

## Dead Man

By Jim Jarmusch

Look out the window. And doesn't this remind you of when you were in the boat? And then later that night, you were lying, looking up at the ceiling, and the water in your head... was not dissimilar from the landscape, and you think to yourself, "Why is it that the landscape... is moving, but... the boat is still?" And also... Where is it that you're from? - Cleveland. - Cleveland. - Lake Erie. - Erie. Do you have any parents back in, uh, Erie? They passed on recently. And, uh, do you have a wife... in Erie? No. - A fiance? - Well, I... I had one of those, but, um, she changed her mind. - She found herself somebody else. - No. Yes, she did. Well, that doesn't explain... why you've come all the way out here, all the way out here to hell. I, uh, have a job out in the town of Machine. Machine? That's

- Is it? - Yes. Well, I... received a letter... from the people at Dickinson's Metal Works... Oh. Assuring me of a job there. Is that so? Yes. I'm an accountant. I wouldn't know, because, uh, I don't read, but, uh, I'll tell you one thing for sure: I wouldn't trust no words written down on no piece of paper, especially from no "Dickinson" out in the town of Machine. - You're just as likely to find your own grave. Look. They're shooting buffalo. Government says... killed a million of 'em last year alone. Pardon me, sir. Could you please direct me towards the office? Thank you. Excuse me. Excuse me. How do you do, sir? I'm Bill Blake, your new accountant from Cleveland. What the heck are you doin' here? Well, uh, I have here this letter... which confirms my position here. Well, this letter is postmarked two months ago. Makes you about

the end of the line.

a month late.

This here is Mr. Olafsen.

He's our new accountant.

I'm sorry. I think

there's been some mistake.

- Look, Mr. Black,
- Blake.

 $\ensuremath{\text{I'm}}$  a very busy man, and  $\ensuremath{\text{Mr}}.$  Dickinson

does not pay me for idle conversation.

Well, I'm sure he doesn't, but

this letter confirms my position here.

Now, I've spent everything I had

left after my parent's funeral

just to get here.

Listen, Mr. Black,

I've got a lot of work to do here,

and this ain't

my business.

I'd like to speak

to Mr. Dickinson.

No, I-I don't think

you want to do that.

I insist on speaking

to Mr. Dickinson, sir.

You insist?

- I insist.
- You insist?

Yes, I do.

Well, go on then, lad.

There's the door.

All right then.

Go on then!

Well, I will.

Hello?

Mr. Dickinson?

Who the hell are you?

And where did you get

that goddamn clown suit? Cleveland?

Well, actually, yes, sir.

I did, uh, get it

in Cleveland.

What the hell are you

doin' in my office?

Well, I-I-I came

to talk about my job.

The only job you're gonna get in here is pushin' up daisies from a pine box.

Now get out.

Thank you

very much, sir.

Back to work,

Mr. Olafsen.

Excuse me.

Excuse me.

Sorry.

Pardon me, sir.

Could I get

a bottle, please?

We liked you better

when you was a whore.

Jackass.

Shit!

Why don't you just paint my portrait?

I'm sorry.

- Let me help here. One.
- This one's no good. No, it's ruined.
- Two.
- It's no good.

Oh, here. Oh!

Watch yourself.

- You okay? You all right?
- Yeah.

Here. Have a drink.

Would you like a drink?

Thanks.

I'm sorry.

Would you mind walking me

away from here?

- S-Sure. Sure.
- Yeah?

I'll just get

my suitcase.

- It's that way.
- All right.

Oh, shit.

I have a sneaking suspicion that that large man back there was inebriated.

- I was gonna say something, but I don't wanna cause any trouble.
- No, I think it's best.

That's my room.

Wasn't... expecting

any visitor.

- Like it?
- Yes, it's beautiful.

These flowers. Gosh.

They really

are something.

Yeah. Thank you.

You're welcome.

I made them

from paper.

If I ever get the money,

I'd like to make them

out of cloth.

Silk.

And I'd put

a drop of perfume...

French perfume...

in each one.

What does it

smell like?

- Paper.
- Well, it is paper.

Hey, Bill.

You got any tobacco anywhere?

- No, I don't smoke.
- Damn.

Ow!

Oh, watch it.

It's loaded.

Why do you

have this?

'Cause this is America.

