

1 EXT. CROWD MOVES AGGRESSIVELY THROUGH A CITY STREET - 1989 - DAY 1

A **SWEET-FACED PREADOLESCENT GIRL** SHOULDERS THROUGH A SEA OF JEERING FACES Screaming OBSCENITIES AT HER, BUT THERE IS NO SOUND. THE PICTURE MOVES IN SLOW MOTION. THE POTENTIAL FOR VIOLENCE IS OMINOUS AND PERVASIVE.

2 INT. CLOSE-UP - HOME PREGNANCY TEST SWATCH TURNS PINK IN A WOMAN'S LEFT HAND 2

THERE IS A GOLD BAND ON HER RING FINGER.

The other hand brings up directions, matching the POSITIVE example to the TEST SWATCH: they are the same.

BARBARA (O.S.)  
Oh my God!

3 INT. BARBARA'S BATHROOM - MORNING - CONTINUOUS 3

BARBARA CRISP (41) stands in front of her bathroom sink. She looks extremely tired, as she stares in the mirror at the body that has betrayed her . Her right hand moves instinctively over her swollen breasts, feeling their added weight; then to her belly.

GRANDMA (O.S.)  
(growing urgency)  
Barbara...Barbara

There is a sudden twist of the knob at the bathroom door - Only plywood, it shudders - so does Barbara. She is shaken enough.

BARBARA  
(through door)  
...I'm sorry, Mother. I thought you were asleep. I'll be out in a minute.

GRANDMA (O.S.)  
Please..I need you! Come help me.  
I'm afraid! Something on t.v. scared me. Why have you locked the door?,  
Help me.. Barbara...Barbara

Her mother is scratching at the door. Barbara hurriedly puts the test kit back in the box, puts the box in a brown paper bag and throws the whole thing in the trash. She opens the door. GRANDMA is frail, some osteoporosis in her back, curving her slightly. Near tears, Grandma collapses against Barbara.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

BARBARA  
 (soothing)  
 Sssh. You're alright..

GRANDMA  
 You know how I hate a locked door. I  
 can't.. what if there was a fire.

Grandma's earnest blue eyes look into her daughter's.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)  
 (continuing)  
 I don't know, I'm just frightened.  
 They were killing some girl on t.v.  
 It was horrible.

BARBARA  
 (comforting)  
 Don't worry. It wasn't real, Mother.

4 EXT. HOLLYWOOD - SUNSET - MORNING

4

TRAFFIC - BRIGHT SUNLIGHT

VAL  
 .....FUCKERS!

Val's fist smashes onto the trunk of a car as it pulls away.  
 She lurches towards the car.

VAL (CONT'D)  
 You haven't got what it takes anyhow -  
 Losers!

Val chases the car for a few steps, then pulls the strap of her dress down, exposing her breast to the GUYS' rearview mirror. She steps up on the corner in front of a vacant gas station and leans against the chain link fence. Val is 17, black, large-boned, very tall. She is unnaturally thin for her build. In her chartreuse, lycra dress her stomach seems distended and her breasts strain the fabric, there is something sensual about her. She carries a large satchel, out of which she lives. She wears a very new neon Walkman.

She is singing to herself.

(I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR), She is an o.k. singer and knows all the words. She dances provocatively - directing her motions toward cars stopped at the light. Guys walking by check her out, but they are DRUG USERS, not cash and carry types.

A HOMELESS WOMAN with a shopping cart and TWO CHILDREN comes down the street.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

Val acknowledges her - They know each other from the neighborhood.

The Homeless Woman maneuvers the cart with her DAUGHTER in it and her fidgeting SON over to Val. The Homeless Woman asks Val for a cigarette, which Val searches out of her satchel, hands her one, then fishes out a piece of Bazooka. Val unwraps it, splits it in two and gives one piece to the Son and the other to the Daughter.

HOMELESS WOMAN

Thanks, (referring to cigarette)  
I've been standing in line over at  
Social Security... It's a sin what  
person has to go through to get  
what's owed 'em...

The Homeless Woman lights the cigarette.

VAL

(to the Son)  
Can you read? (He shakes- "no", she  
reads) "Even a broken clock is right  
twice a day." Bazooka Joe beats  
horoscopes every time.

Val is playing peek-a-boo with the Daughter, who giggles delightedly.

HOMELESS WOMAN

...made me leave my cart outside..I'm  
just lucky nobody took nothing, it's  
all I got in the world....I gotta  
get these kids fed...Thanks.

VAL

Bye...(makes a face to the little  
girl who waves) bye ..

The Woman pushes-off ...

As THEY round the corner the SON waves at Val; pointing at his bubble, which - POPS.

A CAR slows, a SHADOWY GUY in a LA BARRON with a " baby on board warning" nods... Val goes toward his car but spots a COP CAR turning off Highland. She turns and heads down Mccadden street. Then begins running.

As she runs she grabs her abdomen, then glazes over - disoriented - dizzy - nauseous...

She stops, and wretches violently.

5 INT. - BATHROOM STALL - STELLA ADLER ACTING SCHOOL - AFTERNOON 5

MELANIE is vomiting. Melanie is 19, very beautiful, and femininely dressed. She finishes throwing-up. Flushes. Walks out of the stall over to the sink where she splashes her face with cold water. She looks in the mirror, dissatisfied, smoothes her hair and walks out of the bathroom.

6 INT. LOBBY - STELLA ADLER ACTING WORKSHOP - CONTINUOUS 6

Melanie walks toward ROBERT (21). Classically handsome, there is an arrogance about him. He is talking to an EXTRA SEXY GIRL. Melanie slips under Robert's arm, which encircles her like a reflex. They are the poor version of a "RALPH LAUREN" couple.

ROBERT

( to Girl unenthused)  
Definitely - Come check it out. Just tell the guy at the door that you know me.

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

I'll do that, I hear it's the new cool bar, on account of how cute the bartenders are.. - Great scene  
Melanie.

ROBERT

Yeh! Melon - you nailed that accent.

MELANIE

Thanks. I really lost it towards the end., but I'm getting more confidence ...

The Girl doesn't care what Melanie is saying, she's halfway out the door, with a wave for Robert.

ROBERT

Sick again, Mel?

MELANIE

Uh, huh. It keeps getting worse.

She puts her head on his shoulder defeatedly.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

( continuing)  
I'm sure I'm pregnant.

ROBERT

Let's get out of here and get some coffee.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

Melanie looks at him wide-eyed with expectation. He walks out the door ahead of her.

MELANIE  
O.K.

7 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE STELLA ADLER - CONTINUOUS

7

Melanie and Robert get into their beat-up '79 VOLVO with MINNESOTA plates.

8 INT. HOLLYWOOD WOMEN'S CLINIC - RECEPTION - AFTERNOON

8

Val sits, waiting for her urine test result. She wears a zip-up sweatshirt from her bottomless satchel. The RECEPTIONIST, a well-groomed Asian woman, looks at Val as she speaks into the phone. Val cannot hear her, but she squirms in the presence of what she imagines to be the Receptionist's disapproval. The Receptionist hangs ups.

RECEPTIONIST  
Miss Langston?....(Val gets up,  
tugging at her dress. She walks to  
the window.) Your test was positive..  
but no Doctor can take you today.

VAL  
Can you tell me how old it is yet?

BARBARA CRISP comes into the clinic. Seeing the Receptionist is busy with Val, she takes a seat beneath an AIDS : AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY KILLER poster. Self-conscious, she fidgets with her wedding ring, slipping it into her handbag.

RECEPTIONIST  
Well, it's not a question of  
old..(phone rings) You'll need to  
talk to a doctor.( Into phone)  
HOLLYWOOD WOMEN'S CLINIC.....Hold  
please. Can you make it Thursday?  
(Val nods) at 10:00a.m.? A doctor  
will examine you and discuss your  
options with you, o.k.?

The Receptionist gives Val a reassuring, if condescending, smile.

Val leaves as Barbara leans over the reception desk.

9 INT. EXAMINING ROOM IN CLINIC - AWHILE LATER

9

Barbara is still in the stirrups.

(CONTINUED)

A WOMAN DOCTOR has finished the exam. She drops something into a steel bowl and removes her gloves.

WOMAN DOCTOR

Well, Your I.U.D. was incorrectly inserted.. but I don't see any distinct changes in the cervix.. Now the home tests are very accurate, if anything they err on the side of negative - but we will test you now and give you the result before you leave ..

She signals Barbara to sit-up.

WOMAN DOCTOR (CONT'D)

( continuing)

..and you can have time to think it over. (glancing at chart) If you want to have it... because of your age you'll need to start prenatal care now. I gather you have had at least one child .. but are single .. according to your chart...

BARBARA

... No..I'm...  
divorced...three....

WOMAN DOCTOR

.. Excuse me?

BARBARA

Three-I've had three children...and  
I don't want another.

WOMAN DOCTOR

Well then... We can take care of that. But, we're getting ahead of ourselves. First let's find-out if you're really pregnant. Please give a urine specimen to the lab assistant - she'll give you a cup with your name on it. After that it won't take long and then, if that's your decision, we can talk about an appointment to terminate.

Posters of childlike fetuses, various banners expressing PRO-LIFE slogans and photos of DONALD INGERSOL blocking clinics and shaking the hands of pro-life POLITICIANS adorn the walls of this small office.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

Bush and Quayle posters are interspersed with the pro-life slogans.

There is a HEAVY-SET WOMAN answering the phone ( "LIFE FORCE CRUSADE, can YOU help US?") at one of the two desks in the office. At the second desk TERRY is taking notes, while talking on the phone.

TERRY

Thank you so much...Donald will be very pleased. ... Yes.. yes.. it is an important cause ... I'll send someone to pick it up today. Thank you very much. (She hangs-up, chuckling ironically) I can't believe he gave it to me..

She gets up from her desk and knocks on the door to the inner office.

TERRY (CONT'D)

( continuing)  
It's Terry. .

DONALD (O.S.)

Come in Terry...

11 INT. DONALD INGERSOL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

11

DONALD

( continuing)  
....So have you made any progress?

DONALD INGERSOL (30-ish) is a fair-skinned, redhead with strong features, and strong convictions. A photo of Donald and Quayle is enshrined on the desk.

TERRY

I got you one Donald, from the county coroner's office, he was very happy to help. It came from an accident victim - and here is the part you'll love - It was third trimester, fingers, toes..

DONALD

Hallelujah, ...You've become invaluable to me Terry, I don't know how I survived before you signed-on.

TERRY

So, you thought anymore about a newsletter?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

TERRY (CONT'D)

- one with pictures and testimonials,  
I have a file of poems.. I could  
start getting photos at tomorrow's  
meeting..

DONALD

I don't know.. We're over-extended  
as it is... The clinic expenses ,  
but .. Why don't you take some  
pictures, we may find some new sources  
of cash. The Lord will provide us  
with supporters and funds enough for  
this holy war.

Terry starts to leave, pauses.

TERRY

I'm gonna run out for a sandwich,  
you want anything?

DONALD

No thank you. Peggy always packs my  
lunch in the morning - we're on a  
tight budget.

TERRY

I'll be back ....

12 EXT. OUTSIDE LIFE FORCE CRUSADE OFFICE BUILDING - PAY PHONE - 12  
MOMENTS LATER

Terry checks around before making a call. **(Val is walking  
down the boulevard, away from the WOMEN'S CLINIC)**

TERRY

Hi it's Terry. ..It's definite he's  
gonna use the coffin,-- same stunt  
he pulled in NEW ORLEANS but with a  
more developed fetus... I know, but  
I got him a new one .....The  
coroner.....That's right L.A. county  
office. ...I know.... Leak it to the  
WEEKLY too, you can't count on the  
TIMES printing anything  
newsworthy.....( She laughs) Oh!  
And he o.k.ed my taking pictures at  
the meeting. ..Hell yes.. He thinks  
I'm his girl Friday...Yep, ...if I  
didn't hate his politics so much I  
could almost feel sorry for the guy.



13 INT. BARBARA CRISP'S DINNINGROOM - EARLY EVENING

13

Barbara sets the table for six. LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS drones on about "ANTIGUA". Lovely couples play on the beach, simmer in hot tubs and dine on slimming delicacies.

Grandma dressed in a bib-like apron, is banging her plastic cup on her plate distractedly. Grandma is in a peevish mood. All of Grandma's dishes are plastic, she even has a plastic cup with a spout (the kind used for toddlers). There are five other place settings at the table, all of which are china and glass.

Grandma's banging grows louder.

BARBARA  
Mother, please stop that!

GRANDMA  
( loudly)  
Dinner!

BARBARA  
We'll eat as soon as everyone gets home. Now please stop banging.

GRANDMA  
( yelling)  
I want mine now!

The old woman's eyes flash with rage.

BARBARA  
You'll have to wait like a lady.

GRANDMA  
Shut up!

Grandma stands and Pushes her place setting onto the floor. She looks at Barbara, challenging her to react. When Barbara simply kneels to pick-up the unbreakable dishes, Grandma defiantly pushes a set of the china dishes onto the floor.

Barbara starts picking up the broken pieces, but she begins to cry. Grandma takes no notice and walks into...

14 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

14

..the kitchen, Grandma lifts the lid off one of the pots, and begins to eat rice and peas with her fingers.

