, as if he has a stitch.)

Ah. Damn.

An' it shall be for a sign and a season....

(He feels something higher up around his chest.)

Oh no. Ahhh.

And the lord said Let there be Lightning. And there was Lightning. And God saw that the Lightning was good. And God separated the Lightning from the Darkening. And God called the Lightning Lightning and the Darkening called He Thunder. And the Lighning and the Thunder was the first day.

(The pain in his chest causes him to double over for a moment. Then slowly straightens up.)

And God said, Let the all the liquor under heaven be gathered together and let the dry land appear. And lo it was so. And He called the dry land Texas. But it wasn't dry for long. And He said, Let there be package stores, and the land was not dry. And the Thunder and the Lightning was the second day. And that was a good good day. Ahhh. Goddamn.

(He clutches his chest.)

And the Lord God said, Let us make a man. And the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the earth and the white lightning of the lord filled that man's heart and set his heart to beating.

Oh no. It's goin' too fast. Way too fast.

(He drops to one knee.)

And the Lord said let there be Johnnie Sue and the man knew his girlfriend Johnnie Sue and she grew great with child, but the child they were havin' it was gonna be a terrible electric monster baby child on account of the man had white lightning in his heart where his blood should be. And so she lost that little baby and they paid for their terrible sin.

(He gets back up.)

I done dark dark deeds and they are burnin' up my heart. Forgive me, Johnnie Sue. It was the lightning made me do it.

(A moment.)

And then they got married and they had a for real baby girl. And they called her name Rosemary Thyme Beausoleil. And she was somethin' else. So goddamnn beautiful. Where is she, Johnnie Sue? I wanna see my little girl. Can't no court order stop me. That ain't right. I'm comin' Johnnie Sue. I'm comin' home. I got my -- Ahhhh.

(He clutches his heart and goes down on one knee.)

I got my -- Ahhhhhhh.

Oh Jesus. My head is swimmin'....

My brand new....,

(He fights his way back to his feet.)

I love you, Johnnie Sue. I love your blue blue eyes, I love your big honkin' tits, I love your your inky dinky butt, way you go skinny bitchin' down the street with both sides bangin', look like two cats fighting in a tote bag. Oh baby.... I miss you so bad. I'm gonna bust down that door with my .....

(He picks up his guitar from the guitar stand.)

Ahhhhh!

(He doubles over in pain again, then straightens up.)

my brand new shiny ....., Ahhhhhh.

(He doubles over again, slowly trying to work his way back to his feet.)

Oh Lord why are you testing me?

Tell me, Jesus. I got my-- Ahhh. Too fast. Too fast. I'm runnin' out of heartbeats.

(He staggers. He tries to get up, but he staggers again.)

my brand new bigass -- Ohhhh Lord!!! I can't stop it. Make it stop. It's bustin' right through my chest.

(He is on his knees in pain clutching at his chest.)

I done dark dark deeds. Forgive me, Johnnie Sue. I want to see my little girl. It was the lightning made me do it.

(Lights up on the bungalow. Rosie opens the door.)

ROSIE

Daddy!

SCOTT

Rosie!

JOHNNIE SUE

No!

(Rosie slams the door in fright. Lights out on the bungalow.)

SCOTT

I'm gonna get my brand new bigass twelve gauge – Ahhhhh!!

(He shouts to the sky.)

I got White Lightning in my heart and it's burnin' down the world!

JUDGE

Counsellor! Do you wish to cross-examine the witness.

(Scott hears the Judge. He snaps out of his memory. He looks around. He puts the guitar back on the stand.)

SCOTT

That's right it was my guitar. Or was it roses? I got to figure this all out.

(He sees his cowboy clothes on the floor at his feet. He puts on his cowboy hat. He looks around and realizes where he is. He picks up the rest of his clothes and looks at them. He jangles his spurs.)

JUDGE

Counsellor!

SCOTT

Yes your honor Judge Randy Vandenbopenhagen sir.

(Scott stands beside the witness stand. During the following he puts the rest of his cowboy outfit back on. Well not the spurs cause they make so much damn noise. And not the hat, so we can see his handsome face.)

(To Johnnie Sue.) You solemnly swear to tell the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help--

JOHNNIE SUE

I already done that, Scott Louis.

SCOTT

You swear on a stack of bibles?

JOHNNIE SUE

I already done it on a bible. I said it.

SCOTT

Ms. Beausoleil. You understand I got my life at stake here?

JOHNNIE SUE

Why, Scott?

SCOTT

On account of some crime they say's been committed.

JOHNNIE SUE

I'm scared, Scott.

SCOTT

I'm scared too, baby.

JOHNNIE SUE

Come home, Scott Louis.

SCOTT

I got to make my case first.

JONNIE SUE

Hold me, Scott. Hold me like you used to.

SCOTT

I can't. You know I can't.

