

WRIGLEY & KING

Written By Neil Murphy

FADE IN:

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

A quiet street in front of a well lit suburban funeral home.

A young man, a FUNERAL GUEST, waits at the base of the front steps.

The guest lights a cigarette and takes a drag. He EXHALES, digging car keys out from his pocket with a JINGLE.

INT. WADE BURDA'S CAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON SEVERAL FINGERS: They TAP the edge of the steering wheel.

On WADE BURDA, mid forties, a tall man with graying hair. He wears a dark suit and tie.

Seen through the windshield is the funeral home with the guest in front smoking.

Wade carefully watches the front of the building as he continues TAPPING his fingers.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT

The front door opens and the guest glances back. A group of people walk down the steps and meet him.

The group converses briefly and one of them points down the street.

The group crosses the street and moves out of view.

INT. WADE BURDA'S CAR - NIGHT

Wade watches the group walk away. He opens the car door and steps out.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - CONTINUOUS

Wade stands up next to his car and quietly shuts the door.

Several car doors SLAM in the distance. Wade glances over at the sound and then crosses the street.

Wade reaches the steps of the funeral home and walks up. He opens the front door and goes inside.

INT. FUNERAL HOME FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Wade enters and closes the door softly behind him. He spots a guest book on a stand nearby.

Wade picks up the pen next to the guest book and lowers it to the page.

CLOSE ON THE PAGE: Wade moves his hand to write then stops himself. He sets the pen back down.

Wade straightens up and walks out of the room.

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

A closed coffin draped with an American flag sits against one wall of the room.

Several rows of chairs are arranged in front of the coffin.

Wade enters from the back and walks between the rows.

He stops at the coffin and stares down.

CLIFFORD SLOAN, mid thirties, an innocuous looking man wearing glasses walks past the doorway to the parlor.

Sloan carries a potted flower in each hand. He glances in to the parlor as he passes and stops.

Sloan gently sets down the potted flowers at his feet and enters the parlor.

He quietly approaches Wade from behind.

CLIFFORD SLOAN

I'm sorry sir but we're closing up  
in 15 minutes.

Wade turns and looks at Sloan, he notes the pin stamped with "DIRECTOR" fastened to the other man's lapel.

Wade nods and turns his attention back to the coffin.

WADE BURDA

Sure, I won't be long.

Sloan hovers slightly behind Wade, he clasps his hands behind his back.

CLIFFORD SLOAN  
How did you know the deceased?

WADE BURDA  
He was my brother.

Sloan looks surprised and moves closer to Wade.

CLIFFORD SLOAN  
Oh. You're the pilot, your family  
said you might come. You missed  
them all earlier, it was quite a  
turnout.

WADE BURDA  
I know, I just didn't feel up to  
it.

Sloan nods understandingly, his gaze moves past Wade and  
rests on the coffin.

CLIFFORD SLOAN  
Your brother Dane was quite a hero.

Wade smiles slightly and glances at Sloan, then back at the  
coffin.

WADE BURDA  
When we were kids, we had this big  
friendly dog named Wrigley that  
used to go everywhere with us. Our  
house was out on this stretch of  
land that had been a farm and next  
door lived this... Paranoid old man  
named Plemmons. He was always  
yelling at our family to train  
Wrigley to stay off his property,  
saying he was going to shoot him if  
he caught Wrigley on his side  
again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BURDA FARM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A quiet field surrounded by barren trees in one of the colder  
months.

Three boys stand looking down at something laying on the  
ground, obscured by the tall grass.

DANE, 15, the oldest stands in the center flanked by YOUNG WADE, 8 and BARRY, 7.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Wade stares down at the coffin, lost in thought.

WADE BURDA

Then one day he just did it, we found Wrigley laying in the grass, most of his head gone. Me and my little brother Barry start crying and Dane, I guess he was about 15 then, he just carried Wrigley back over to our yard. Got a shovel from the shed and started digging a grave.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BURDA FARM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dane with his back turned thrusts the shovel into the hard ground. He exhales deeply, his breath visible in the chilly air.

WADE BURDA (O.S.)

When our Dad got home, we told him what happened...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Wade turns and makes eye contact with Sloan.

WADE BURDA

... And he went over to Mr. Plemmons' place. Dad was a really sort of mild-mannered guy and when he came back he just said that we needed to keep better track of the animals and that he would get us a new dog that weekend. Barry and I went to bed still crying and then the next morning real early, just as the sun was coming up Dane wakes us both and tells us to watch him from the upstairs window.

(MORE)

WADE BURDA (CONT'D)  
Barry and I look down below at the  
yard and we see Dane come out of  
the house...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BURDA HOUSE FRONT PORCH - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dane comes out, the screen door BANGING behind him. He raises  
a shotgun and rests the weapon on his shoulder.

WADE BURDA (O.S.)  
... Holding this 12 gauge that our  
Grandpa had given him on his  
birthday.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Sloan leans forward expressing his interest.

WADE BURDA  
... I think for duck hunting. So  
Dane goes to the edge of the yard  
and he waits. Now Mr. Plemmons had  
his own dog named King, and King  
was the opposite of Wrigley, very  
well trained, never wandered off.  
Mr. Plemmons had even trained  
King...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLEMMONS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

King, a large dog, holds a rolled up newspaper in his mouth.

WADE BURDA (O.S.)  
... To go out the dog door and get  
the newspaper every morning.

The dog's head turns slowly as something draws it's  
attention.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Both men stare down at the coffin.

WADE BURDA

So Dane sees King come outside to get the paper and he whistles to him. It was a very weird whistle that Mr. Plemmons had trained King on. Kind of like had a hum in the back of it.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BURDA FARM PROPERTY LINE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

CLOSE ON THE OPEN DUAL BARRELS OF A SHOTGUN: a shell loaded into each.

An eerie HUMMING WHISTLE is heard.

The barrels SNAP shut.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Wade's eyes narrow slightly.

WADE BURDA

I still don't know how Dane knew to do it. So King comes running across the yard towards Dane...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PLEMMON FARM OPEN FIELD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

King, his eyes open excitedly, runs over the dead brown grass in the field.

The dog still clenches the newspaper between his teeth.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME PARLOR - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Wade stares off in a trance.

WADE BURDA

... And as soon as he was over the property line Dane dropped that dog with both barrels.

Sloan looks taken aback but Wade isn't paying attention.

WADE BURDA (CONT'D)

This'll sound strange but... That's  
really the first time I can  
remember loving my brother.

Wade shrugs slightly and then glances around.

He sees Sloan's startled expression. A slight smile crosses  
Wade's face and then he starts to leave.

Sloan remains speechless, his gaze follows Wade as he turns.

Wade walks out of the parlor. Sloan turns back to the coffin  
for a moment, then leaves the room as well.

FADE OUT:

THE END.