15 INT. LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

15

Barbara, sits in the debris, crying softly. The front door opens and JACK CRISP enters. He is 43, in good shape, but developing a slight paunch. He has a receding hairline. His clothes and hands show traces of grease. He takes in the scene, and walks over to Barbara. Crouching down beside her, he touches her arm. She jerks away, looking at him accusingly, then blankly.

JACK

Honey? ..What happened? Are you hurt?

BARBARA

Mother broke some dishes, that's all.

JACK

Well,..(unclenching Barbara's fist and looking at her hand)..Are you O.K.? You're not cut?

BARBARA

No. ..I'm just..(straightening-up) tired I suppose. (kissing his cheek perfunctorily) I'm o.k..really... She's just been very difficult all....

There is a loud scream from the kitchen, followed by a thud. Barbara goes into the kitchen. Jack is caught by the T.V.

-GIRLS IN BIKINIS- .

BARBARA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Are you hurt Mother?... Let me look at it.

GRANDMA (O.S.)

It hurts. Make it stop. Ouch!

16 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

16

Barbara is by the sink running cold water over Grandma's hand. An iron skillet lies on the floor surrounded by pork chops.

BARBARA

(to her mother,  
scolding)

You know you're not supposed to touch the things on the stove. You could've scalded yourself, or worse.

(CONTINUED)

Grandma looks at Barbara disapprovingly.

GRANDMA

You don't care about me! Ouch! be gentle.. You're just like your father,.. bastard...watch it. I'm the mother.. You stay out of the kitchen.

Barbara gets a bowl of water and puts some ice in it. She steers grandmother to the kitchen table and has her submerge the burn in ice water.

BARBARA

Who'd do the cooking, Mother?

GRANDMA

You can't cook... I am a wonderful cook... I'll do the cooking.. Just like him; mean and selfish.

BARBARA

Please, just keep your hand still. I'm going to bandage it in a ..

LISA CRISP, 15, enters through the back door.

LISA

What'd she do now?... (looking at the floor) Ruin dinner?

Barbara hurriedly gathers the porkchops into the skillet, smarting at the heat herself. Lisa opens the refrigerator and takes out a YOPLAIT YOGURT.

BARBARA

They're edible still... So don't spoil your appetite.

Barbara fills the skillet with water, rinses the chops, dumps the water out, then puts the skillet back on the burner. Drops of water hiss as Barbara turns up the flame.

LISA

I'm becoming a vegetarian for tonight. Meat's full of chemicals, besides you never know where it's been.

GRANDMA

( out of a  
reverie)

I gave you everything you ever got - not your father - no sir. He didn't give a damn if you lived or died.

(CONTINUED)

LISA  
She's a real trip.

BARBARA  
( ignoring)  
Can you get me some salve out of the  
medicine cabinet in my bathroom,  
Lisa. (Lisa leaves, Barbara calls  
after her) and try to wrench your  
brother away from that NINTENDO thing.  
He's been at it since he got home  
from school.

Barbara stands in the kitchen doorway watching Jack watch  
news of LIFE FORCE CRUSADE's work in ORANGE COUNTY.

BARBARA (CONT'D)  
(continuing  
distractedly)  
Keep your hand in there Momma 'til I  
can put a bandage on it. O.K.? Jack,  
why don't you try to coax your  
youngest son to the table. We're  
gonna eat as soon as Bradley gets  
home from the garage.

JACK  
I just want to watch the news...You'd  
think in America people would respect  
a person's right to see a doctor  
without having to hear a sermon...  
what happened to religious freedom  
..Those Bastards. (Barbara winces).  
Sorry ..hon.... Bradley's got a date,  
he left the shop early.

BARBARA  
I wish he'd called,...(to  
herself)..one sets broken anyway.

JACK  
What'dya say, honey?

BARBARA  
It doesn't matter.

Val is trying to buy a rock off her DEALER.

The Dealer, accompanied by a young, pretty-boy (KID) and a  
heavy-set MAN wearing shades who grips a snarling pit-bull  
(BRUISER) by a chain leash, glances at HUSTLER magazine.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

The Dealer sees that Val is there, takes a last, lustful look at the center fold, and signals Val to follow him...

18 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

18

The Dealer pops a few rocks from his mouth, showing his gums - toothless, but for four dental implants: two canine on top and bottom.

She looks into his broad palm at the yellow-white rocks, like extracted teeth. She trembles for it, licking her lips, which are chapped; there is white, thick spit in the corners of her mouth. She rubs her thighs with flattened palms.

VAL

I need three. But I'm shy the cash.

DEALER

You gonna have to get on your knees for three...(he laughs, looking at his entourage) for all of us, even Bruiser (referring to the dog) here.

KID

Yeh! Bruiser loves to get head!!

The Kid cracks himself up.

VAL

I'm not touching that piece a shit. (pointing at the Kid) He's bent over for every queer in Hollywood. No rock is worth that. Thanks.

The Kid quits laughing, and for a moment it looks as if he might cry.

DEALER

(to the Kid)

Bitch can't take a joke! ..Man, everybody round here just calls you herpes Val.

VAL

Fuck you! I don't got no herpes. (THEY laugh, 'she took their bait'.) Look, I'll jerk the kid off, ..I gotta have a couple a rocks...I got some rough news today.. I gotta take care of some business. I need to be steady.

19 INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

19

A computer screen displays text describing activities of Donald and the Lifeforce Crusade.

TERRY

Hello, Bill; It's Terry. I wanted to check on those pages I faxed you... Uh, huh? I guess his sincerity is a little dull, but my angle has always been how self-righteous the movement is - the guy is just sincerely self-righteous.

She laughs along with "Jack" on the phone. "Jack" cuts to the chase.

TERRY (CONT'D)

.... Well, he's broken some ethical codes - but who hasn't? (laughs)Yeah, okay. I'm digging. No, no - you're right. Americans do love a scandal. No - There's no Jessica Hahn waiting in the wings.... Very funny!

Listening, Terry looks at herself in a mirror opposite her desk. She touches her face and neck, scrutinizing her wrinkles.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Exciting?! Christ! Bill, it's the pivotal issue of our time! ... The point of view will be the effect on women. ... Okay! Uh huh. Well, I'll work on something more provocative. Yeah, sure. Bye.

Terry hangs up. She types the word SCANDAL?!!!!? on her screen.

20 EXT. ALLEY - AWHILE LATER

20

SHADOWY LAVENDER, OUT OF THE CIRCLE OF LIGHT CAST BY A NEWLY LIT STREETLAMP.

Val is on her knees in front of the MAN. He zips-up his fly and walks away, as Val spits-out cum. The Kid has resumed laughing. The Dealer grins triumphantly, high on his power over Val, and all USERS. Val gets up slowly, the concrete has made her knees sore, and walks over to the grinning Dealer.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

Bruiser goes to where the cum has landed and licks it up. The Dealer drops the rocks into her trembling palm. There are four. Val looks at him questioningly.

DEALER  
You were good, baby.

21 INT. ROBERT AND MELANIE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

21

Melanie and Robert are making love.

Robert begins to suck Melanie's nipple. Melanie looks down at his closed eyes and baby face; she tenses up and starts to struggle to get out from under him, which she can't. He stops suckling her, but continues to hold her beneath him.

ROBERT  
Sssh! Relax, Melon. I love you.

This makes Melanie pull farther away.

MELANIE  
Don't say that - just let me go.  
Christ! I hate myself. How could I  
let this happen.

Robert releases her. She sits up.

ROBERT  
You weren't alone, you know.

Melanie looks at him.

MELANIE  
I can't have it ...

Melanie goes into the bathroom.

ROBERT  
No one wants you to, but I'm gonna  
help you through it.

On a milkcrate/bedside table, Robert has a stack of his HEAD SHOT, a cover letter, some manila envelopes, a book - L.A. AGENTS "HOW TO GET TO WHO TO KNOW", AVERY blank labels, and an exacto blade. Robert picks up his picture looks at his photograph, then poses for the mirror propped against the opposite wall.

MELANIE (O.S.)  
You know, I keep wishing I hated  
you, or something.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: 21

Robert picks-up the EXACTO BLADE, cutting the eyes and mouth of his picture.

22 INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 22

Melanie is weighing herself, sucking in her slightly swollen stomach.

ROBERT (O.S.)  
(mock Italian accent)  
How could you hate this face.

23 INT. DOORWAY OF BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 23

Melanie peeks around the corner coquettishly...

Robert holds his photo in front of his face with the eyes and mouth cut out. He sticks his tongue out the hole, swishing it side to side and rolling his eyes. She laughs.

MELANIE  
(playfully, hopeful)  
There isn't the tiniest part of you  
that wants our baby?

He takes the mask down, very serious.

ROBERT  
I know it sounds cold , but,..no..I'm  
way too young,..so are you Mel.

Melanie realizes this is his heartfelt decision. She flops on the bed.

He looks at her for a few moments. Then he looks at the room: a futon, milkcrates with stacks of clothes, books, tapes, tape deck, t.v. etc..

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
(continuing)  
...Besides..(Dracula voice) we've  
got nowhere to lock it up if it cries.

He tickles her a little, she flops and giggles, then he kisses her stomach.

MELANIE  
You're right,(running her fingers in  
his hair)... besides the time to  
have kids is when you're rich and  
famous, right? ... But I wish my  
SAG insurance activated. I'm kind  
of scared of the idea of going to a  
clinic.

(CONTINUED)



ROBERT

I never even thought about insurance till I came out here..You think it's just that California is a disaster zone? The home of the Irwin Allen flick and all...

He is trying to cheer her up, but she is uncheerable.

MELANIE

....Does help mean half, or all?

He is not sure what she means at first, then looks annoyed. He gets up and starts to dress.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

( continuing)

..I heard even a clinic is \$200.00 - for a real doctor it's \$500.00...and

ROBERT

Mel, if I weren't so broke I'd take you on a cruise to recuperate, but I'm scraping by on mostly tips as it is. Clinics do 'em all the time, it's probably the best place. THE ABORTION EXPERTS

Melanie is put-off.

MELANIE

You can't laugh this away. We made something together..(quietly) it's real.

ROBERT

Only if you make it count Mel, just let it go . .(touching her hair) The timing's all wrong - you know.

MELANIE

Do you have to go to work tonight?

ROBERT

...And work is the last thing I can blow-off... What about all that cash you got for that commercial you did?

MELANIE

I had to get car insurance, remember. For the car we both use ...and pay this month's rent.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

" and you didn't put in a red cent.  
" Go on - this is the perfect time  
for some of " mother's phrases." I  
know - I'm a rotten provider  
....Maybe Eli will get you that pilot.

MELANIE

God.. I'm sorry. I don't mean to  
guilt trip you. I'm just scared  
that's all. I hated going to Dr.  
Alcott back home - and I knew him  
all my life..

ROBERT

That's probably why you hated it.  
There's something creepy about that.

MELANIE

He was the nicest old man in the  
world, - he used to give me giant  
cherry lollipops. He called me his  
' beauty'. He used to say "..and  
how's my beauty today."

ROBERT

He sounds like a letch.

MELANIE

( under her breath)  
You ought to know.

ROBERT

( annoyed)  
What's that supposed to mean?

MELANIE

It's just, I get so jealous thinking  
of all those pretty girls who hang  
around the bar... and I can't even  
get in.

ROBERT

I guess I use Dr. Alcott's motto -  
"get'em while they're young". (putting  
his arm around her) Honey, those  
girls don't hold a candle to you.  
You're gonna be a star.

MELANIE

Eli doesn't think it will happen.  
The Network guys want a "name". I  
just wish I had enough for a private  
doctor, that's all.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

Well, I'll give you all the money I've got..I don't know why you just can't get it from your parents.

MELANIE

I'm not gonna ask my father to pay for my.., abortion. That's sick.

ROBERT

...That's sick . Well pardon me for suggesting it. It's not like you have to say " Dad give me four hundred bucks so I don't have to go to a clinic for an abortion." Tell him you need classes or pictures.. lie..

Melanie follows him to the door. He opens it, then looks at her childishly pouting, beautiful face. He kisses her sweetly.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

( continuing)

You're really just an old-fashioned femme fatale.

He starts to leave, she grabs him awkwardly, pressing her mouth into his shoulder.

MELANIE

( almost inaudible)

I really love you...

ROBERT

I'll be back around 2:30 a.m. It's gonna work out, Mel.. I promise. You should go to aerobics, get those endorphins going. You know it always makes you feel better...

Barbara is bathing Grandma. The bathtub has a metal rail on the side.

GRANDMA

Oh, that feels good. My daughter loves it when I give her a bath. She's such a pretty little girl. I like to braid her hair. She has the most beautiful long blonde hair. Mine's as fine as a baby's , but hers is like a horse's mane - only soft, silky.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

Barbara tires to focus on cleaning her mother.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

Do you know where my little girl is?  
I can't find her and it's dark out.

BARBARA

I'm right here Momma. I'm your little  
girl.

Grandma looks at her incredulously.

GRANDMA

You're not my daughter. (suddenly  
louder) CHRIST - you're old as me.  
What do you think - I'm a fool, I  
know you're trying to trick me, I  
haven't lost my mind, you know. I'm  
sound as a bell. (trying to lift  
herself out of the tub, slipping  
back in) You can't keep me here, you  
know.