Charlie.

You know, Thel,

I never wanted

to go away.

I know we said

it was, uh,

it was all over

and everything, but... you were always in my heart, Thel. Always. I, uh... I brought you, uh... Well, it's a present. A present? Well, I, uh... I'm... I'm goin'. And, uh, I'm... I'm sorry, Thel, for, uh, for intrudin'. Well, I never really loved you anyway. No, Charlie. - I never stopped lovin' you, Thel. - Don't! Thel. Here's white man's metal next to your heart. I tried to cut it out, but it's too deep inside. A knife would cut your heart instead... and release the spirit from within. Stupid fucking white man. Do you have any tobacco? I don't smoke. Hey, Wilson, got any extra tobacco? Well, of course you wouldn't have any extra tobacco. How 'bout you? Shit. You ain't even old enough to smoke. Ahh! Mr. John Dickinson. Last night, my youngest son, Charlie... God bless his soul... was gunned down in cold blood right here in our own hotel.

The gutless murderer, one Mr. Bill Blake, also shot to death Miss Thel Russel, the fiance of my beloved son. Not only that, but he stole a very spirited and valuable horse, a beautiful young pinto that belonged to my personal family stable. Hell, only, a pinto ain't rightly a horse to fret much about, if the truth be told. Shut up! You three are supposed to be the finest killers of men and Indians... in this here half of the world. Cole Wilson, your reputation is already a legend. You I know I can trust. Conway Twill, you're a real good killer, but be sure you keep that goddamn trap shut. And Johnny "The Kid" Pickett. I heard tell you killed 14 men. I doubt you've seen that many years, and I ain't even gonna tell you what I really think of you. - I always work alone. - Uh, excuse me there, Mr. Dickinson, but, uh, rightly I, I never have worked with anyone else either. - I never have. - Uh, yeah, m-me neither. Shut up! My boy Charlie is dead! Oh, I ain't askin' this time. I'm tellin', and if somebody don't like it, I'm prepared to do

a little killin' of my own. Now, that bastard couldn't have got too far yet. Well, why don't we just say there, Mr. Dickinson, sir, I think we oughta start uh, fresh in the mornin'. I mean, it's well after noon now, and time we get finished, all packed up and... I want him brought here to me... alive or dead don't matter, though I reckon dead would be easier. I'm a-hirin' you boys on an exclusive basis, and I'm willin' to pay more money than you've ever seen before. Boys, the hunt is on. Stupid fucking white man. I want this out over the wires. Post a \$500 reward from here to hell and back. Notify every marshal, deputy and possum-skinnin' lowlife in the goddamn territory. Bring everybody in. I want that bastard's head. And make sure you include a full description of my pinto. I want that horse back. Goddamn pinto is a stupid damn animal. Stupid as the day is long. Got his heart so set on one. Buy yourself a sorrel horse... and paint some white spots on him as far as I'm concerned. Jesus Christ. Course, ya can't put much stock

in a man who spends the most part of a conversation... talkin' to a bear. Talkin' to a goddamn bear. The round stones beneath the earth... have spoken through the fire. What? Things which are alike, in nature, grow to look alike, and the speaking stones have lain a long time lookin' at the sun. The speaking stones? Some believe they descend with the lightning, but I believe they are on the ground and are projected downward by the bolt. Did you kill the white man who killed you? I'm not dead. What name were you given at birth, stupid white man? Blake. William Blake. Is this a lie? Or a white man's trick? No, I'm William Blake. Then you are a dead man. I'm sorry. I d... I don't understand. Is your name really William Blake? Yes. Every night... and every morn', some to misery are born. Every morn' and every night, some are born to sweet delight. Some are born

to sweet delight. Some are born to endless night. I really don't understand. But I understand, William Blake. You were a poet and a painter. And now, you are a killer of white men. You must rest now, William Blake. Some are born to sweet delight. Some are born to endless night. Makin' biscuits, Mommy. Sweetheart. You didn't touch it, did you? - Huh? - No. - You swear to me. - I swear. Swear to me you're tellin' the truth. Yes, I swear I'm tellin' the truth. Not a goddamn word to no one, ever. You understand? Don't ever ask me no questions. Where are we? You are being followed, William Blake. Are you sure? I mean, how do you know? Often the evil stench of white man precedes him.

