

"Caddo Lake"

DALE: Man, that must be ol' Iris Crow playin' her Dean Martin again.

DEL: Must be.

Pause.

DALE: Damn I love East Texas. Listen to that lake.

Dale burps.

DALE: Listen to that ol' bullfrog!

DEL: That was me burpin'.

DALE: Oh.

DEL: Man if I get any drunker I just might forget about my ex-wife voting for Nixon, my three kids, my delinquent car payments, and all that money I embezzled... But I doubt it.

DALE: Embezzled? You're my brother. That's terrible.

DEL: *(pause)* What did I just tell you that was so terrible.

DALE: That you embezzled.

DEL: I didn't tell you nothing of the sort... did I?

DALE: Yeah.

DEL: When.

DALE: Just now.

DEL: Well... "Just now" doesn't count. Remember "just now" is over as soon as you say it. "Just now" is just too goddamn ephemeral to last. In fact - let's drink to it.

DALE: Drink to what?

DEL: Drink to the ephemeral.

They drink.

DEL: *(proudly)* I'm drunker than you are.

DALE: Well, naturally... You're older'n me.

DEL: And don't you forget it.

DALE: How can I? I have to keep lending you money.

DEL: How come?

DALE: Because you're older'n me.

DEL: And don't you forget it.

DALE: How can I? I have to keep lending you money.

DEL: Why.

DEL: Because you're embezzling.

DEL: *(stunned)* I'm embezzling? I'm embezzling? How dare you call me an embezzler. How do you know I embezzle? Is it writ large in the stars that I, Del Lane, embezzle?

DALE: No. You just told me you embezzled.

DEL: Well. OK. That's different. That's brother to brother stuff. That's truth stuff. But remember - I never embezzled from anybody other than themselves. I embezzled from people who deserved it. Hell - if I could've embezzled from Nixon I would have!

DALE: You mean you embezzled your partners.

DEL: Yeah.

DALE: You cheated your partners, Del?

DEL: Not cheated. No. No. No. Embezzling is borrowing money without paying interest as long as you pay it back before they catch you. Just like the Federal government. Now, that's all I've done. That and sell off part of this lake.

DALE: You've done what? ...You've done what?

DEL: I sold off our lake front property.

DALE: You sold our lake front property.

DEL: That's kinda the idea. Yeah.

DALE: In order to what?

DEL: In order not to go to jail. That's in order to what.

DALE: This is what you've done - did?

DEL: It's a done-did-kinda-deal, Dale.

DALE: Well... Shit... That's kind've a shitty deal, Del.

DEL: Well. Technically speaking... Yeah.

DALE: Daddy left us that land together.

DEL: But under my name.

DALE: But we was to share was the idea.

DEL: That was an idea whose time has come and gone, Dale.

DALE: (*shattered*) But Michele and I... Little Dale... Little Dalette...
That was to be our retirement home. Our treasure. Our future.
You know what you've done?

DEL: What.

DALE: You've mortgaged our future.

DEL: (*professionally*) No I haven't, Dale. I haven't mortgaged our
future. I've sold our future. Outright.

DALE: To who?

DEL: To the Grant Brentley Oil Company.

DALE: Grant Brentley! Shit! That lyin' some of a bitch been trying to
drill on this here lake for twenty years.

DEL: And he never could drill here and you know why?

DALE: Yeah, because nobody would ever sell!

DEL: (*soulfully*) Well, I soooouull'd. I soullllld!

Pause.

DALE: How come.

DEL: 'Cause I embezzled and I'd have to go to fuck' - Angola.

DALE: They'd send you to fuck' - Angola?

DEL: Sure as God made little green prostates.

DALE: Angola's a super, fine, fucking scary prison.

DEL: That's where they send embezzlers. Unless... you got
connections. Well, I ain't got connections. I got lake front
property.

Pause.

DALE: We was gonna build on this lake. Michelle and me.

DEL: (*envious*) Michelle and you has been a good marriage.

DALE: As good as you and Monica... had.