BARBARA

Yes Momma, I know.

Barbara gets a big towel and holds it up.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Can you lift yourself? Now hold  
onto the railing. That's a good  
girl. (wrapping her mother in the  
towel) There, now we'll dry you off  
and get you to bed, O.K. Momma?

Barbara covers her mother with the towel, drawing her close.  
Her mother leans into her.

GRANDMA

You had the prettiest hair when you  
were little. I used to braid it...

25 INT. HOLLYWOOD - HOLIDAY SPA AEROBICS STUDIO - NIGHT

25

Melanie, INSTRUCTOR, LADY EXECUTIVE, DANCER, and OTHERS  
jump, twist and "make it burn" to pop tunes. Ad Libs. "Get  
movin' girls - we don't want to age like our mothers.." etc.  
Melanie goes a little green, she stops and leans on the bar  
at the back of the room.

26 INT. HOLLYWOOD - HOLIDAY SPA STEAMROOM - AWHILE LATER

26

Melanie, Lady Executive, and Dancer are sitting in the  
steambath.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

...it's not like I'm not happy to be lucky in my career...so far (crosses her fingers) it's just.. well, now.. it's like an expectation - you know. I mean my dad took care of everything... always. My mother wasn't lazy, but she was..I don't know - safe. I don't even feel like I could just be a wife..not that Robert would ever ask me...

DANCER

Marrying them doesn't solve anything. Now I'm just paying my husband's way through school instead of my boyfriends. He's still the one with the future. I'm getting flabby and arthritic shaking my ass for MTV and he's gonna be a lawyer. There is something basically wrong with this system.

LADY EXEC

It's a man's world. Women have to face that - Use it. Make ourselves strong.

DANCER

You sound like a self help book. ..Besides, that's easy for you to say - you earn, what?, \$250,000 a year. That's like having an honorary penis...

LADY EXEC

Language...language, remember (referring to Melanie) she still believes in love.

27 INT. - BAR HOLLYWOOD - THE BURGUNDY ROOM - NIGHT

27

EXTRA SEXY GIRL is at the bar talking to Robert, who is taking drink orders, mixing drinks and interacting with other customers.

Terry sits at the bar with a HUNK, who is ignoring her and checking out all the young girls. When Robert puts down their drinks, Terry pays for them. The Hunk drinks his without a `thank you'.

Robert returns to the Extra Sexy Girl, continuing the conversation.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

So, you two came out here together?

ROBERT

Yep! We'd already been together for years, she was only sixteen when we started...I was gonna come alone. But... I really wanted a shot at stardom, but looks like Melanie's getting all the breaks. I can't even get an agent.

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

That's so unfair. You're really incredibly talented.

Robert gives her a Cheshire cat grin.

28 INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - LATE

28

She enters her darkened apartment with the Hunk from the Burgundy room. They embrace in the door way, his hands moving over her body. The door closes. Terry's cat rubs against the Hunk's calf in the darkness, letting out a soft meow.

HUNK

Shit! You didn't say you had a cat!

TERRY

Don't worry. She's friendly.

Bending down, Terry scoops the purring cut up in her arms and offers it to the Hunk.

TERRY (CONT'D)

She likes you.

He regards the cat with terror, as a spasm contracts his face and he lets out a huge sneeze.

HUNK

I wouldn't have come...(sneezing)  
I'm aller...(sneeze) allergic!

He turns and opens the door. Terry is panicked. She drops the cat.

HUNK (CONT'D)

Sorry, ...

He starts to sneeze, then suppresses it.

TERRY

You'll be okay.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

Terry tries to embrace him, but the fur on her makes him sneeze uncontrollably now.

HUNK

I can't .... Sorry ....

He closes the door behind him. Terry flicks on the light. Blinking, she looks at the guilty cat, which licks itself demurely. Annoyed, she hisses at the cat. The cat runs away.

29 INT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - NIGHT

29

Val's lips take a deep hit on a well-used, glass crack pipe. She is wearing her WALKMAN, seated on the floor by the bed, where a "JOHN" sleeps naked. She holds the smoke for awhile, then exhales, falling against the bed as she sighs out the smoke.

VAL

Flowers, just like burning flowers.

30 INT. BARBARA'S LIVING ROOM - 3:30 A.M.

30

Barbara is in her bathrobe, curled in an armchair, thumbing through a family album, showing a SNAPSHOT of BRADLEY as a newborn in Barbara's arms in her hospital bed.

In the photo her face bursts with radiance and love for the baby that she gazes at adoringly.

The rest of the pictures show BRADLEY at different ages, some with his BROTHER and SISTER ( there is a Hippie feel to the clothes of the PARENTS and the KIDS): GARDENING WITH MOM, SMEARED WITH DIRT, GRINNING; BRADLEY 16, JUMPING FROM A CREPE PAPER CAKE THAT SAYS HAPPY BIRTHDAY MOM; THE TWO OF THEM ON SKIS WITH THE MOUNTAINS BEHIND THEM.

A car pulls up outside. Keys in the lock. Barbara's eldest son BRADLEY enters. He is 20, well-built. He stops, noticing Barbara go rigid in the spotlit chair. Bradley stares straight at her, challenging, silent.

BARBARA

You know I don't like you coming home at this hour, Bradley.

He holds her gaze, then walks down the hall to his bedroom.

31 EXT. ESTABLISHING - CHURCH IN HOLLYWOOD - DAWN

31

32 INT. SAME CHURCH - LIFE FORCE CRUSADE MEETING IN PROGRESS - 32  
CONTINUOUS

Donald Ingersol stands before a group of twelve or so. He is a moving speaker, whose sincerity is apparent. He speaks with a distinct mid-western accent.

DONALD

I want to thank you for coming so early. I appreciate the sacrifice and your commitment. And the women who you save from killing their babies one day will thank you for your commitment. These women are the victims of profiteering doctors. They are told their babies are not alive, and they believe. It's up to us to change their minds. (While Donald speaks.)

ARDY STONE, (36) appears in the back of the church. He is a small, thick-set man with a furtive, animal quality. He moves forward, but when he notices Terry taking pictures of the audience, he sits in the very back pew.

DONALD (CONT'D)

We must make them see that God intended for their baby to live. We must make everyone of these women know that abortion is the murder of her unborn child. The medical profiteering must be stopped.

As applause fade, Donald moves to a chalkboard with a sketchy lay-out of the clinic on it.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Now, my wife Peggy (he gestures to PEGGY) and I made headquarters in HOLLYWOOD because I - wanted to face sin on its own ground, so to speak - but we have yet to face the heat of this inferno. So tomorrow's procession and protest will be extremely important to our cause. We will meet here tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m.. Secrecy is essential to our having time for the procession before the Pro-abortionists arrive, as, unfortunately they always do, like Locusts.

Laughter from the audience.

(CONTINUED)



DONALD (CONT'D)

Not to mention the police. We will be concentrating on the main entrance, here (pointing). But some of you should march near the rear, to catch anyone sneaking around the back. I hope all of you are prepared to be arrested.

Reactions of listeners - applause, cheers, ad-libs "Got my bail right here." Laughter.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Now I don't have to tell you good people what we're up against. You know already, that's why you're here, but this particular abortion mill performs as many as twenty abortions a day, so if we can shut it down for even one day it will be a triumph over death.

The crowd applauds. Ardy Stone looks around him, then applauds.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Our signs have graphic pictures and dynamic slogans, and, of course, the procession is very moving, but if you wish to bring your own signs, please do. Just be sure they're attention getters. Remember - keep your eyes on me and wait for my directions. The police have been very abusive, as no doubt some of you will find out. Resist - but remain passive. A war is won with discipline and self sacrifice. Thank you all for coming. God bless you all.

Donald mingles with the CRUSADERS; shaking hands with some, embracing others like old friends. Ardy Stone goes to the chalkboard. Standing only a few inches away from it, he studies the rough-map as if memorizing it. The intensity on his face is unsettling.

Donald notices Ardy.

DONALD (CONT'D)

( approaching  
Ardy)

Will you be joining us tomorrow?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

ARDY

It's about time somebody put a stop  
to these murderers.

DONALD

Well, I believe God is with us. See  
you in the morning..Mr.?..

Donald extends his hand. Ardy does not respond.

ARDY

Ardy , Ardy Stone...Junior. My mother  
tried to get me cut out of her.

DONALD

It's nothing new, just bigger  
business.

ARDY

My father put a stop to it. She was  
gonna trade the midwife a peacock.

Donald chuckles. At a loss for words, he extends his hand  
and shakes Ardy's with enthusiasm.

FLASH - as Terry snaps a photo of the two men shaking hands  
in front of the map of the clinic on the blackboard, the  
stained-glass window fragmenting dawn's first light behind  
them.

33 INT. MELANIE AND ROBERT'S - MORNING

33

Melanie comes out of the bathroom. Casually dressed, she  
looks exhausted. Robert is laying across the bed, asleep.  
She leans over him, touching his ear with her lips.

MELANIE

( whispering )

You sure you won't come with me.

ROBERT

..Mmm..I'll come for the real thing.  
I got home late last night.

MELANIE

I know...

She picks-up the YELLOW PAGES, looking first under Women -  
not finding WOMEN'S CLINIC , then under Clinics - FAMILY  
PLANNING. She circles the address of two clinics on  
Hollywood Boulevard: HOLLYWOOD WOMEN'S CLINIC and FAMILY  
CLINIC. Both say "Free abortion counseling" . She tears out  
the Yellow page.

34 INT. CALIFORNIA ABORTION RIGHTS ACTION LEAGUE - MORNING

34

Terry hands the rolls of film to ACTIVIST seated at the desk.

TERRY

I secretly xeroxed tomorrow's itinerary, practically right in front of Ingersol, (handing over the paper) I feel like JAMES BOND these days. The best thing would be if you were there waiting to escort the women across the line, but I don't want any suspicion, although I feel he trusts me.

The office is full of volunteers at phones. AD LIBS of pledges.

ACTIVIST

Any worries he's onto you?

TERRY

None! - He insists I call him Donald, and I'm going to breakfast at his house tomorrow. You wouldn't believe how much his wife already hates me. Okay, I'm off. Get these photos developed this afternoon with duplicates for your file. If I talk him into the news letter, I'll arrange for a really incompetent printer - absorbing the cost could bankrupt the 'crusade', - I'll pick the pictures up later today.

ACTIVIST

O.K. - Maybe you should seduce him. (Terry makes a face that says "No way") Scandal's what kills..Well.. Keep at the financial mismanagement...and don't let the self-righteous get you down.

They laugh.

35 EXT. ESTABLISH - FAMILY CLINIC IN THE SAME BUILDING AS LIFEFORCE CRUSADE - MORNING

35

Melanie looks at the Yellow page's FAMILY CLINIC: FREE ABORTION COUNSELING ad, Donald passes her - holds the door for her - and Melanie goes inside.

36 INT. CITY BUS - MORNING

36

Val is seated on a crowded bus, which is riding through the CRENSHAW DISTRICT. There are poor, tired WOMEN and little CHILDREN all around her. The CHILDREN congregate together, it is impossible to tell which CHILD belongs to which MOTHER.

A BOY is demonstrating that he can stick a safety pin into the top layer of his skin without pain or blood. The CHILDREN watch as he closes a fourth safety pin in a line on his palm.

37 INT. FAMILY CLINIC - OFFICE - AWHILE LATER

37

Melanie is seated opposite a STIFF WOMAN (50-ish), wearing a bun and a suit.

There are fleshy, rubber fetuses at different stages of development on her desk, each of the nine dolls is cradled in an individual compartment of a wooden frame, which says "YOUR BABY" on it.

STIFF WOMAN

Well you're pregnant young lady,  
there's no doubt there.

There is silence, during which the woman stares at Melanie, while Melanie stares at the baby dolls. The Stiff Woman refuses to speak, though Melanie's silence is excruciatingly vulnerable. Melanie reaches in her pocket, pulling out a corner of the Yellow page..

MELANIE

Your... ad said free ..abortion  
counseling.. I ...

STIFF WOMAN

Did you come her looking for an  
abortion?

Melanie looks frightened, shaking her head faintly - no.

STIFF WOMAN (CONT'D)

Counseling means helping you make  
the right decision!?!...(Melanie nods)  
You don't think it's right to kill  
your baby - do you!? (looking at  
the dolls) What could be more  
guiltless? You're the one who chose  
to have premarital sex, you aren't  
married - are you? (Melanie nods)  
and the man you trusted enough to  
let him get inside you - where is  
he?..

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

The Stiff Woman's question affects Melanie physically, launching her out of the chair. She bangs into the desk, knocking off one of the baby dolls. Stunned by her own rage, she is disoriented and cannot locate the door.

MELANIE

(half crying, half  
hissing)

You liar- you're not trying to help  
me ! LIAR!

She runs out of the office, bumping into Terry - who looks after her with concern.

The Stiff Woman closes the door to her office slowly, eyeing Terry with suspicion. Terry feels her watching, and turns as the door snaps shut.

38 EXT. MELANIE OUTSIDE BY HER CAR - CONTINUOUS

38

She is shaking and fumbling with her keys. She drops them and while bending for them a CAR buzzes her, nearly crushing her head.

