

"Hide & Seek"

LOGLINE: John Parker is wracked with guilt over sleeping with a bridesmaid on his wedding day, causing his wife to become catatonic with shock. His only hope of reaching her is the Native American shaman Don Ramon, but John's wife is lost deep inside the secret rooms of her mind - can John face his fears and find her?

BLACK SCREEN.

FLAMES FROM A SMALL BONFIRE REFLECT IN AN EYEBALL.

JOHN PARKER (VO)  
She just froze. Like a fucking  
popcicle.

The eye ball blinks and a tear waters the eye.

JOHN PARKER (VO)  
She's been like that ever since.

INT. A STONE/MUD HUT, SKY CITY, ACOMA PUEBLO, NEW MEXICO.  
NIGHT.

JOHN PARKER (35) sits cross-legged on the floor staring into the fire which illuminates the traditional Native American hut. Colorful woolen drapes hang from three of the visible walls.

The light from the fire doesn't reach the fourth wall where shadowy movement is seen.

DON RAMON (65) appears out of the darkness holding three steaming mugs. His gray ponytail and Native American features cast an Eagle-like shadow against the wall.

He hands John a mug, resting his own on the stone-clad floor and offers the third into the unseen darkness.

JOHN PARKER  
Kind of you to offer, but  
really... she's frozen. I don't  
just mean emotionally, but  
physically as well.

(BEAT)

It took three of us to get her  
in the car.

Don Ramon nods and drinks the brew.

DON RAMON  
And this is why you came to me?

JOHN PARKER  
I've tried everything else.  
Doctors, Medication. I'm ashamed  
to say, just now on the drive  
down here I even tried slapping her.

Don Ramon takes a kerosene lamp from the table and illuminates the darkened fourth wall.

JESSICA PARKER (30) sits catatonic at a chair in the corner, eyes glazed over. At the centre of her dark brown hair is a single tuft of shock white.

Don Ramon flicks the white strand with his rough fingers.

DON RAMON

This changed with the shock? Yes?

JOHN PARKER

Yes! She was always so proud of her hair. A gift from her Italian Grandparents she said.

DON RAMON

Why don't you tell me what happened and we'll see if we can't somehow reach Mrs. Parker.

JOHN PARKER

It was three days ago...our Wedding...

2. INT. A LARGE BANQUETING ROOM IN AN UPMARKET HOTEL. ALBUQUERQUE. EVENING.

A hand places a stylus needle onto a record.

"THE MORE I SEE YOU" SOUNDTRACK (CHRIS MONTEZ), PLAYS.

The late stages of a wedding reception are in progress. Pink Balloons are everywhere. Guests are dancing.

A wall of revelers part to reveal John and Jessica dancing. Her wedding dress is exquisite, John's morning suit looks crumpled and he is stumbling, visibly drunk. Jessica tries to correct his stamping feet.

JESSICA'S MUM, overdressed and overfed, watches from the sidelines. She pokes JESSICA'S DAD in the ribs as he tries to load his plate at the buffet.

The poke upends his plate causing a chicken drumstick to fall into the punch.

JESSICA'S MUM

Aw, Hon. Don't they just make the cutest couple.

Jessica's father gives a browbeaten look at the couple and smiles weakly.

JESSICA'S DAD

Yes dear.

He reaches into the punch to retrieve the drumstick.

JESSICA'S MUM  
And to think how stressed Jess  
was getting.

(MOTIONING TO THE BUFFET)  
You know how highly strung she  
can be.

JESSICA'S DAD (UNDER HIS BREATH)  
Highly strung? Bridezilla?

JESSICA'S MUM  
What was that, hon?

JESSICA'S DAD  
I said, I'm glad the balloons got  
here.

He thumps a large clump of coleslaw onto his already  
heaving plate.

CUT TO

John rests his drunken head on Jessica's shoulder as they  
dance.

JOHN PARKER (SLURRING)  
I love you baby.

JESSICA  
I love you too, honeybun.

JOHN PARKER (WITH DRUNKEN SINCERITY)  
No, I really fucking love you.  
From the moment you saved me from  
drowning, I knew it was you.

JESSICA (LAUGHING)  
Soon as we get back to New York,  
I'm going to teach you how to swim.

JOHN PARKER  
Aw baby, you know I'm phobic  
about water.

JESSICA  
You certainly are tonight... how  
much beer have you drunk?

JOHN PARKER  
I'm serious. Remember Jerry's?