Why don't we, uh...

What should we do?

Maybe we should, uh...

The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn from the crow. Ever wish you were the moon? Geez, my Henry's cold. Aw, come on! My britches been open like that how long? Only been ridin' a couple of days together, but Jesus, one of you fellas could've mentioned the fact that... Unsaddle your goddamn horses. Unsaddle your goddamn horse.

Go on.

- Geez.
- An Injun dug this fire pit.

Oh.

Oh, an Indian.

We ain't trackin' no goddamn Injuns, Cole. I mean, uh, hell, Dickinson didn't say nothin' about trackin' no goddamn Injuns. I mean, the boy's name

is William Blake.

You know a lotta Indians, do ya, named William Blake? I mean, "Howdy, Chief Billy..."

D'you hear somethin'?

Huh?

- Did ya?
- No. No.

I guess it was nothin'.

You know about Wilson?

- What?
- Do you know about Cole Wilson? What kinda question is that? 'Course I know about Cole Wilson. Everybody knows about him.

He's a livin' legend.

Fucked his parents.

- He what?

- He fucked his parents.
- Both of 'em?
- Yeah.

Mother. Father. Parents.

Both of 'em. Fucked 'em.

Oh.

And you know

what I heard?

After he killed 'em,

he cooked 'em up and ate 'em.

Are you telling me

he killed both his pa...

I'm tellin' you

he killed 'em. He fucked 'em.

He cooked 'em up. He ate 'em.

He ain't got a goddamn conscience.

You understand what I'm sayin'?

He'd just as soon slit

our goddamn throats in the

middle of the night as walk.

Course, someone

your age, Jesus,

if you was

to put one in him...

"Johnny 'The Kid' Pickett

Slays Cole Wilson."

William Blake,

do you know how

to use this weapon?

- Not really.
- That weapon will replace your tongue.

You will learn

to speak through it,

and your poetry

will now be written with blood.

What is your name?

My name is Nobody.

- Excuse me?
- My name is Exaybachay.

He Who Talks Loud,

Saying Nothing.

He Who Talks...

I thought you said

your name was Nobody.

I prefer to be called Nobody. Nobody? Um, shouldn't you be with your own tribe or somethin'? My blood is mixed. My mother was Ohm gahpi phi gun ni. My father is Abso luka. This mixture was not respected. As a small boy, I was often left to myself. So I spent many months stalking the elk people... to prove I would soon become a good hunter. One day, finally, my elk relatives took pity on me, and a young elk gave his life to me. With only my knife, I took his life. As I was preparing to cut the meat, white men came upon me. They were English soldiers. I cut one with my knife, but they hit me on the head with a rifle. All went black. My spirit seemed to leave me. I was then taken east... in a cage. I was taken to Toronto, then Philadelphia... and then to New York. And each time I arrived in another city, somehow the white men had moved... all their people there ahead of me.

Each new city contained the same white people as the last, and I could not understand how a whole city of people... could be moved so quickly. Eventually, I was taken on a ship... across the great sea... over to England, and I was paraded before them... like a captured animal, an exhibit. And so I mimicked them, imitating their ways, hoping that they might lose interest in this young savage, but their interest only grew. So they placed me into the white man's schools. It was there that I discovered... in a book... the words that you, William Blake, had written. They were powerful words, and they spoke to me. But I made careful plans, and I eventually escaped. Once again, I crossed the great ocean. I saw many sad things... as I made my way back to the lands of my people. Once they realized who I was, the stories of my adventures angered them. They called me a liar. "Exaybachay." He Who Talks Loud, Saying Nothing. They ridiculed me.

My own people. And I was left to wander the earth alone. I am Nobody. Ain't ya glad the sun kind of sets? Prepares you like? I mean, what if it, like, went out sudden, like, say, blowin' out a candle or somethin'? I mean... You know, one minute we're ridin' along, we can see everything and each other ... and, boom, the next minute is just... you're in total darkness. That'd scare the bejesus outta me. Once upon a time, there were three bears in the forest. A big bear, a medium mommy bear... and a tiny little baby bear. One mornin', they were gonna eat their breakfast porridge. They had a big bowl, a medium bowl and a tiny little bowl. That porridge was too hot. Stupid white man. - So they went to take a walk. - William Blake, you go to them. - Along came this girl. She was... - What? Alone? Why don't we just go around them? No! You go. It's a test. I don't know those people,

You go.