39 EXT. CRENSHAW DISTRICT - VAL'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - MID-MORNING

39

Val walks up to the house. She looks at it for a minute, steps on the narrow porch and takes out her crack pipe. She places the rock very carefully in the cracked, charred bowl of the pipe. Puffing slowly, she scans the street she grew up on. There are CHILDREN playing in the street. There are a few OLD FOLKS out on the stoops and semi-porches, but they have no interest in the CHILDREN.

Val's eyes have a glassy, red patina. She is definitely high. She draws a fresh breath and slides her hand under the front step, where a key is stuck in a crack.

She goes inside.

40 INT. VAL'S MOTHER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

Val's mother TWILA is lying in her bed with a MAN, they are both naked. There is an empty WILD TURKEY bottle and an overflowing ashtray on the bedside table. The room is very messy; decorated ornately years ago in gold and purple, it looks yellowish and brownish. Val stands at the foot of the bed. She goes to the window and jerks the shade so it spins at the top of the frame. This jolts TWILA awake. She shades her eyes from the unwelcome sunlight.

Twila (35) is cafe au lait colored with very fine features, she is not aging well. She blinks until Val is in focus. The MAN grumbles, pulling a pillow over his head.

(CONTINUED)

TWILA

Val..? what.. What the hell are you doing here ?... Sweet-Jesus. ...

VAL

I want to come home Mamma.

TWILA

What..no...Home? Why?

VAL

I'm pregnant...

TWILA

So?

VAL

Mamma..what do you mean - so? I'm gonna have a baby and I need to live at home.

TWILA

You are not bringing a baby into my house!.. A baby, .. What do you want with a baby?

VAL

How can you say that? What 'm I supposed to do?

TWILA

You're not so stupid that I have to tell you, do I?

The MAN lifts his head.

MAN

( shouting )

Would you bitches take your whining asses into the next room! I need some sleep!!!

Twila puts a finger to her lips, shushing Val. Twila slips on her robe and grabs her cigarettes.

VAL

Who's he?

Twila gives her a SHUT-UP look, trying to hustle Val out, but Val fixes on the MAN , stumbling backwards...

41 INT. TRACKING - VAL AND TWILA THROUGH CLOSET/HALLWAY - 41  
CONTINUOUS

They walk through a clothing-strewn, open closet that leads into ....

42 INT. TWILA'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 42

..the kitchen.

VAL  
Who's that chump?

TWILA  
(lighting a cigarette)  
What's it to you. One thing is certain, he's not your father..

VAL  
What about Leo? Where's he? - I thought you were going to marry Leo?

Twila boils water for coffee, signals Val to sit and opens the icebox.

TWILA  
Well, we changed our minds. Forget it. I'm never getting married. Why should I? I gotta job, I own this house... I can always rent the back rooms to cover my expenses.. I don't need no husband. Besides, I been beat-up by enough boyfriends, why do I need a husband?!

VAL  
I thought you loved Leo.

TWILA  
Leo was fun. He made me laugh, but love shifts... Most men are either beaters or cheaters ..anyway ..as time goes on... (She puts out her cigarette) What do you know about love anyway? - selling yourself to strangers for that crack shit..shit...

Twila takes eggs, milk, sausage and cheese out.

TWILA (CONT'D)  
Besides.. I've loved every man I've ever been with.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TWILA (CONT'D)

I give a man all my love up until I don't love'em no more. (She cracks three eggs into a bowl, adds a splash of milk) And I think that's the only true way to love.

Twila gives Val a coffee cup, while beating eggs. Val is not listening; she is too high to process this. Her only focus is her desperate need to come home.

TWILA (CONT'D)

If you asked them, they wouldn't complain. (slicing sausages into bowl) Men like to leave - It makes them feel important.

VAL

If I had the baby, could I come live with you?

TWILA

No..I don't want a baby in my house. Besides, .. I know you're doing crack.. I'm not gonna take care of your baby while you're out scoring.. No way. I put up with that shit from your father...

VAL

If I came home I could get clean..(getting frustrated) You owe me, you never did shit for me. You kicked me out, I wouldn't be all fucked-up if you didn't kick me out!

Twila puts down the bowl, wipes her hands on her robe. The pieces of sausage float in the beaten eggs. Twila looks at Val, then sits down across the table from her, and lights her second cigarette. Looking evenly at Val...

TWILA

You never did shit for me either.. You ruined my figure. I used to have great tits... Can you believe it?

MAN appears in doorway.

MAN

You still do, Twila-Bird. I'm hungry.

Twila gets up and goes to him, consolingly. He pulls her to him, his arm encircles her waist.

(CONTINUED)



He bites at her neck and shoulders with mock-aggression.

TWILA

(cooing, but pulling  
away)

I'm fixen your breakfast - go back  
to bed. (to Val) It's not my  
responsibility to get you out of your  
mess. I gave up that job.

MAN

I don't smell breakfast.

TWILA

I just gotta get this settled with  
Val. I'm making you a sausage omelet -  
So keep quiet.

MAN

Well, don't take too long. I got to  
go to work.

TWILA

So do I, honey. I'll bring it to  
you when it's ready.

The MAN leaves.

VAL

Mamma, can't I please come home.  
I'll get cleaned-up, I swear. I  
can't do it if you don't help me.  
Please!.. I want my baby.

TWILA

What do you know about babies? You  
think a baby's gonna make you happy? -  
You're crazy. Babies are trouble.

VAL

Mamma, please. I need this baby.  
I'm gonna love it, take care of it.  
I just need a little help from you.  
Can you think about me for a change?!

TWILA

Think about you? You don't know  
what you're talkin' about. I spent  
my best years taking care of you...  
Don't tell me about babies. I ruined  
my life having a baby.

(CONTINUED)

VAL  
 ( quietly)  
 You never loved me.

Val finally says what she has always felt. Twila acknowledges truth when she hears it.

TWILA  
 You were never easy to love...Sure  
 I did...when you were cute, or  
 sleeping...you were my baby.. once  
 you were born....

She walks behind Val, putting her hands on her shoulders. Val's "crack high" gives Twila's words a surreal quality. Her confusion is making her paranoid.

TWILA (CONT'D)  
 But you're lucky you can get one...

Val is shaken by this revelation. She is conscious of her mother behind her, it makes her jumpy.

TWILA (CONT'D)  
 It doesn't matter.. I mean I had  
 you..But if I had the choice...

Val's crack bubble is popped.

VAL  
 You'd have killed me?  
 You've always hated me.

TWILA  
 I took care of you for sixteen  
 years...I didn't hate you...but  
 when you started paradin' around  
 butt-naked in front o'James,...  
 smoking that shit in my house with  
 that spic of yours while I was putting  
 food in your mouth and clothes on  
 your back,... well... I had paid for  
 my mistake....

VAL  
 I know, Mamma, I was just lonely -  
 and James was always around. And  
 I'm gonna be good. I'm gonna have  
 this baby. .. And I got to come home  
 to do it right.

(CONTINUED)

TWILA

There ain't no way to do the wrong thing right. Don't waste you being young on tryin'.

VAL

It's the only thing that's ever been mine, I'm not gonna kill it. If you would just let me come home for a little while. So as I can get straight....

TWILA

No, you can't do that...you shouldn't have it.

VAL

That's the best advice you've got to give me!? Kill it!? That's all you've got for me Mamma!?

TWILA

Where are you living? Dirty motels? You think your customers are gonna want a baby in the bargain. Are you gonna love your baby when you're broke and out of stuff? You can't take care of yourself, let alone no baby.

VAL

That's why I want to live with you.

TWILA

Well you can't.

VAL

O.K...I get it. You're a bitch, Mamma. I wish you never had me either, you know that. I'm gonna love my baby. I'm gonna do it right. I'll find a way.

Val slams out of the house. Twila watches after her.

TWILA

( mumbling to herself)

There ain't no way to do the wrong thing right, baby...Believe me....

Melanie opens the front door.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

ROBERT (O.S.)  
 (  
 (calling)  
 I thought you were gonna miss it.

44 INT. BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

44

Robert lies on the bed in his boxer shorts, distractedly flicking the channels on t.v.

ROBERT  
 It hasn't come on yet.

Melanie comes into the bedroom looking catatonic, rubbing her knee a little.

ROBERT (CONT'D)  
 I setup the tape machine. - What did the test say?

MELANIE  
 It said I'm pregnant...Did I get any calls?

ROBERT  
 Your agent called.

Robert looks at her expectantly.

She sits at the edge of the bed, away from Robert. He reaches over to hand her the remote controls.

MELANIE  
 Did he say anything?

ROBERT  
 (  
 (disbelieving)  
 He said he'd call back. So?...Are you O.K.?

MELANIE  
 No ...I'm pregnant.. I'm fucked.

Robert gets up and leaves the room.

Melanie's commercial comes on the screen. She presses the play/record button and the machine begins taping.

MELANIE (CONT'D)  
 (  
 (calling)  
 It's on!

INTERCUT:

45 INT. T.V. SCREEN - COMMERCIAL - COLLEGE DORMROOM 45

GIRL (Melanie, looking a bit heavier) on her bed, in front of a window calls her MOM and DAD.

MELANIE

( (on screen)

Mom?...Dad..? It's all so exciting here. I'm making zillions of friends. My classes are great. And I met a boy...

46 INT. T.V. - CLOSE ON COMMERCIAL PARENTS ON ONE PHONE TOGETHER 46

ANNOUNCER

When they are far away and growing up so fast, it is important to keep in touch...

47 INT. T.V.- HIGH-TECH SHOWROOM -CONTINUOUS 47

The republican looking ANNOUNCER points to images of FIBER OPTICS magnified a thousand times.

ANNOUNCER

( (continuing)

That's why we at PACIFIC BELL give you the best technology has to offer. We are creating the phones of the future to improve the quality of your life...

48 INT. T.V. - DORMROOM - MELANIE'S MOUTH 48

MELANIE

( (on screen)

I'll call soon... I miss you...I love you....

INTERCUT:

49 INT. - BEDROOM - SIMULTANEOUS 49

Robert is in the doorway with a beer in his hand.

ROBERT

((referring to commercial)

You look great!

MELANIE

I look fat.

(CONTINUED)

ROBERT

So... Did you make an appointment?

MELANIE

(with a vicious tone)

You mean, for the abortion?

ROBERT

What's eating you, Mel?

MELANIE

( (sarcastic)

What could possibly be 'eating' me?

ROBERT

Shit!

Robert walks out. Melanie stares at the t.v. as the ANNOUNCER concludes - "So you can hear every word."

Melanie tears up. The phone rings.

Melanie answers it.

MELANIE

Hello?

ELI (O.S.)

Melanie? - Eli - did you see the commercial?

Melanie tries to compose herself.

ELI (O.S.) (CONT'D)

it doesn't matter, because my little milkmaid - you got the pilot!

It takes a second to sink in.

MELANIE

You mean it's all set, for sure?

Eli is slender, wears very chic eye glasses (the type called "eyewear"), very stylishly dressed.

ELI

Well they want to do one more video test today, but we're negotiating your contract already.

(MORE)

50 CONTINUED:

50

ELI (CONT'D)

Be at the studio at 3:00p.m.,  
sharp....They hate to wait, but I'm  
sure they'll make you. Patience...and  
call me when you're done, to tell me  
how it went, O.K.? Bye, sweetheart.

Eli hangs up, without waiting for Melanie to answer.

51 INT. MELANIE AND ROB'S - CONTINUOUS

51

Melanie hangs up, delighted. She runs into the next room.

MELANIE (O.S.)

I got it! Robert, I got it.

52 CLOSE-UP - SLENDER RIFLE STOCK OF A MARLIN 75 C 22R.R. IN ARDY STONE'S HANDS - AFTERNOON

52

53 EXT. GUN SHOP - CONTINUOUS

53

Ardy holds the rifle with reverence and awe.

SALESMAN

Worth the wait? Huh! A weeks not  
too bad, but these gun control  
lobbyist want even more. Damn  
fanatics - cutting in on my business.

Salesman waits for Ardy to speak. Ardy checks the mechanism,  
cracking the empty rifle stock.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Sell alot of those babies. No  
mistaking that sound. Want some amo  
with that?

ARDY

Yeh! three packs.

SALESMAN

You need any practice we got a  
shooting range in the back.

ARDY

No, I grew up handlin' guns.

SALESMAN

Oh yeh! Where you from?

ARDY

Louisiana.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

SALESMAN

Good hunting down there - Beautiful country.

ARDY

God's own.

Ardy grabs the rifle, ammo and leaves.

54 INT. MELANIE AND ROBERT'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - 1:30 P.M.

54

Melanie leans over sink, applying make-up. Robert watches her.

MELANIE

This part could make my career. We'd be set... I'm so nervous. I get so scared when I have to be perfect.

ROBERT

So how do you think you got pregnant... I mean since you've been on the pill for two years?

MELANIE

Look...Robert..(trying to be direct) I stopped taking it cause it made me fat and I was auditioning for this pilot. (A plea for understanding.) I needed to look my best.

He takes a beat, then comes in for the kill.

ROBERT

So, you wanted to get pregnant, right?