JUMP CUT TO

3. EXT. LARGE GARDEN WITH SWIMMING POOL. SUNNY DAY.

John is holding a beer against his barechest.

Jessica, two men and two women, all in bathing costumes run through him.

He laughs as they pass.

Sound of a splash. John turns to see a swimming pool.

He drops his drink and screams.

CUT BACK TO

4. WEDDING RECEPTION.

John shudders recalling the memory

JOHN PARKER  
Besides, Why's it so important  
to learn to swim? We live in  
central Manhattan.

They dance past Jessica's parents. The father raises his glass and the mother pushes a pink balloon at them.

John head-butts it away.

The balloon is caught by a bridesmaid.

The DJ points at an unseen reveler and changes the record.

The music changes to "NIGHT ON DISCO MOUNTAIN". On the dance floor John catches the eye of the Bridesmaid, her breasts are pushed up by the dress like two pink balloons.

She watches him, he watches her.

JESSICA'S MUM (WATCHING JOHN)  
He's such a nice boy...

CUT TO

4.INT BRIDESMAID'S HOTEL ROOM.

John is on the bed, on top of the bridesmaid. He thrusts with the urgency of a condemned man.

5. INT. BANQUETING SUITE.

Jessica looks round for John. Not finding him she leaves the room.

6. INT. HOTEL ROOM.

John is feverishly grinding away at the bridesmaid. As both he and the music reach their climax the door is kicked open.

The outline of Jessica in her bridal dress is silhouetted in the door-frame.

Her face opens wide in terror, then glazes over.

CUT BACK TO

7. INT. DON RAMON'S HUT.

Jessica's face retains the same expression now flickering in the firelight.

Don Ramon shakes his head.

DON RAMON

I see.

JOHN PARKER

I'm a complete bastard. You don't need to tell me. What can I say? I was drunk, scared. It meant nothing.

John starts to sob. Slowly at first, building to a whine.

JOHN PARKER

Oh God! You've got to help me reach her. She means everything to me.

(COMPOSING HIMSELF)

They wouldn't let her fly back to New York in that state, and if her mother gets wind of what caused this, she'll lynch me.

(BEAT)

They're from Mississippi.

JUMP CUT TO CORNFIELD. DAY.

"THE MORE I SEE YOU" CHORUS PLAYS.

Jessica's Mum stands in a cornfield, still in her wedding outfit. She holds up a hangman's noose, letting it swing from side to side.

MUSIC STOPS.

CUT BACK TO HUT

DON RAMON

How did you find me?

JOHN PARKER

I got wrecked with the hotel barkeep. He's from this Reservation and told me a crazy-arse story about how you brought his father out of a coma.

Don Ramon nods sagely, lighting a bundle of incense sticks.

He waves them around the hut.

JOHN PARKER

Ah! Smudging yeah? The barman told me about this. It's part of the ceremony right?

DON RAMON

Citronella. The mosquitoes are biting me to shit tonight.

(BEAT)

Mr Parker. It's clear your wife has locked herself away deep inside the many rooms of her mind. She's unable or unwilling to answer the door to the outside world.

(BEAT)

Are you prepared to break and enter into this most private of houses.

John looks over at the motionless Jessica.

JOHN PARKER

But how? Like in Fantastic Voyage?  
Are you going to shrink me till  
I can climb in through her ear?

Don Ramon walks to an old wooden cupboard. On the door is a large dream-catcher pendant.

He unhooks the pendant and opens the door, removing a jar containing small green fleshy buttons.

He hands the dream-catcher to John.

John places it over his neck. It looks out of place against his pink T-shirt.

Don Ramon opens John's palm and places three of the green buttons in it.

DON RAMON

Eat.

JOHN PARKER (SUSPICIOUS)

What are they?

DON RAMON

Keys.

JOHN PARKER

To what?

DON RAMON (SOLEMNLY)

The doors inside your wife's mind.

John Parker eats all three at once, chewing with a revolted expression.

8. EXT. DON RAMON'S HUT. ACOMA PUEBLO. DUSK

The last of the sun sets over the Table-Top Mesa. A Coyote howls in the gathering darkness.

CUT TO

9. INT. DON RAMON'S HUT.

Don is looking out of the glassless window.

JOHN PARKER  
What was that noise?

Don Ramon watches him in silence.

JOHN PARKER (BABBLING)  
OK. Only a wild dog. We used to  
get wild dogs on my parents farm.  
I thought... I think... I feel...  
Whoosh!