It's a test.

I don't know those people,
and they don't look very friendly.

- What if they kill me?

- Nobody will observe.

She got sleepy, and she
went into their bedroom.

- There was a big bed, a medium

bed and a tiny little bed. - All right. - I'll go. ...their tiny bed. I'd rather not, but I'll go. The bears got home. Papa said, "Somebody here ate all our porridge." - What's the best way to get down there? - Be quiet and go. - And he scalped her, - All right. And he tore her head off her body. And he took that golden hair, and he made a sweater for baby bear. - That's terrible. - Tonight we're reminded... of the evil emperor Nero Augustus. He was the scourge of all the Christians. What's a scourge? It's... It's like when somethin' real bad happens. Like when everybody gets killed and you can't do anything about it. Like a swarm of locusts. For the entertainment of his guests, Nero would illuminate his whole garden... with bodies of live Christians covered in burning oil... strung up on flaming crosses, crucified. And at dinner, he would have the Christians rubbed by his guards...

with aromatic herbs

and sewn up into sacks.

and garlic...

And then they'd throw these sacks to the wild dogs.

Well, that's terrible.

- It's horrible.
- Terrible's what it is.

You know, I just... I can't

drink whiskey like I used to could.

My old belly

just ain't no account.

I get the shits every time,

don't you know?

I'm sorry, Big George.

I got some food here that

even Goldilocks never tasted.

I think this is gonna

fix up your old gut.

These beans is shit.

Why don't you shut your goddamn trap

and just eat your beans?

Them, uh... There's possum

in these beans, and spices too.

- I tried hard.
- Well, Sally,

I don't give a pig's ass

what anybody says.

I still say you make

a hell of a pot of beans.

Now why don't you say us

a grace outta the Good Book, would you?

Thank you, Big George.

I'd be delighted to do that.

"This day will the Lord

deliver thee into mine hand;

And I will smite thee, and

take thine head from thee;

And I will give the carcasses of

the host of the Philistines this day...

unto the fowls of the air

and the wild beasts of the earth."

Amen.

- What's a Philistine?
- Well, it's just a real dirty person.

Hello.

I smelled beans.

Who are you travelin' with? I'm with Nobody. Where you headed? I don't know. - Do you like beans? - I... I love beans. Have you got any tobacco? - I'm sorry. I don't smoke.

- Would you give me some tobacco?
- I would if I had some.
- I'll trade you some beans

for some tobacco.

I don't have any tobacco,

but I'd love some beans.

Hurt.

- Yes.
- Eyeglasses.
- Yes.
- Pretty suit too.
- I clean up real good, you know.
- Is that right?
- Yeah.
- What size shoes are those?
- Ten.
- They look very comfortable. Are they?

Not too bad.

What kinda flower

is that?

Well, it's a rose...

that's made out of paper.

- Paper?
- Rose.
- Now you see there?
- Look at the edge on that knife.
- Hmm.
- Feel that.
- I'd rather not.

Aw, go on.

- Hmm.
- That... That is a very, very sharp knife, that is.

- Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.
- Yeah. Yeah.

What do you call it?

- Pretty.
- I'm sorry?

That hat.

What do you call it?

I'm really not sure.

Ah, your hair.

Your hair is soft.

It's like a girl's.

By God, it is soft.

Now how do you

get it that way?

See, this old stuff of mine, it just...

Well, it's just like old barn hay.

- There ain't a durn thing

you can do with it.

- Hm.

How do you... How do you get it

that way and keep it like that?

Just lucky, I guess.

Lucky. Yeah.

Oh, yeah.

Goddamn it.

You keep your hand off of it.

I thought I told you

not to touch me.

I don't give a good goddamn

what you told me. You keep

your hands off his hair.

Why? What's that to do

with you then, eh?

That's got plenty to do

with me, goddamn it.

- Really? This one's mine!
- That's right.
- This one's yours?
- Yes!

This one's mine, Big George.

You had the last one.