JOHNNIE SUE

Please, Scott.

SCOTT

I got lightning in my very soul, coursing through my body, one touch from me could burn you to a cinder.

JOHNNIE

No you don't!

SCOTT

I do. You know I do. It all started after I got killed and struck by lightning the second time in my life.

JOHNNIE SUE

Oh no, don't start in now. Not here.

SCOTT

Your honor, it all began when I was working on the line down in Plano.

JUDGE

(To himself.) Ain't she the cutest little thing. What the hell does she see in a boy like that. Oh well. Oh well. (To Scott.) What? What?

SCOTT

Your honor?

JUDGE

Son, you direct your questions to the witness and let me have some privacy up here.

SCOTT

Ms. Beausoleil? That is your name is it not? Ms. Johnnie Sue Beausoleil?

JOHNNIE SUE

You know perfectly well.

SCOTT

Hey I am my lawyer now. You got to let me be my lawyer now and stop talking to me like I'm me.

JOHNNIE SUE

Well tell your lawyer he knows me since high school.

SCOTT

Fine. Now. It all began when I was working the line out in Plano. You ever been out to Plano, miss?

JOHNNIE SUE

You didn't work on the line in Plano.

SCOTT

Yes I did.

JOHNNIE SUE

Don't start in on that story.

SCOTT

Six years I walked the line.

JOHNNIE SUE

Like fun you did. Why you got to tell that story, Scott? Folks gonna think you ain't got all your dogs barkin'.

SCOTT.

Excuse me, miss. I'm the one asking the questions here. Six years I spent on that line, just me and the sky and the line out there.

JOHNNIE SUE

Powerlines in Plano are buried underground. The heck are you talking about, Scott Louis?

SCOTT

There is six hundred volts of DC current in that line going swoop swoop all the way to sunrise out there.

JOHNNIE SUE

Hey! You are supposed to be askin' me questions. Ask me a question, why don't you?

SCOTT

And then when the thunderheads roll in, well I never used to pay 'em no never mind, I ain't afraid of no thunderstorm.

(He trances out momentarily.)

I got white lightning in my heart and its....

JOHNNIE SUE

You ain't got no white lightning in your heart, Scott Louis. Stop sayin' those crazy things so you can come on home to me.

SCOTT

I got to make my case, Johnnie Sue. I got my life at stake here.

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott Louis, is there something you're not tellin' me?

SCOTT

I don't... I ain't... I can't remember but bits and pieces...Now listen to me. I got to figure this out 'cause I think it's got something to do with my extenuating circumstances. Now there was this one time I was out there in Plano and I was--

JOHNNIE SUE

No you were not.

SCOTT

And I was way up in them powerlines way up high out in the middle of nowhere and the sky so big it felt like it was everywhere. And it started to rain.

JOHNNIE SUE

Ask me a question, Scott.

SCOTT

Isn't it true, Ms Johnnie Sue Beausoleil, that I was out there in the rain --

JOHNNIE SUE

No, it isn't.

SCOTT

Please wait till I am finished. And it was thunder and lightning and I knew those bolts was getting' closer and closer to me cause I could hear the thunder and the lightning gettin closer and closer together Ain't that true?

JOHNNIE SUE

What?

SCOTT

Isn't it true, Ms Johnnie Sue Beausoleil that I couldn't but hardly see 'em go FLASH and then WHAM they exploded in my ear.

JOHNNIE SUE

How on earth should I know that?

SCOTT

A simple yes or no will suffice ma'am.

JOHNNIE SUE

Then, no, it ain't true.

SCOTT

May I remind you that you are under oath?

JOHNNIE SUE

May I remind you that you are under arrest?

SCOTT

That is why I am asking you. I got to get to the bottom of this.

JOHNNIE SUE

Well go on then, get to the bottom

SCOTT

And I said to myself, "Look out, Scott Louis, mighty close that time."

JOHNNIE SUE

I can't hear you thinkin'.

SCOTT

Yes, you can. And I can hear you.

JOHNNIE SUE

That better not be true. I will not stand for that. I will get me a court order stop you hearing me think. Can I get a court order your honor?

JUDGE

(To himself but outloud.) Very pretty dress. Uh, I mean, uh yes yes. I mean no no, you can't.... This here is a criminal court, Miss. Can't get no short order here.

SCOTT

And next thing I know I heard that WHAM, that sizzlin' kind of KABLOOEY and it knocked me off that pole and send me flying ass over teacup. Aint' that right?

JOHNNIE SUE

How am I supposed to know what you heard out there in the middle of nowhere out there in Plano?

SCOTT

Ah ha! So you admit I was in Plano!

JOHNNIE SUE

I am speakin' hypothetically.