He collapses to his knees, then his side, in spasm.

He reaches up from the floor with his hand. It connects with a brass doorknob which he uses to pull himself up.

On the door is stuck a picture of his face, a red line and circle drawn through it.

He turns the doorknob. Locked.

Kicking the door results in a painful foot.

With a run up he shoulder-barges the door.

10. INT. A LARGE ENTRANCE HALL.

The door gives way and John falls into a large hallway.

He looks around at the many pictures adorning the walls. All are images of a girl's childhood.

John is drawn to one picture in particular: a small girl holding a pink balloon.

A pink balloon rolls against his legs, caught on an unseen breeze.

His eyes follow it.

The balloon comes to rest next to a door at the far end of the hallway.

A child's laugh is heard from behind it.

John approaches the door.

11. INT. HOTEL BEDROOM.

John opens the door to find himself back in the Bridesmaid's hotel bedroom.

On the bed, the duvet has a large lump visible underneath it.

John walks nervously towards the lump and lifts back the cover.

A large brown pig lays on the bed grunting. It is wearing stockings, lipstick and eyeshadow. It turns to him and grunts expectantly.

He recoils in horror.

JOHN PARKER

Please stop punishing me. What more can I do?

(BEAT)

Let me bring you home. I'll do whatever it takes, just please stop hiding from me.

A window next to the bed bangs open causing the curtains to billow out.

A pink balloon floats in through the open window.

John catches it and bursts it angrily.

At this loud noise, the pig rushes off the bed and through the next door, its stockings trailing behind it.

John blindly rushes to the door before it closes.

12. INT. OLYMPIC SIZE SWIMMING POOL.

The water glistens from the sunlight slanting down through the large glass roof.

John surveys the expanse of bright blue water and grips the doorknob in fear.

The pig is nowhere to be seen.

JOHN PARKER (RESIGNED)

OK. Punish me. Good! God knows I deserve it.

At the far end of the pool a few bubbles burst on the still surface.

JOHN PARKER

That's enough Jess. A joke's a joke but this isn't fair. Open water? The one thing I can't...

More bubbles burst catching his attention.

A black shape is submerged at the centre of the deep end, furthest away from where John stands.

He notices it and walks towards it.

As he gets closer he realizes it's a body.

He runs to the deep end.

JOHN PARKER

Jess! Oh lord no!

He looks around in a panic for anyone or thing to help.

With a deep breath he jumps into the water.

13. INT. UNDERWATER. OLYMPIC SIZE SWIMMING POOL.

John grasps his way to the bottom of the pool.

Bright underwater spotlights reflect off the blue tiling.

He looks around at the circular underwater lights, seeing faces staring back at him.

Jessica's Mum.

Don Ramon.

The Bridesmaid.

John splashes round and round.

The faces stare back judgmentally.

Jessica sits cross-legged on the pool bottom in her wedding dress. Her index index finger is raised, flipping John the bird. Her white lock of hair floats upwards and erect like a further finger insult.

He sits facing her, unable to match her stare.

JOHN PARKER (MOUTHING THE WORDS)

Sorry.

He holds out his hand to Jessica and closes his eyes.

(BEAT)

She takes it.

John opens his eyes and breathes out relieved.

With her free hand, Jessica violently grabs his crotch. He involuntarily breathes in water.

CUT TO

14. INT. DON RAMON'S HUT.

John is lying on the floor in the fetal position, eyes screwed shut.

He leans up, feeling his testicles.

Don Ramon watches from a chair by the window, the orange light of the desert dawn visible behind him.

A female voice from the shadows of the hut.

JESSICA

John Parker...

John tries to speak but spits out a large mouthful of water.

Jessica emerges from the darkness. Her now unglazed eyes piercing.

John gets to his feet, offering a relieved smile.

JESSICA

...you scrawny bastard!

She lands the perfect punch squarely on his jaw.

He falls once more to the ground, reaching out for the table as he goes and knocking over the jar of green buttons.

Don Ramon laughs and shakes his head.

Jessica looks at John crumpled on the floor. Her features soften.

JESSICA

Take me home.

"THE MORE I SEE YOU" SOUNDTRACK PLAYS.

Don Ramon looks out of the window.

THROUGH THE WINDOW FRAME.

A large brown pig in stockings runs away from the hut, pursued by coyotes.

FADE OUT.