- Is that a fact?
- I saw him first.
- I don't give a shit who saw what

and who did what or who did who. You had the last philistine. This one's mine. If I want this one, I'll have him, too, by God. Fine. What happens if I just shoot you then, eh? - What do you think about that? - You gonna shoot me? - That's right. - Well, why don't you shoot me then, goddamn it? - I will. I'll shoot you right now. - Come on. Shoot me. - I will. - Well, quit talkin' about it and do it, by God. I will. - There you go. - Good God, I'm hit! Lord have mercy! Burns like hell fire! You son of a bitch. I'm gonna have to kill somebody now. Well, goddamn it, I guess nobody gets you. - What the hell? - Nobody. Oh, Jesus's bears and squirrels. I cooked, I cleaned, and I sewed, and I have a right to get... Yee! Hootka. That's me. Wanted. "The brutal murders of one Thel Russell and one Charles Ludlow Dickinson." I didn't kill Thel. I didn't kill Thel. Your actions

are useless.

There can't be...

This is complete fabrication.

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You cannot stop the clouds by the building of a ship. What? What did you say? You know, I've had it up to here with this Indian malarkey. I haven't understood a single word you've said since I met you, not one single word. Are you sure you have no tobacco? I've already told you I don't smoke. If I don't smoke, there's a pretty good chance that I don't have any tobacco. William Blake. I guess the best advice just not to take any damn advice. Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. What the hell... is that? What's that say? Read it.

## - "Wanted:

- I'll be damn.

Five hundred dollars.

- Huh? "In the amount of \$500." Shit. Hell, ain't we about more fucked than a whore at closin' time, huh? Thanks to goddamn Mr. Dickinson, huh? I'll tell you what that there says, huh? It says some pelt-wearin' trapper, some stinkin' bean-suckin' possum skinner, he's gonna collect that reward money. Make you feel good? Huh? - Goddamn pelt skinner.

I don't understand. I thought we was hired exclusive. I mean, he paid us in gold in advance. I'm out here... I'm out here in the middle of shits creek... with two local lunatics. One who don't say nothin'... And the other one, he won't never stop yappin'! You gonna shed tears for us? I wouldn't do that if I were you. - And why not? - Because it ain't good for your health. Fuck you. Fuck me? Fuck you. Goddamn it. Jesus, Cole. He's just a kid. He's a Navajo mud toy now. Yeah. Aho. I have just ingested... the food of the Great Spirit... and Father peyote. Do you think I could have a little bite of it? It's not for use even for William Blake. Flowers of the medicine... give you sacred visions that are not for you right now. My southern brothers were prohibited from using it... by the Spanish devils. But now, even the Notoemne and the Dene... know of its loving ways. What? What are you lookin' at? William Blake.

It's so strange that you don't remember any of your poetry. I don't know anything about poetry. Oh, you're so modest. Listen... I feel very weak. I'm hungry. Quest for vision is a great blessing, William Blake. To do so, one must go without food and water. All the sacred spirits... recognize those who fast. It's good to prepare for a journey in this way. I seem to have misplaced my eyeglasses. I can't see clearly. Perhaps you will see more clearly without them. You're a very strange man. Very strange. May the Great Spirit watch over you, William Blake. Nobody? Nobody?

Nobody?

Nobody?

- Hey, Marvin.
- What?

How come Dickinson's telegram didn't give no description of the horse... this murderin' fucker stole? It did, Lee. A pinto, just like that one. White legs, brown ass,

brown sides.

It did? I don't think

it did, Marvin.

Well, you asshole... You got the damn telegram on you. Take it out and look. That's right. Yeah, I got it here.

I'll check it.
Maybe I been thinkin'

of them wanted posters.

Lee! It's him!

You William Blake?

Yes, I am.

Do you know my poetry?

Some are born

to endless night.

Well, Rome weren't built

in a day, Cole.

Course, uh, I wasn't

overseein' that particular job.

Fresh kill.

Yeah. No damn tobacco,

that's for sure.

This, uh, some kind

of telegram or somethin'?

What's that say?

Dickinson again.

Oh, goddamn Dickinson. You mean

to tell me he's even got the law

involved in this now?

Jesus.

Tell you one thing. If, uh, that there

Blake fella keeps on shootin' marshals,

I'll wind up

likin' the bastard.

Looks like a goddamn

religious icon.

Anyhow, gettin' back

to the beginning of the story,

my granddaddy come over

from Scotland, you see.