MELANIE

I did not want to get pregnant,.. I figured I wouldn't right-off after so long on the pill.

ROBERT

You could've told me. We could'a used something else.

MELANIE

Sure! Do you remember how much you complained about being able to feel my diaphragm, .. you made me miserable

ROBERT

..I would'a used a rubber or something...

(CONTINUED)



MELANIE

You always say you would rather not have sex than use a rubber.

ROBERT

Well.. if I'd known you were trying to get pregnant I wouldn't of fucked you at all - That's for damn sure.

Melanie looks at herself in the mirror, feeling the injustice ...indignation flashes across her face.

MELANIE

(an edge of hysteria)

If you ever took any responsibility for our sex life, I might not have gotten pregnant!

ROBERT

Yeh.. Well you can forget about my coming to the clinic with ya tomorrow, - for your ABORTION! I'm not gonna let you put me through this shit, when you planned it all along!

MELANIE

You better come with me tomorrow.

ROBERT

What's that? A threat? What is it with girls about going with them? What's the difference?

Melanie looks at him in horror.

MELANIE

You BASTARD!,....I can't wait to have you out of me! Do you understand! (screaming) I WANT YOU OUT OF ME!!

Robert is outraged. Reflexively, he raises his hand and smacks her hard across the face.

They both freeze, in shock.

Melanie looks at herself in the mirror. Her cheek and eye already discolored and swelling.

MELANIE (CONT'D)

( in tears)

Look what you did to me!

55 INT. BARBARA'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

55

DONAHUE show is on. His guests are men who got their non-English speaking wives from a catalogue. On the kitchen counters there are several trays of cupcakes, some decorated.

Grandma is pursing her lips, as Barbara tries to get her to take a pill. Barbara tries pushing it between Grandma's tight lips, but Grandma shakes her off, a look of terror on her wrinkled face.

BARBARA

Mother, please. The doctor said to take your pill as close to eating as possible.

Grandma shakes her head and tightens her lips.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Please.. It's good for you..

GRANDMA

( through closed  
lips)

It's poison.

BARBARA

Mother ..It's not poison. I would never give you poison. Please, I need to go to the garage and talk to Jack. Just take the pill.

Barbara pinches her mother's upper-arm - HARD! Grandma opens her mouth wide, shrieking. Barbara unflinchingly pops the pill in, holds her mother's mouth and nose.

56 EXT./INT. WATTS - GANG CORNER - AFTERNOON

56

A TATTOOED HAND - decorated with crosses and abstract symbols in dark ink taps on the glass as the car window electronically disappears.

MATEO leans into a stopped BMW with USC TROJAN stickers everywhere, FRATERNITY sticker on the windshield.

A collegiate BUYER drives. A cute GIRL is in the passenger seat, wearing a low cut top.

MATEO

Watcha need, Chief?

BUYER

How much?

(CONTINUED)

MATEO  
Twenty apiece.

BUYER  
( timid)  
Yesterday it was ten!

MATEO  
Who you buy from - you see him -?  
buy from him! ..Best I can do for  
you is two for thirty.

GIRL nudges BUYER suggestively.

BUYER  
O.K. I'll take 'em.

Buyer naively opens his wallet in front of a drug-dealer. -  
Ultimate no-no!- Flashing daddy's credit cards.

MATEO  
Mastercard or Visa?

Buyer is too nervous to get it. GIRL laughs, flashing Mateo  
a little tit.

Mateo winks at her as he drops the rocks in the Buyer's hand.

The car pulls away. Buyer rolls-up his window as he pulls  
off, yelling at the Girl for flirting with a SPIC. Mateo  
spits after the car.

MATEO (CONT'D)  
Chingao! I hate those frat-fucks.

Mateo turns to notice Val watching him from across the street.

Val approaches. The GANG start to whistle and cluck at  
her. ("STRAWBERRY, STRAWBERRY EASY TO PLUCK, EASY TO FUCK ,  
KNOWS HOW TO SUCK. STRAWBERRY, STRAWBERRY TASTES SO SWEET,  
GOOD TO EAT..."). Mateo gives them a look, they rap more  
softly. He takes a step towards Val, who has crossed the  
street.

MATEO (CONT'D)  
What's up? I ain't seen you round  
lately? You tired of selling it? Or  
didya get that AIDS shit?

The GANG behind him laughs, but Mateo gives them another  
cold look. Val hangs back, forcing Mateo to move farther  
from his friends.

(CONTINUED)

VAL

I came down to see my mother, but I really wanted to see you. Did you miss me?

MATEO

Only when I get a hard-on.

He chuckles, looking over at his friends.

VAL

I wanted my mom to let me come home - just for awhile, till I can get a good job and a place. But she said no way.

MATEO

Your mom's a bitch... She's got a new boyfriend. He's blacker than your pappa.

Mateo takes out a pipe of his own and drops a rock into it's cracked, burnt bowl. He lights, smokes...

VAL

I saw him ... Remember that night I smoked for the first time, I coughed and gagged, and that moon was over the TOWERS so we climbed the fence...(Mateo hands her the pipe) It doesn't even make me cough now.

She takes a deep hit.

MATEO

(holding-in smoke as  
he speaks)

You sure can suck it down, you always were good at that.

They laugh together, smoke pouring from their mouths.

A SLOW MOVING CAR WITH BLACKED-OUT WINDOWS CRUISES BY. MATEO SEES A SLIM GUN BARREL SLIP OUT A CRACK IN THE WINDOW. VAL NOTICES WHERE MATEO'S GAZE IS FOCUSED.- SEEING- NOT COMPREHENDING.

MATEO GRABS VAL'S ARM, "RUN!!!" JUST AS THE RIFLE CRACKS IN THE AIR, AND ONE OF THE GANG MEMBERS CRUMBLES TO THE PAVEMENT. THE OTHER MEMBERS SCATTER. VAL LOOKS OVER HER SHOULDER AS SHE RUNS, A LOOK OF CONCERN FOR THE FALLEN GANG MEMBER ON HER FACE.

57 EXT. JACK'S FOREIGN CAR GARAGE - MID-AFTERNOON

57

Barbara leads Grandma into the yard, where several expensive foreign cars are being worked on by a crew of MECHANICS. One of them is Bradley. He is working under a FERRARI that is raised on the lift.

BARBARA

Wait here with Bradley, Mother. I'll be back soon. Bradley, where's your father?

BRADLEY

.. inside...

Bradley looks at his grandmother contemptuously. Barbara heads into the small office.

58 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - CONTINUING

58

Jack is seated at his desk going over some invoices. There are a few nudie posters and calendars about, but nothing compared to the average garage, mostly cartoons about mechanics, etc.. Barbara quietly places a brown paper bag on the desk beside Jack, who looks up in surprise, then recognition.

BARBARA

I need your opinion on the cupcakes I made for Eric's school fair. And Momma needed some exercise.

JACK

Well, you didn't have to do that. Sit down.. Gosh , it's strange to see you in here. You mean you walked?

Jack becomes self-conscious about a MISS APRIL hanging behind him, at which Barbara seems to be staring.

JACK (CONT'D)

(continuing, trying to dismiss it)

The fellas put those up. Every month a new girl.

BARBARA

(with genuine smile)  
Must be nice.

Awkward silence.

(CONTINUED)

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You like your work, don't you.

JACK

Well, of course. A man needs to get satisfaction out of his job, or what's it all for, right?

BARBARA

I guess everyone deserves satisfaction.

JACK

Barbara , honey, is something the matter?

BARBARA

Jack, I went to the doctor yesterday.. and..

JACK

Barby, it's o.k. (She looks at him)  
I don't know much about it...I knew something was making you moody and tired, and you're awful late and all ... so ..I figured..

BARBARA

So...Then you know that I'm...

JACK

..that you're starting your change .. of life..the menopause...

Barbara looks at him - shocked - insulted.

JACK (CONT'D)

....It's not like we want anymore children. Besides, you're the most beautiful woman in the world to me and nothing can change that.

BARBARA

( ( annoyed)

Jack - But I'm not... (reflecting)  
We don't want anymore children...,...do we?

JACK

Honey, you're exhausted. Taking care of your mother is putting alot of strain on you, and all the trouble you've been having with Brad isn't

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JACK (CONT'D)

helping. I know he's out of hand, but he's a good worker, - practically my best mechanic... He needs some freedom.

Barbara is sidetracked, upset.

BARBARA

Then he can move out, but he can't treat my house like a motel, and take my doing his laundry and cooking for him for granted.

JACK

I know. I've tried to tell him. It's strange, he used to be so close with you - It seemed, to me, sometimes, like I was the outsider with the two of you, I don't know...how

BARBARA

I don't either. (This is her greatest concern) It's as if he hates me for bringing my mother to live with us.

JACK

It does seem to annoy him. It's been an adjustment for all of us (he touches her hand). I'm very proud of him, you raised a fine man.

BARBARA

I am too, of course I'm proud. It's just I wonder...sometimes I wonder if I got sick like momma would there be anyone to look after me, or would I end up in some home.

JACK

(bemused)

Honey, I'll always look after you, no matter how senile you get. Now I really have to get these invoices done. Do you want me to have one of the boys drive you home?

BARBARA

No, I want Momma to get some walking, besides, it's not far.

59 EXT. POOLSIDE OF A HOTEL - AFTERNOON 59

Ardy is cleaning the pool, watching a very attractive WOMAN rub herself with lotion. She senses his gaze, heightens the gesture, peering at him over her huge sunglasses. Ardy is tantalized, but angry that she is affecting him beyond his control.

Barbara and Grandma walk along the fence that separates the pool from the side walk.

60 EXT. WATTS TOWER - VAL AND MATEO ON CURB - AFTERNOON 60

Standing in front of a green Vega. Mateo looks right and left then takes his shirt off, wraps his fist with it, he pushes Val away, instructing her to cover her eyes, but Val watches his chest and arm as he smashes the window glass.

61 INT. CAR - AWHILE LATER 61

Mateo and Val are making love in the backseat of the Vega. The glass is scattered on the seat and floor.

The WATTS TOWERS are behind them.

VAL

Maybe we could get married... I love you Mateo... I always did.

MATEO

Sssh, Baby ...I ain't marrying nobody.

Val tries to get into the sex.

62 INT. ELI'S OFFICE - CLOSE TO 3:00 P.M. 62

The left side of Melanie's face is swollen and red, her eye is slightly purple.

ELI

I cannot believe Rob did this. I mean I knew he'd be jealous of your success, but brutalizing your lovely face. Well - he is beneath contempt.

Melanie tries to stop crying to speak.

MELANIE

It's so unfair... He blamed me for getting pregnant...(hyperventilating slightly) He said I did it on purpose, like I'd tricked him or something.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



MELANIE (CONT'D)

I wanted us to be successes together,...I would never have done that....to us..

ELI

Jeezuz! I swear, I think women are amazing. When I want to have sex I would never have the self control to stop and think about putting in my diaphragm. And I'm not going to eat cancer for anyone. I'd be pregnant every other week.... Don't you fret. You can stay at my place however long. And I'll postpone the test a couple of days.

Melanie looks up in horror.

MELANIE

Won't it hurt my chances, I mean making them wait?

ELI

Are you kidding? In this town? It's gonna make them think you're so hot that I'm hearing other offers trying to start a bidding war. You know, Melanie, when you're not all bruised you're gorgeous.

Melanie smiles radiantly through her tears and Eli picks up the phone.

63 INT. THE CENTER FOR VICTIMS OF ABORTION - LATE AFTERNOON

63

Donald Ingersol is sitting next to his wife PEGGY (35), petite, painfully awkward. He is holding her hand as she speaks in a timid voice. They are seated at a round table of women.

PEGGY

I was scared, so when the doctor said "abortion" it seemed so easy. I felt so powerless. So alone.

DONALD

( coaching)  
... but after, when it was over?...

PEGGY

I felt empty.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

PEGGY (CONT'D)

I was more alone than ever because I couldn't face what I had done. The act itself. I didn't know how grave my sin was until I met Donald and he made me see it was murder. Till then I believed the doctor, who called it a menstrual extraction. Like I was sick and he fixed me. But Donald let me know that the doctor had wounded me by putting me out of touch with God.

Universal "AMEN".

64 EXT. INGLEWOOD - VAL'S OLD HIGH SCHOOL - DUSK

64

Val wanders around the vacant high school. She runs down covered walkways, jumping, dribbling an imaginary ball, making baskets. She tries all the doors. The one to the boys' lockerroom is open. She goes inside.

65 INT. HIGH SCHOOL LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUING

65

Val carefully places her second-to-last rock in the glass pipe and smokes it.

66 INT. ARDY STONE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

66

A semi-furnished bachelor apartment. Empty T.V. dinner boxes and empty beer cans overflowing the trash bag in the kitchenette. The television blares a story about RU486 as a safe and less traumatic abortion. Ardy carries a newly heated T.V. dinner to the armchair in front of the T.V. He looks disheveled, as if he had worked and slept in his clothes for a week. He bristles with rage at the news story. He begins cutting Salisbury steak.

ARDY

Bitches, murdering Bitches!