SCOTT

And I looked down at my body lying down there on the ground, and I was floatin' over the damn thing and thinking, Hey, I heard it before I seen it. Ain't that somethin'? That don't happen very often. And long story short, is it not true that I was dead. Dead as a doughnut. Deader.

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott Louis, folks here are gonna think you're off your rocker you keep tellin' this story.

SCOTT

Just answer the question. Isn't true that the good lord was a tuggin me up to heaven when those ambulance boys got out their zapper and they zapped me back to life? And ain't that the true story how I got killed and struck by lightning the second time?

JOHNNIE SUE

You ain't never been dead in your life. I don't know why you are tellin' that crazy story here. You ain't done nothin' Scott. You don't need no ironclad alibi and, if that don't hold up, extenuating circumstances.

SCOTT

The Good Lord struck me dead and the Good Lord brought me back to life. Repeatedly. Repeatedly. And I am not responsible for any crimes that did or did not happen and which I did or did not commit in spite of my ironclad alibi which I might or might not have. (On account of my extenuating circumstances.)

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott! You never got hit by no lightning, unless you mean that White Lightning costs a buck sixty-nine a bottle seems like it hits you over the head everytime you got two dollars in your pocket.

SCOTT

That is a flat out lie. I never touched no liquor in my life.

JOHNNIE SUE

You were coming home drunk every single night. And they was gonna take my baby away so I kicked you out to save my baby girl

(Lights up on Rosie in the bungalow.)

ROSIE

Daddy!

SCOTT

Rosie girl, come and dance with me.

(Rosie puts her feet on top of Scott's and the dance as he hums a tune.)

This here's the waltz, Rosie. See it goes one two three. One two three, one two three.

ROSIE

One two three, one two three, one two three.

SCOTT

That's it little dancin' girl. I think you got it.

ROSIE

Daddy, you dance divinely.

SCOTT

You sound just like your Momma when you say that.

ROSIE

Do I really?

SCOTT

You sure do and you dance divinely too.

ROSIE

Do I really? I mean really?

SCOTT

Honey some day you are gonna dance like that with some goodlookin boy and he is gonna come apart at the seams like an old Raggedy Andy doll.

ROSIE

Daddy, is that your song you're hummin'?

SCOTT

Mmm hmm.

ROSIE

Did you finish it yet?

SCOTT

I got the first verse, Rosie. Do you wanna hear it?

ROSIE

Yes please.

SCOTT

(Scott grabs his guitar off the guitar stand by the door and sings.)

Whoever loved you  
Crazy as I,  
Mad as a river  
Wild as the sky?

Whoever told you  
Lies like I do,  
Loved you so holy  
It couldn't be true?

That's about as far as I have got.

ROSIE

Daddy, that is so good you could sing that song on the radio and make a million dollars.

SCOTT

Well maybe when I finish it. I have to write the bridge.

ROSIE

And a harmony, Daddy.

SCOTT

That's right. I need a kick-ass harmony.

ROSIE

Don't say kick-ass.

SCOTT

What should I say?

ROSIE

Say real pretty harmony like angels.

SCOTT

Ok.

ROSIE

Yeah.

(They stop dancing.)

Daddy, I had a dream it was pourin' down rain and you got hit by lightning and it zapped you clean clear through and I could see you inside out your bones and everything and your heart goin' beat beat beat. And I woke up cryin' Daddy 'cause I want you to come in out of the rain.

SCOTT

I will, honey. I promise. I will be comin' home real soon now, but you gotta tell me something before I do. And tell me true. Who is she seein, baby? Who is it?

ROSIE

What?

SCOTT

Whos is she bringin' home, Rosie when I'm not there? I know it's someone so you might as well just tell me who it is.

ROSIE

It ain't no one, daddy. Just me and momma and we get so lonesome sometimes.

SCOTT

She tell you to say that? Is that what she told you to say to me?  
(Rosie pulls away from him.)

ROSIE

No, Daddy. She didn't tell me nothin'.

SCOTT

(He has her in real close.)  
Are you sure?

ROSIE

Have you been drinkin', Daddy?

SCOTT

You know damn well I don't drink, honey..

ROSIE

Your breath smells like a dog been out in the rain all day.

SCOTT

Rosie!

ROSIE

Don't shout, Daddy.

SCOTT

I'm sorry. I'm sorry, baby girl. I didn't mean to yell at you. It's the lightning made me do it. Come back, Rosie. You don't have to answer that question.

(She exits. He turns back to Johnnie Sue on the witness stand.)

I know the answer. (To Johnnie Sue.) You been bangin' Bobby Kennedy, that little four-eyed runt.

JOHNNIE SUE

No I have not!

SCOTT

You know it's true, you faithless wife.

JOHNNIE SUE

It ain't. And don't you ever call me that.

SCOTT

It's my turn, Johnnie Sue. I got the floor here.

JOHNNIE SUE

Bobby Kennedy is dead. Since the day I was born he has been dead.