He was actually part of

the Mactwill clan.

Uh, the, uh, clan tartan

was kind of gold and purple,

if I remember correctly.

I never wore

a lick of it myself.

Dropped the "Mac" part of the name

when he decided to come out West...

on account of he figured

it'd get him more work and all.

How 'bout your family history

there, Cole? Let me guess.

Kind of figured you for a German, huh?

I mean, am I right?

Am I close?

Austrian?

I'd like to speak with

Mr. Dickinson, please.

I insist on speaking

with Mr. Dickinson.

Goddamn redskins.

Oh!

- Nobody?
- William Blake.

She's upset.

She's beautiful.

- She didn't mean to call you that.
- Huh?

But you sure interrupted

a very romantic moment, William Blake.

Oh. I'm sorry.

You stay here 'til I return.

Don't let the sun burn

a hole in your ass, William Blake.

Rise now and drive

your cart and plow...

over the bones

of the dead.

Do you still have

my eyeglasses?

No. I traded 'em.

- You traded them?
- Do you have any tobacco?

No. I traded it.

- For what?
- I'm not telling.
- Liar.
- Thief.

I don't care if you were

married 16 times

I still love you

Yo-ho yo-ho-yo

I will take you to

the bridge made of waters.

The mirror.

Then you will be taken up

to the next level of the world.

The place where

William Blake is from.

Where his spirit belongs.

I must make sure that you pass back

through the mirror at the place...

where the sea

meets the sky.

White man's

trading post.

Indians get

diseases there.

What do you mean?

Smallpox,

consumption.

Blankets are infected.

It spreads

through the villages.

I see you have acquired

a new weapon.

Hmm? Oh, yes.

A Winchester.

- Here. Take it.

- No.

No, really.

Take it.

I took it off

a dead white man.

Did William Blake

kill this white man?

Yes.

William Blake killed

the white man.

We need a canoe.

Water.

"The brutal murders of Charles Dickinson

and fiance, Thel Russell.

Also the murders of

the following territorial marshals...

...deputy... Big George Drakoulious,

Benmont Tench

and one Salvatore Sally Jenko."
- It's not bad.
- Huh?
It's not a bad illustration
of you, William Blake.

- It's a present.

Well, I want you

- Aho.

Good morning.

to have it.

May you serve the Lord, and may His holy dominion guide you through your dismal life.

How can I be of assistance,

my poor man?

All our ammunition

is guaranteed.

This latest batch was,

in fact, personally blessed

by the archbishop of Detroit.

Good morning.

May our Lord Jesus Christ

wash this earth with His holy light...

and purge its darkest places

from heathens and philistines.

The vision of Christ

that thou dost see...

is my vision's

greatest enemy.

Do you have tobacco?

We sure don't.

Aren't those tins of tobacco

right there behind you?

Sure are, but

those cans are empty.

There's no tobacco in them.

Perhaps I could interest you

in some beads...

or possibly a blanket.

Blanket.

Yes, my fine fellow.

Ammunition.

Uh, I'd like some

tobacco, please.

Well, I may have one or two twists left. From my personal supply, you understand. For good friends only. Good Lord. You're William Blake. Yes, I am. By the grace of the Lord Almighty. Sir, would it be presumptuous of me to ask you for... for your autograph? Please, kind sir. It would be a great honor. Pardon me. There's my autograph. God damn your soul to the fires of hell. He already has. Hootka. I'm tired. I'll free the horses. I see you collected

some more white man's metal.

Yes. I seem to be

a magnet for it.

Ohh, man.

Good day for

a canoe ride.

Nobody?

Is this the boat...

that'll take me across

the mirror of water?

No.

This boat's not strong enough,

William Blake.

William Blake

is a legend now

He's a good friend

of mine

Stand up,

William Blake.

William Blake.

Ah.

Walk proudly,

William Blake.

That man there?

I know him.

He's a great builder

of sea canoes.

Hello.

I prepared your canoe

with cedar boughs.

It's time for you

to leave now, William Blake.

Time for you to go back

to where you came from.

You mean Cleveland?

Back to the place where

all the spirits came from...

and where all

the spirits return.

This world will

no longer concern you.

Found some tobacco.

The tobacco

is for your voyage,

William Blake.

Nobody.

I don't smoke.

Aho, William Blake.