67 INT. BARBARA'S DINNER TABLE - EVENING

67

Jack, Barbara, Grandma, Lisa and ERIC (their 11 year old son) are sitting at the table eating. There is an empty place setting to Barbara's right. Barbara picks at her food distractedly, shoving it around the plate, she is staring at the empty place. Grandma is singing softly to herself.

GRANDMA

"Oh dear, what can the matter be?"

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GRANDMA (CONT'D)  
 three fat ladies stuck in the  
 lavatory, they sold their virtue for  
 poetry.  
 Johnny's so long at the fair."

Eric giggles theatrically behind his hand. Lisa gives him a  
 "cut it out" look.

ERIC  
 Mom, those cupcakes are awesome.

LISA  
 I don't know why you couldn't make  
 them yourself, Eric. I mean even  
 you can read directions, you're not  
 that big a spaz.

ERIC  
 Cooking's woman's work, right Dad?

JACK  
 Well, your Mom is certainly a  
 wonderful cook.

LISA  
 Dad, you say you're a liberal but  
 you're so sexist! I mean, Mom's  
 been making your breakfast for twenty  
 two years, like you can't scramble  
 an egg. It's positively archaic.

ERIC  
 Woe, Vocab word babe. Oh Lisa, you're  
 so mature..

The front door slams.

Bradley enters.  
 Without a word he sits at the empty place and begins serving  
 himself heaping portions. Barbara watches him with disbelief.

BARBARA  
 ( (forced  
 calm)  
 You're an hour late. We waited for  
 you.

BRADLEY  
 ( (with a full  
 mouth)  
 I was busy.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Your mom's been busy cooking for you.

BRADLEY

Yeh!... well....

BARBARA

"Yeh...Well"? How dare you come into this house - late, without calling, with nothing to say but "yeh..well".

There is a frantic note in her voice. Jack looks startled. Lisa and Eric look at each other.

BRADLEY

( (annoyed)

What's your damage Mom? I'm just late, no big deal.

BARBARA

You are not the one in this household to say what is a "big deal"..and what isn't...

If you're going to be late or miss dinner you call me!.. I'm your mother, not a slave.. I don't have to put up with you treating me like one.

Barbara's voice is shrill, trembling with the effort to control her rage.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You come to my table without washing your hands or saying 'hello' and stuff yourself on my food, then go out without telling me where you're going or when you'll be back!

Bradley continues to eat, this enrages Barbara all the more. The FAMILY watches, startled, as Barbara grabs Bradley's plate from under his fork, and tosses it to the floor.

Grandma begins to clap and squeal. Lisa tries to quiet her.

BRADLEY

Jesus, Mom, What's your fucking damage? You goin mental, too?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

BARBARA

You!! - you're my FUCKING damage. ( Jack starts at hearing Barbara use a word she has never uttered ). Who the - Hell - do you think you are? ...(deathly quiet, serious) I want you out of this house... Get out of my house.

BRADLEY

I'd watch out for her Dad! You're going to end up takin care of her...

JACK

Don't worry Bradley. Your Mom's had a hard day and ....

BARBARA

Don't you explain to him. He's a spoiled pig, don't you apologize to him. I'm sick of him taking. (to Bradley) I want you out. Now!

Bradley looks at his Dad, who stares at Barbara, dumbfounded. Bradley grabs his jacket off the back of the chair.

BRADLEY

( mumbling )  
Fuck it!, man. I'm outta here.

He slams out the door. Barbara stands - for a moment looks at the empty chair, the mess on the floor, then walks out of the room. Her bedroom door closes. Jack looks at the children. Eric is frightened, but silent. Lisa is looking at her father, expectantly. Only Grandma seems unconcerned. She is eating with gusto - smiling.

68 INT. ELI'S DUPLEX - NIGHT

68

Eli's Duplex is super-chic, lots of glass brick. Melanie is perched on his overstuffed couch. There is an assortment of junk food on the coffee table.

ELI

You don't think I'm a mother hen, do you?

MELANIE

(spooning CHERRY GARCIA)  
No, Eli you're wonderful. I can't believe how sweet you're being to me.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

ELI

I'm glad to do it for you... Now  
I'm not coming home tonight, ...got  
a date with a hot Latin.. but help  
yourself to anything ...and try not  
to think about Rob.

He fusses around her, covering her with a blanket.

ELI (CONT'D)

You'll be hounded by men killing  
themselves to give you everything  
soon enough. I gave the studio-guy  
the tape of your scene in acting  
class, and he loved it. He's real  
hot for you, I can smell it in his  
voice.

Melanie jumps off the couch and throws her arms around Eli  
for a quick hug.

MELANIE

You're the best agent in the world.

ELI

May you always think so. Now I must  
go. And, Dearest, always remember.  
...(points to food) If you must binge -  
purge. No fat allowed on nationwide  
t.v..

MELANIE

Don't worry I get morning sickness  
at night too.

They laugh.

69 INT. HOLLYWOOD STRIPPER BAR - EVENING

69

Ardy Stone sits, back to the bar, staring at the stage.

In the mirror's reflection over the bar a topless STRIPPER  
gyrates. Ardy is galvanized. His eyes are fixed on her  
pumping pelvis; he drinks without looking at the glass,  
pops bar nuts into his mouth mechanically. His unblinking  
gaze follows the STRIPPER like radar.

70 INT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - EVENING

70

Lights on.

Val and "JOHN" are kneeling, naked on the bed facing each  
other, touching. He is sickly white in the presence of Val's  
dark chocolate flesh.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

She seems to absorb all the light he reflects. A music video moans in the background.

"JOHN"

...This Jamaican maid would rub olive oil into her dark skin...

She prepares a crack pipe.

"JOHN" (CONT'D)

...in the kitchen. Every night I would watch her - I know she knew...

He takes the pipe to his lips. Val lights it. He inhales, swallowing it like food and gagging a little.

VAL

...So, she was your first love...

He holds the hit, then blows out talking.

"JOHN"

...My wife is the woman I love.  
(coughing) I just want to fuck you.

VAL

You get what you pay for... No love for sale.

71 INT. BRADLEY'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

71

Barbara is looking at Bradley's wall. His sports trophies are on shelves alongside a collection of empty imported beer bottles stacked in a pyramid.

In a framed collage of pretty, petite, blondes (ex-girlfriends, some pictures showing him kissing them, posing, etc.) Barbara notices a picture of herself with Bradley who is about 9 and wearing a cowboy costume she made him. She touches the glass. There is a tap at the door.

Lisa peeks around the door, she doesn't wait for a "come in".

LISA

Are you o.k. Mom? ...I've stacked the dishwasher and cleaned-up the mess and everything....

Lisa is still shaken by her mother's outburst. Barbara is embarrassed and tries to sound as if nothing happened.

BARBARA

That was very thoughtful.

(CONTINUED)

LISA

He's a jerk, Mom.. You were right..I'd like to kill him sometimes.

BARBARA

When he was little we were best friends. He told me everything he dreamed and thought... He came out of my body and now he's a stranger.

Barbara catches her breath.

LISA

I'm gonna start being more helpful. Mom? - Do you think she knows what's happening to her?

Barbara looks at Lisa with regret - apology.

BARBARA

It's not easy .. I wanted to be so close to my children.

LISA

Mommy, it's his fault. Please don't be sad. I don't know why he's so mean about Grandma.

BARBARA

My mother always embarrassed me, even before she got sick. People gossiped about her.

LISA

On account of Grandpa?

BARBARA

Things were so different then, Lisa. The town judged her very harshly. We would go out to the movies and he would be there with his family. - He'd look right by me.

LISA

Taking care of Grammy is too much work for you.

BARBARA

You know Lisa, the only thing left in the world that I'm sure of is taking care of my mother.

Barbara holds Lisa's face in her hands, then slips an arm around her shoulder, leading her out.

(CONTINUED)



71 CONTINUED: (2) 71

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Come on,... we never had our desert.  
There are cupcakes out there for an  
army.

72 INT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - NIGHT 72

LIGHTS OUT, THE FLICKERING, T.V. STATIC ANIMATES THE ROOM IN GREY SHADOWS. Val is rifling through the pants pockets of the snoring JOHN. She takes all the cash (\$400) from his wallet, leaving the credit cards; she puts the wallet back in his jacket. Val walks to the bed, leans over the JOHN, playfully lifts his eyelid - no response - then she slips off his Rolex and ring. Val grabs her satchel and blows out of the room. The JOHN rolls over, resumes snoring.

73 INT. ELI'S DUPLEX - NIGHT 73

Melanie is bathed in the glow of a silent T.V.. She dials the phone.

After a few rings a woman's voice answers (Melanie's MOTHER).

MOTHER (O.S.)

(groggy)

Hello?... Yes?...(annoyed). Who's  
there?!

MELANIE

Sorry Momma.. it's Melon..I ...Well,  
I'm not at the apartment... I'm  
staying at Eli's - I wanted to tell  
you, so you wouldn't worry.

74 INT. MELANIE'S PARENTS BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 74

Melanie's MOTHER (52) has a soft, round face. The bedroom is excessively feminine and frilly. The husband's sleeping form is dwarfed by ruffled pillows of varying shapes and sizes. The bedside table is a shrine of family photos; one of Melanie with her prize winning 4-H calf.

MOTHER

You had a fight with Robert? I don't  
know why you throw yourself away on  
him..He...

75 INT. ELI'S - CONTINUOUS 75

MELANIE

Momma - I know what you feel about  
Robert, you've been telling me for  
three years..

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

MELANIE (CONT'D)  
and you've been right all along, I  
broke-up with him..forever.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
Good! Now you'll find someone who'll  
take care of you.. someone with nice  
things.. connections - out there..

Melanie rolls her eyes - "What does Mom know about out-here!".

76 INT. PARENT'S - CONTINUOUS

76

MOTHER  
a powerful man can make the woman.  
Like Pia Zidora's husband.

MELANIE  
He's older than daddy! I'd like to  
be in love Momma..

MOTHER  
(          (laughing)  
Well, you're so beautiful you could  
find a handsome and powerful man.  
With Robert you've always been selling  
yourself short.

77 INT. ELI'S - CONTINUOUS

77

Melanie does not feel beautiful right now.

MELANIE  
I know Momma, and it's over..Did you  
see my commercial?

MOTHER (O.S.)  
(          (perking-up)  
Yes... Everyone phoned. I felt so  
proud..

MELANIE  
Did I look O.K.?

Melanie holds her breath, handing her fragile ego over to  
her Mother's crushing grip.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
(          (sighing)  
..Your such a lovely girl, I just  
hate it when you let yourself gain  
weight... It all goes to your face..  
You probably are living on fast food..  
No one in Los Angeles cooks...

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

MELANIE

I've taken that weight-off..besides the sponsor wanted the milk-fed-midwestern type. Eli said it was great. And it looks like I'm going to get that pilot I auditioned for.

Her mother squeals.

MOTHER (O.S.)

(away from the receiver)

William! .. William - Wake-up - Melanie's going to have her own show (back into the receiver) Oh honey, ..I feel so proud ..I know you'll be a star...

MELANIE

It's not my show and it's not definite, so don't tell everyone yet, except for Robert's mother..It could all fall through at the last minute.. This has gotta be costing a fortune.. Give my love to daddy..and. I need..

MOTHER (O.S.)

I'm sending you a vegetable soup cookbook.. I'm so proud of you. I love you, take care.

MELANIE

I ..(her mother hangs-up)

Melanie dials her apartment, gets the machine, looks at the clock, hangs-up turns up the sound on DAVID LETTERMAN, and scrapes the filling off an OREO with her teeth.

78 INT. HOLLYWOOD - BURGUNDY ROOM - NIGHT

78

Robert whispers in other BARTENDER's ear as the Extra Sexy Girl, in her sexiest outfit, waits by the door. The Bartender nods. Robert guzzles the last of an old fashioned, and weaves his way through the CROWD.

They walk out together.

79 EXT. - HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS

79

The Extra Sexy Girl points to her car. Robert and she stumble towards it, (Val is on a pay phone across the street)... Robert presses her up against the car grinding into her as he kisses her. She melts into him, he pulls away and takes her car key, walks to driver's side.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

(The car is parked in front of the STRIPPER BAR.)

80 INT. HOLLYWOOD STRIPPER BAR - NIGHT

80

Ardy Stone is watching the blonde STRIPPER, now on her break and wearing a satin robe over her costume, chat with one of the COCKTAIL WAITRESSES. He moves down the bar toward her. She senses his stare. She turns - a look of irritation on her painted-smile face.

STRIPPER

Take a picture - It'll last longer.

Ardy stops a few stools away from the two women.

STRIPPER (CONT'D)

You got something to say to me,  
little man?

WAITRESS

I think he wants to ask you to the  
prom.

The BARTENDER, CUSTOMERS, and WAITRESS laugh, but the Stripper stares at Ardy, who squirms.

STRIPPER

Get lost, Chicken-Shit. I'm not  
interested.

She looks at him - challenging.

ARDY

My father kept my mother on a chain  
for 200 hundred days.

STRIPPER

Well if she was half the dog you  
are, who could blame him?

The whole bar breaks up in riotous laughter.

Ardy looks at her, angry, then leaves to the sound of jeers.

STRIPPER (CONT'D)

Creep!

81 INT. SUNSET IHOP - NIGHT

81

Val is at the counter, moving the ring in her hand, catching the glint in the stones. The DEALER enters with the large MAN.