SCOTT

I don't care if he is dead, I seen you with my own eyes.

JOHNNIE SUE

No you didn't. How could you, Scott?

SCOTT

All them smart ass Kennedy boys. I hear you squealing his name in the middle of the night and beggin' him to give it to you one more time and I run back to the bedroom as fast as I can and he's gone, cleared out in his private jet must a had it parked out back. And you are pretending to be asleep but you got this great big smile on your face and your heart is racing, I can hear it, and you are whimpering his name real soft, Oh Mr. Kennedy, Oh Mr. Robert Francis Kennedy, like you think I can't hear it. BUT I CAN!

JOHNNIE SUE

Scott Louis! You listen to me! I am sick and tired of Bobby Kennedy this and Bobby Kennedy that. Bobby Kennedy don't drive no truck for the A&P. Bobby Kennedy don't own the Power Company in Plano, Texas. Bobby Kennedy don't have no radio transmitter on the dark side of the moon keeps you from getting' a hardon, Scott Louis, although there I times I wish he damn well did. And Bobby Kennedy don't have no private Lear Jet settin' in my back yard and he don't come parachutin' into my bedroom every Friday Night after the Late Show with Jay Leno holdin' Martini and Rossi

imported Vermouth in one hand and Bombay Gin in the other. It just ain't true. And I don't go squealin' his name late at night neither. That is your name I am callin' out, Scott Louis. Your name. Cause I never know where you are and I am lonely as all get out waitin' up for you and wonderin' what you are up to. Now I want you to sober up and come home to me and Rosie.

SCOTT

I heard him on the phone, him and that big brother of his thinks he runs this whole country, and you were tellin' them what you are going to do to them next time they comes to town. That ain't what sex is for, Johnnie Sue. God wanted you to do get down on your knees and do that he wouldn't of given you teeth.

JOHNNIE SUE

I ain't never done that, Scott, as God is my witness, not since I was sixteen and a half years old. And you know goddamn well I ain't got my own teeth anymore, pardon my French. I am *plagued* by dentures and that ain't the least bit funny for you to go teasin' me about it. You make him stop, your honor. He is badgerin' the witness.

(Pause while everyone waits for the Judge to make a ruling.)

JUDGE

(Talking to himself, inadvertently talking into his microphone.)

Hell, I used to get it for free. Now it costs me twelve ninety-nine on pay-per-view.

(Short pause.)

What? Who the hell said that? Order in this court. One more outburst like that and I will clear this courtroom. I hope that is crystal clear. Now you proceed counsellor.

SCOTT

Now let me ask you this miss know it all. Isn't it also true when I was sixteen I was over to the town pool cruisin' the girls and that sniveling little Bobby Kennedy was driving an eighteen wheeler jackknifed clean off the overpass --

JOHNNIE SUE

Bobby Kennedy don't drive no truck for the A&P!

SCOTT

-- clean off the overpass came crashing down in the street and and knocked a powerline into the shallow end where I was danglin' my feet in the water and that powerline hit the water like a roman candle and something grabbed me by the ankles and shook me from here to hell won't have it. No one would touch me 'cause I was startin to smoke. Ain't that true, Johnnie Sue?

JOHNNIE SUE

No it ain't. You were trying to impress Sally Sears and you tripped on the diving board and that is all there is to it. And Johnny Jewel pulled you off the bottom and gave you mouth to mouth and everybody called him homo 'cause, well, he was one, that was pretty

damn clear with his pink shirts and his twotone saddle shoes and that ugly duck of a cadillac he drove with *Perry Como* playing on the radio, who the hell did he think he was kidding?

SCOTT

I was dead. And they had to start me up again, get my tongue out of my throat and bang on my chest till my ribs about cracked.

JOHNNIE SUE

Will you ask me a question!

SCOTT

Isn't it true! That I saw Jesus sitting on the bottom of the deep end all quiet and peaceful and He told me...

JOHNNIE SUE

Now you listen to me. I want you to stop all this crazy talk and sober up! You are endangerin' our little girl. You walk right into the Lee Harvey Oswald elementary school with a big old flask of White Lightning and you sing Jesus Loves Me to her whole classroom? I want you home, but I want you straight. You are never there for her.

(Lights up on Rosie in the bungalow. She is crying. Johnnie Sue comes down from the witness stand and goes to her to comfort her.)

JOHNNIE SUE

Don't cry, honey. It's gonna be fine. You wait and see. I know it will.

SCOTT

(He comes into the bungalow.)

I'm here. I'm here. I'm sorry I'm late.

JOHNNIE SUE

She is cryin' her eyes out on account of she thought you weren't comin'.

SCOTT

I'm here. I'm here. Hi, baby girl.

ROSIE

Daddy?

SCOTT

Hi baby.

ROSIE

It's too late.