

You wanted to know what the bad guys looked like. Now you know. It may happen again. My job is to take care of you. I was appointed to do that by god. I will kill anyone who touches you. Do you understand?

Yes.

He sat there cowered in the blanket. After a while he looked up. Are we still the good guys? He said.

Yes. We're still the good guys.

And we always will be.

Yes. We always will be.

Okay.

In the morning they came up out of the ravine and took to the road again. He'd carved the boy a flute from a piece of roadside cane and he took it from his coat and gave it to him. The boy took it wordlessly. After a while he fell back and after a while the man could hear him playing. A formless music for the age to come. Or perhaps the last music on earth called up from out of the ashes of its ruin. The man turned and looked back at him. He was lost in concentration. The man thought he seemed some sad and solitary changeling<sup>2</sup> child announcing the arrival of a travelling spectacle in shire and village who does not know that behind him the players have all been carried off by wolves (pp. 80-81).