(CONTINUED)

DEALER

...Right-off I tell her she got me the wrong brand... So, she's tellin' me I bought VICEROY once before, that she knows I smoke'm. I tell her "I'll trade you before I'll trade my PAL MALS in for some shit brand like VICEROY!" That shut her up..

The Man laughs, tapping Val on the shoulder, gesturing for her to follow him to the booth where the Dealer has seated himself. She puts the ring in her change purse, which she puts in her satchel and follows the Man. He sits next to Dealer.

VAL

I got a present for you. You're gonna look like a Century City exec with what I got for you.

She lifts the Rolex tantalizingly out of a compartment in her satchel. The Dealer reaches for it - not his usual cool - Val snaps it back.

VAL (CONT'D)

How many do I get for a beautiful timepiece of this quality. This is the real thing - not one of those Taiwanie knock-offs.

Val is enjoying having something he wants, for a change.

DEALER

So you're stealing now... Suck 'em fuck 'em... steal from 'em. Meh,mmm.

The Dealer shakes his head like an old man reading the news. The Man snickers.

The Dealer relaxes as Val sits, deflated by his words.

DEALER (CONT'D)

Now let me see this (taking the watch) ... looks like the real thing, of course it could be fake. I'll give you six for it.

VAL

Six rocks .. for a ROLEX?! Bullshit! That's sixty bucks. (snatching the watch back) Even a fake's worth that. This is the real thing.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

81

DEALER

O.K. o.k., don't sweat me, Relax !..  
 Since you say it's real I'll give  
 you ten. That's all the stuff I got  
 on me.

VAL

Fifteen, and you can give me the  
 other five tomorrow. I'll trust you  
 for it.

The Two men laugh at her nerve, she starts to walk away with  
 the watch.

DEALER

Yeh, fifteen's reasonable. Come  
 here Val, I want it.

She struts back to the booth.

82 EXT. - HOLLYWOOD - PARKING LOT OF STRIPPER BAR - NIGHT

82

Ardy Stone is parked across from the Club, in an electric  
 blue EL CAMINO with ARDY'S CLEAR BLUE POOL written on the  
 flatbed.

83 ON THE RADIO: TWO ANALYSTS ARGUE ABOUT THE ISSUE OF CONDOM 83  
 DISTRIBUTION IN L.A. HIGHSCHOOLS AND GRAMMAR SCHOOLS. ONE  
 TAKES THE SIDE THAT EDUCATION IS THE ONLY REMEDY FOR RAMPANT  
 TEEN PREGNANCY AND THE SPREAD OF AIDS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE. "  
 THE RIGHTWING IS CONSTANTLY DENYING THE REALITY OF SEXUAL  
 ACTIVITY AMONG TEENS. MOST TEENAGERS ENGAGE IN SEX BEFORE  
 15. PRETENDING WILL NOT STOP THEM, OUR ONLY CHOICE AS ADULTS  
 IS TO ACT UPON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE SEX  
 AND PUT OUR EFFORTS INTO MAKING SURE THE SEX THEY HAVE IS  
 SAFE. " "THAT'S THE SAME LIBERAL BULLSHIT THAT WANTS THE  
 GOVERNMENT TO MAKE IT SAFE FOR JUNKIES TO SHOOT UP, AND  
 PROSTITUTES SAFE TO GO TO. NONE OF US ARE SAFE WHEN THESE  
 CRAZY LIBERALS ARE OUT TO MAKE IT SAFE FOR CRIMINALS TO RUN  
 WILD IN THE STREETS."

The clock says 2:30.

The lights behind the sign showing a naked, REDHEAD lying  
 prone on a purple divan, go out. The BARTENDER holds the  
 door open for the WAITRESS, followed by the STRIPPER, now  
 dressed in modest street clothes, but wearing full make-up.

The Bartender walks to his parked car, shouts a final  
 goodnight, gets in, and drives away. The Waitress and  
 Stripper chat at the bus stop; the Waitress' bus arrives,  
 she gets on. The WOMEN wave to each other through the glass  
 as the bus pulls away.

(CONTINUED)

The Stripper crosses the empty street against the light.

The wind blows trash out of the gutter, it goes skittering across the BOULEVARD. Her hair blows across her face, sticking to her lipstick.

Ardy starts his engine, leaving his lights off, he turns the corner to follow her down the darkened street. The car crawls down the street, Ardy stares at her. She is aware of him, and clings to the buildings, away from the street.

Her heel falters on the incline of the alley driveway, steadies,.. walks on...

ARDY TURNS THE WHEEL SHARPLY INTO THE DRIVEWAY - TURNING HIS BRIGHT HEADLIGHTS ON - LURCHING FORWARD - THEN - STOPPING - HIS BUMPER IS INCHES FROM HER KNEES. SHE IS DAZED BY THE SUDDEN LIGHT, HOLDING HER HAND UP TO HER EYES. HE INCHES THE CAR FORWARD. TOUCHING HER LEG, STARTLING HER, PUSHING HER BACKWARD, SLOWLY INCHING HER DEEPER INTO THE ALLEY WITH THE THREAT OF RUNNING HER OVER.

PANICKED, SHE LOOKS UP INTO THE NIGHT SKY, SEARCHING FOR WINDOWS ONTO THE ALLEY. SEEING A LIT WINDOW, SHE SCREAMS.

SHE RUNS BACKWARD AT AN ANGLE - THEN - FORWARD. TRYING TO RUN BETWEEN THE BUILDING WALL AND THE CAR DOOR. THE CAR STOPS AS ARDY FLINGS HIS DOOR OPEN, THROWING HER BACKWARD ONTO THE GROUND. THE WIND IS KNOCKED OUT OF HER, SHE CRAWLS BACKWARD INTO THE HEADLIGHTS' TWIN SPOTS. SHE TRIES TO SCREAM, BUT SOMETHING CLOSER TO A SQUAWK COMES OUT. SHE LOOKS AT ARDY WITH TERROR AS HE STANDS OVER HER, UNBUCKLING HIS PANTS.

STRIPPER

Please ..,don't,..Oh! Jesus,..please..

ARDY

Don't be frightened. I'm not gonna kill you.

Sounds of retching come from the half open bathroom door. Eli enters his apartment, hears the noise. Goes over to the coffee table and collects the disposable debris of Melanie's food-fest. He throws this out and returns for the dishes as the toilet flushes and the faucet gushes. Eli straightens-out the blanket and fluffs the pillows, as Melanie enters - green.

MELANIE

Oh, .. Eli,.. please don't clean up after me. I would have done it ..I thought you wouldn't be home...

ELI

Lie down.. you look awful. It's good your 'condition' will be temporary. Throwing-up does not become you.

Melanie smiles, laying on the couch, shivering a little. Eli tucks the blanket around her.

ELI (CONT'D)

Sleep for a few hours, if you're up to it we'll have breakfast before I take you to your appointment.

MELANIE

Eli..Thank you - I ..you're a really wonderful man..friend.(joking-off her urge to cry) You wouldn't think of going straight maybe?

ELI

Only if Mel Gibson got a sex change.

Asleep, Barbara grinds her teeth until tears are forming at the edges of her closed eyes. The noise wakes Jack, who gently rubs her jaw, neck and shoulders.

JACK

Barbara .. Honey? You're grinding again.

Waking her.

BARBARA

..Mmm..I ..I was,..swimming, something was biting my feet, then my legs. .. Then they were gone - my legs were gone, and the whole time I felt like you were watching, calling to me to to use my arms...but they were gone too..

Jack starts kissing her arms, turning the soft white side to him. Then he kisses her mouth, tentative, then passionate. Barbara responds to the affection, but it is not sexual for her. She allows Jack to make love to her - searching for comfort.



86 INT. ARDY'S BATHROOM - PREDAWN 86

Ardy is taking a shower, scrubbing vigorously, whistling.

87 INT. HOLLYWOOD MOTEL - DAWN 87

In the window - a heavy, slow drop of water off the hem of Val's dress reflects the tangerine sun rising over the SCIENTOLOGY beacon, then drops to the sill, another forming in it's place.

Val wakes-up with a start. She looks at her underwear and dress in the window frame.

VAL

Shit..(going to the window, touching  
the fabric) wet...

She goes to the bathroom.

Returns with a towel, which she lays on the bed. She takes the dress down and wraps it in the towel. She turns the T.V. to GOOD MORNING AMERICA, grabs her satchel, and seats herself on the towel, shifting her weight to press the water out of her dress. She takes out her pipe and a couple of rocks and settles in to get incredibly high.

88 INT. DONALD AND PEGGY INGERSOL'S KITCHENETTE - EARLY MORNING 88

The motel kitchenette is spotless. Sitting at the table, Donald reads his speech - moving his lips. Peggy is cooking.

Knock at the door.

DONALD

I'll get it ! .....Terry..good  
morning. I trust you slept well.

Covering Terry's hands when he shakes them, Donald receives a pained look from Peggy, which he does not acknowledge.

TERRY

Good morning Donald. Yes I did, I  
had a great night's sleep..Good  
morning Peggy. How....

DONALD

( cutting her  
off)

I need your opinion on this,  
(referring to the speech) you're so  
good with words.

(CONTINUED)

TERRY

Well,..thank you Donald ( Awkward, sensing Peggy's vulnerability) I'm sure what you need is the woman's side..(speaking more to Peggy).

DONALD

Don't be modest, Terry...Peg can you get Terry some coffee. - Would you like pancakes? Toast? Peg can fix you whatever you like.

Donald shoos Peggy into the kitchen, and continues.

DONALD (CONT'D)

"Baby killing is making big bucks in America, but for who? Not for the frightened mother's coerced by doctors into the sin of infanticide...

Peggy brings Terry a cup, Terry gestures 'thanks'.

DONALD (CONT'D)

No - Doctors are making the money. First off the mother, who they send back into the world a blood stained, murderess. Second - off the sale of that innocent baby to research labs. And if that poor baby isn't sold for its tissue it's thrown out like trash...

TERRY

( interrupting)  
Are you sure you want to say murderess, I mean...we want to get them to listen.

Peggy watches, pretending to tidy up.

DONALD

Absolutely, but we also want them to hear the truth. I thought we agreed.

TERRY

What do you think Peggy? How does that term make you feel?

PEGGY

Well, ...I think that..

DONALD

Peg - Please!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: (2)

88

DONALD (CONT'D)

It's not about how the woman feels,  
Terry - it's about what is right and  
what is wrong.

PEGGY

(mumbled, but audible)  
... in your opinion.

89 INT. - PAY PHONE OF VAL'S MOTEL LOBBY - DAWN

89

Val dials Mateo's beeper. It beeps. She punches the number  
of the pay phone into the key pad, ending on the pound sign  
(#).

90 CLOSE-ON DIGITAL READ-OUT ON MATEO'S BEEPER, SOUND OF BEEPING  
ACCOMPANYING - DAWN

90

91 INT. BEDROOM - DAWN

91

The beeper is attached to his pants, which lay in a pile on  
the floor by a bed - woman's silky panties nestle in the  
crotch.

Mateo's foot hits the floor.

GIRL

Dios mio, Mateo, ignore it! Some  
Asshole fiending before it's light  
out?

92 INT. BARBARA'S BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

92

Barbara is showering. Jack comes in and looks at her  
silhouette.

JACK

You know.

Barbara startles at his voice.

JACK (CONT'D)

I didn't notice til just now how  
much weight you've taken-off - since  
your mom's been here. You're back to  
where you were before Brad.

She turns off the water, gets out, wrapping a towel around  
herself.

BARBARA

Are you going to drive Eric?

(CONTINUED)

JACK

I'm gonna drop Lisa off, then take him over and help him unload. You made a hundred and something.

He is crowding her in a sexual way, she is very uptight about it.

BARBARA

Shouldn't you get going, I mean Lisa's school is twenty minutes away from Eric's in traffic.

JACK

I know, Don't worry. You look great Barbara, (nuzzling her) I think losing your temper is good for you.

BARBARA

Stop it Jack - your acting like a teenager.

JACK

..And you're still my only girl.

An ardent kiss and he turns to go. Barbara looks at herself in the mirror.

BARBARA

I love you very much Jack.

JACK

(grinning)  
Well, I'm all yours.

Peggy and Donald load his car with signs as Terry pulls away in her car.

DONALD

Did you have to embarrass me in front of Terry like that? She'll think we're fighting.

PEGGY

We don't fight, Donald. You barely see me anymore. I'm just sick of apologizing, smiling. I thought you needed me as a partner, but you don't.

Donald loads dozens of posters into the back of his station wagon.

(CONTINUED)

DONALD

Don't be melodramatic, Peg. Our mission is saving children, not some movie romance.

PEGGY

What about children of our own? I don't want to miss out, Donald. I'm not young anymore.

Donald slams the tailgate.

DONALD

You turned your back on it once! I'm sorry, but it's true. Should we let thousands die so you can play house somewhere?

PEGGY

That's not what I mean, and you know it.

DONALD

I know you should think a little harder before you open your mouth. Sometimes you sound just plain ignorant.

Peggy gets in the car, defeated.