DEL: Monica and me... Monica and me don't exist... Life could as well be built on other planets. Like if some alien life form were to come down and irradiate my body - I'd say - how come? Not - don't do it. Just how come... Maybe the irradiation you got in mind, that you got coming, is a whole new point of view. Maybe. Maybe! Maybe! Maybe! Fuck the life form... Monica and me... Fuck the life forms... Maybe we're just dinosaurs too. Maybe we just stay together for the mortgages. Hell, maybe the mosquitoes will inherit it all... It was their sorry swamp before we got here anyway. Maybe we're just a temporary thing here on this bank and shoal of time. (*shouting*) Tennyson! Tennyson! Shakespeare! Marlowe!

Pause.

DALE: Man - I wished you'd never majored in English.

DEL: Me too. Then I'd never read The Odyssey. Which isn't exactly English either.

DALE: Don't know that one.

DEL: 'Bout a man trying to get home.

DALE: Does he make it.

DEL: Barely. After a lotta years.

DALE: Does anyone recognize him.

DEL: The dog does.

DALE: Good for the dog... Does the dog give a shit.

DEL: It dies for ol' Odysseus.

DALE: Goddamn. Good dog.

Crickets. Frog sounds. Del (rises unsteadily) then with an enormous intake of breath -

DEL: Goddamn. I'm OK. Good lake. Good night. Good life. I think I'll take a piss.

DALE: You ain't gonna piss. You ain't gonna piss in this lake. Not in this lake you're not gonna take a piss.

DEL: Uh... Is this an academic thing?

DALE: No this is a brother thing. A blood thing.

DEL: Can I just please take a piss and think about this?

DALE: Well, you could but you can't.

DEL: Beg pardon.

DALE: If you piss in this lake you'll be polluting the son of a bitch and I used to own a hunk of it.

~~DALE~~ ^{DEL} But man they were gonna send my ass to Angola prison if I didn't sell it off.

~~DEL~~ ^{DALE} And that's your excuse?

~~DEL~~ ^{DEL} It's the only one I got - OK.

Del begins to piss in the lake. Dale gets up and pisses in Del's beer behind Del's back.

DALE: We should live in harmony, Del. Balance with Nature, Del.

DEL: A piss in the lake ain't gonna hurt nobody's nature.

DALE: Enough people say that - you know what we got?

DEL: A damn cesspool.

DALE: A damn cesspool is right, Del.

DEL: Your point - in its entire form - is what.

DALE: My point is Nature is God's creation Del. It is to be respected and heeded. If we can't respect nature we can't respect man. Nature is our teacher. Respect it. It respects us.

DEL: The only things that respects you in life ^{is} something that pays attention. ~~to you~~.

They both finish pissing. They zip, Del turns, Dale hands him his beer.

DEL: You know what respects me in life? What pays attention to me. Not my ex-wife, not my kids, not my liver.

DALE: What.

DEL: The IRS. The IRS... loves me... loves my ass... The IRS... respects me...

The brothers sit and sip beer.

DALE: The oil folk. They're gonna fuck up this here lake. You know that don't you.

DEL: Yeah. Sure. I guess... I'm sorry I sold your future, Dale.

DALE: You didn't sell nothing. You just pissed it away.

DEL: Yeah... You pissed in my beer didn't you, Dale.

DALE: Yeah.

DEL: The beer that made Milwaukee famous.

DALE: ...Remember Ghandi drank his own urine.

DEL: I'm not drinking my own urine. I'm drinking your urine. And it sure as shit ain't Ghandi's urine.

Del tosses away the one bottle of beer, opens a new one. They sit and drink.

DALE: I was lookin' forward to building on this land.

DEL: Look forward no longer.

DALE: We was boys here once.

DEL: I'll buy you some new lake front property. Somewheres.

DALE: It won't be the lake we was boys on.

DEL: Nope.

DALE: Nope.

Pause.

DALE: This here lake used to have Indians... hundreds of years ago... Caddoes.

DEL: They did the wise thing and died before the IRS got to 'em.

Pause.

DALE: This is a helluva damn deal, Del.

DEL: Yep.

DALE: ...Music... Must be Iris Crow playing Dean Martin again...

DEL: I'd imagine.

Music: Dean Martin singing: "Money Burns a Hole in My Pocket." The brothers drink. Lights fade.