Robert awakes, looking at the top of Extra Sexy Girl's head apprehensively - Yes - It's her - Shit! He tries to slip out of her grip without waking her. She wraps her leg around his pelvis. He extricates himself, picks his pants up off the floor...

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

Can't wait to get back to little miss wifey! Huh?

ROBERT

I thought you were asleep...

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

She won't forgive you, not for bruising her precious face, or for fucking me. Not that I'll definitely tell her. Not that I won't..

ROBERT

We've been through worse.

(CONTINUED)

## EXTRA SEXY GIRL

Really? Seemed to me you were a little inexperienced at the one night stand.

## ROBERT

Yeh! well ...It's been awhile. (to himself) ...it took me a couple times to know, then I stuck to it...I forgot ...I only really want her, but I forgot..

He picks up the rest of his clothes and leaves. Extra Sexy Girl is extra pissed.

Melanie sits on the couch in Eli's terry cloth robe changing channels. She looks so depressed and bruised, Eli is worried by the sight of her. He finishes his business call hastily.

## ELI

What time is your appointment?

## MELANIE

You don't need to take me Eli...I really don't have an appointment, anyway...

## ELI

What? You must get this taken care of. I'm not gonna let you destroy your not yet brilliant career.

## MELANIE

The place I got the test wasn't a clinic, this lady tried to... They didn't give abortions, but I called this other place that said they did, and to come in at ten thirty, but that I'd have to wait.

## ELI

Sweetheart, I did more research getting my teeth bonded. Darling, are you sure you don't want your own doctor.

## MELANIE

My insurance isn't valid. I bet it wouldn't cover it anyway. I hate the thought of going back there, even if it's not the same place, but it's what I can afford.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

ELI

Well, I'll come - just in case.  
I've heard horror stories about  
clinics, lately..

96 INT. MELANIE AND ROBERT'S - MORNING

96

Robert comes in, looks for Melanie, gets nervous when he can't find her, a little frantic when there is no note. Beginning to panic, he hits the message machine, continues looking around as if Melanie might be in a drawer or materialize at any moment. The machine plays a few messages: one for Melanie, an exercise companion..

GIRL

( (on message)

Melanie? Let's meet for low impact  
aerobics, tomorrow - It's Abby, by  
the way.

Then, a message from Melanie. He goes to the machine.

MELANIE

( (on message)

Not that you're worrying, or even  
caring, but I am alright. I took  
the car...I'm taking care of  
everything, so don't  
bother...anyway..If I get any calls  
give'm Eli's number...It's..

At Eli's name he's out the door.

To the empty apartment the EXTRA SEXY GIRL's message comes on.

EXTRA SEXY GIRL

( (on  
message)

I hate being run-out on like that.  
Just give me a call, okay?

97 INT. BARBARA'S KITCHEN - MORNING

97

Barbara is finishing washing the breakfast dishes. There is a knock at the backdoor. Drying her hands, she goes to answer it.

Let's in NEIGHBOR.

BARBARA

I'm so sorry to ask you to sit for  
her again. It's just ..I have this  
medical problem and..

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

NEIGHBOR

I don't mind, besides , you have HBO.. Just tell her this time that you're going, cause she got scared the other day. I don't think she recognized me.

BARBARA

Probably not, anyone who's new is hard for her to remember. I really appreciate it .

NEIGHBOR

Stop thanking me. What are neighbors for?

98 INT. - GRANDMA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

98

Grandma is asleep. Barbara bends over her, gently moving her hair.

BARBARA

Momma, I'm going out.

GRANDMA

Barbara, is that you? Yes, you go ahead dear.

BARBARA

...I don't know, Momma - I've made so many mistakes... in my life... Nothing I thought about it, about being happy...

GRANDMA

SSh, .. My little girl.. Don't you be scared, you're as good as any of those kids. You can't let a word make you cry, not a word as silly as bastard. You hold your head up....

99 INT. HOLLYWOOD DINER - MORNING

99

Val is seated in the back of the diner, picking at breakfast.

Mateo enters the restaurant, looks around, then sees Val. He seats himself across from her, facing the door.

MATEO

I expected you to be beat-up by some John gone nuts.

VAL

No. I'm not hurt,...

(CONTINUED)



She looks down. He is impatient.

MATEO

Well - What-up?! I don't get up this early for breakfast.

VAL

I heard someone in the background when you called back - a girl.

MATEO

Naw, that was my grandma. You scared her, calling so early.

VAL

I want you to go somewhere with me.

MATEO

You called me for a ride? Shit!

VAL

Not a ride, Fuck! If you can't be there when I really need you - What kinda friend is that?!

MATEO

Don't bite baby, I won't leave you. Tell me your problems...

VAL

I gotta do something that scares me...and I need you to back me up.

TWO COPS enter the restaurant. SGT.. KEANE (51) and a fresh faced ROOKIE (23). Mateo fixes on Sgt.. Keane.

MATEO

Shit! Don't move.

Mateo slumps down. The WAITRESS seats the Cops a few tables away, and puts down menus. The Rookie glances at it.

SRGT. KEANE

You think you want excitement ' til you're facing some gorilla with a semi-automatic and your back-up is nowhere in sight.

ROOKIE

Still, I'd like a turn in South Central. Just to get in some combat time.

(CONTINUED)

SRGT. KEANE

I'm glad I got transferred to Hollywood. Hookers, junkies, transvestites, I'm never bored.

ROOKIE

Well - you got kids and all...

SRGT. KEANE

I got a full bladder. I want chicken fried steak and orange juice.

The Sgt.. Keane gets up and goes toward the bathroom. Mateo freezes, seeing Keane look his way. Mateo doesn't breath.

Sgt.. Keane doesn't seem to recognize him, and walks down the hall to the men's room.

MATEO

(whispered)

I'll meet you around the corner.

Mateo springs up and has his sights set on the door. He passes the Rookie, When... Sgt.. Keane grabs his shoulder, spinning him around.

SRGT. KEANE

Outta the hood, aren't you, hijo!

Mateo struggles halfheartedly.

SRGT. KEANE (CONT'D)

You don't want to give me the pleasure of using extreme force, do you?

Mateo relaxes. The Rookie slaps cuffs on him, pulling his arms viciously behind him.

MATEO

No... But you got nothing on me. I'm clean - check my pockets.

Val rushes over.

VAL

Don't hurt him. He came to see me.

ROOKIE

Big date, right?

(CONTINUED)

SRGT. KEANE

I don't hurt anyone who follows my three rules, Miss: Comply, comply and comply.

MATEO

Not to defy, but what are you arresting me for?

SRGT. KEANE

If I know your face this well it's cause there will always be a warrant out for you. We'll just run you in and check.

MATEO

That's bullshit, - man.!

The Rookie jerks the cuffs, dragging him out of the diner.

ROOKIE

Watch it, beaner!

100 EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

100

Val follows in a panic.

VAL

I'm so sorry Mateo. This is caus'a me.

SRGT. KEANE

You can't communicate with the prisoner Miss.

VAL

Please, Officer, give him a break, please!

The Cops push Mateo into the backseat of the squad car.

SRGT. KEANE

You can bail him out. Now move it! And don't forget to pay for your bill.

Val looks at Mateo, who nods for her to go back in the restaurant. He winks at her. He'll be o.k. .

Val goes inside the door of the diner, and watches the police drive Mateo away.

101 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

101

Donald greets the arriving CRUSADERS with the STIFF WOMAN.

DONALD

(shaking hands,  
embracing)

Thank you for coming out today for  
the babies! (moving through the crowd)  
Save the innocents!

STIFF WOMAN

God bless you for your righteous  
outrage. (greeting individuals) The  
doctors are murdering the children!

Donald smiles at the Stiff Woman, then looks past her at  
Peggy and Terry, who he has relegated to handing out posters,  
wary of them both after this morning.

Terry watches Peggy, who is wooden - hypnotized.

TERRY

I agreed with you this morning. (no  
response) About it being Donald's  
opinion. He's such a moving speaker  
I think he convinces himself.

PEGGY

When he was little he lisped. Now  
he just likes to hear himself talk.

TERRY

I think he depends on you more than  
he knows.

PEGGY

Your his new side kick. I'm just  
his token penitent... Your his "yes-  
girl" now.

TERRY

There's nothing between us, and I  
don't support all his methods.

PEGGY

Don't let him know that. (vicious  
irony) He feels free to cast stones,  
the first,... the last and the  
thousands in between.

Terry is shocked, realizing the depth of Peggy's bitterness  
toward Donald. In the distance Donald notes their conversation  
with concern.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

He moves from the Stiff Woman, leaving her in charge of greetings, and walks toward his wife and Terry.

DONALD

What are you Ladies cooking-up? I wonder!? (synthetic humor, forced)  
My ears are burning.

102 EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - MORNING

102

Val is walking, shocked and afraid...

A car pulls to the curb. The GUY hisses something to her. She barely acknowledges him, shaking her head. He drives in the parking lane, hissing more clearly.

GUY

( hissing )  
Just one little suck, Baby, I'm cumin already... Fifty I'll give ya'fifty. I'm burstin for you.

VAL

Suck yourself - Asshole!!

He practically slams into a parked car.

103 EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - AWHILE LATER

103

Ardy is talking to Donald.

ARDY

I get so mad. I want to do something to change things.

DONALD

( paternally )  
We will change things. We must believe that God is guiding us to righteous victory, ... Soon, soon...

EXPAND TO:

At a distance, Terry watches with curiosity and suspicion. They come over to her.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Terry, explain to Ardy how to get to the clinic. He can't march - and give him one of the new posters. See you there.

Donald pats Ardy on the back, and goes to other CRUSADERS. Terry eyes Ardy with suspicion as she gives him a poster: a

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

picture of a fetus in a trash can that says "My mother was a murderer."

TERRY

Nice to meet you Ardy, are you injured? (waits for response - gets none) Is that why you can't march? (Masking her curiosity.) Oh, have you known Donald long?

ARDY

Long enough to know we think the same.

Terry looks at Ardy quizzically as he walks to the car park.

104 EXT. ELI'S BUILDING - MORNING

104

Robert pulls-up in a taxi.

He rushes to the intercom, pressing the buzzer for Eli Steller.

ELI (O.S.)  
Who's there?

105 INT. ELI'S - CONTINUOUS

105

ROBERT (O.S.)  
Eli? It's me -Robert. I have to talk to Melanie. Put her on!

Melanie, dressed, comes into the room and looks at Eli with horror.

ELI  
She doesn't want to talk to you. And I don't either. You should see what you did to her face.

106 EXT. BUZZER - CONTINUOUS

106

ROBERT  
Cut the shit, Eli! and send her down here! NOW!

The buzzer disconnects. Robert buzzes again. No one answers. He leans on the buzzer.

107 INT. ELI'S - CONTINUOUS

107

Melanie is looking at the intercom like it is a monster. The buzzing continues, punctuated by short silences, then longer buzzes.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

107

ELI  
Persistent little jerk. Honey, he  
can't get you.

Melanie is trembling.

ELI (CONT'D)  
He'll go away when you don't come  
out.

MELANIE  
That's what I'm afraid of.

108 EXT. HOLLYWOOD BLVD.- THE PROCESSION - MORNING

108

Speaking into a megaphone, Donald marches at the head of a column of some 50 CRUSADERS. Most are carrying posters. TWO directly behind Donald stretch a banner between them: YOUR BABY IS LIFE.

FOUR in the center balance a small, white coffin between them. Terry, not carrying a sign, and Peggy, carrying a sign that says: "I killed my baby under doctors orders.", bring up the rear.

DONALD  
Women - Don't murder your unborn  
children. They are God's gift to  
you. As hard as it may be to raise  
a child in this life, how much harder  
it is to meet your maker with blood  
stained hands in the next. ...

Traffic is snarled onto Hollywood Blvd.

109 INT. BARBARA'S CAR - PEUGOT - CONTINUOUS

109

Caught in traffic, Barbara can see the tops of the posters moving, but cannot see what they say. She is frustrated by the delay, glancing at the clock: 8:55 a.m.

Out the car window, Val walks by.

110 INT. ELI'S - AWHILE LATER

110

The buzzer has stopped, but Melanie remains staring at intercom.

ELI  
See?... He's gone!

Melanie is dazed, wanting the buzzer to sound.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: 110

ELI (CONT'D)

Melanie - dear, snap out of this. We  
have to leave.

111 INT. ARDY'S CAR - SIDE STREET - SIMULTANEOUS 111

Ardy has removed the wooden plank from the back of the poster,  
and is instead, taping his rifle to the poster with heavy  
duct tape, covering the handle, and using the tape to make  
the barrel look thick and flat.

112 EXT. HOLLYWOOD WOMEN'S CLINIC - SIMULTANEOUS 112

The procession has assembled, forming a line - holding hands  
in front of the entrance. They have centered the closed  
coffin on a pedestal. ONLOOKERS begin to gather.

DONALD

We lovers of life - Protectors of  
the innocent have gathered here to  
end the slaughter of America's  
children and to mourn the death of  
this child of CHOICE ...

Stiff Woman and MAN remove the lid from the coffin, in which  
an eight month fetus lies tucked in white satin, the part of  
it's skull crushed by the steering wheel in the car accident  
which killed mother and child is turned toward the pillow.

The gathering crowd reacts with gasps, protests.

CROWD

That's not an aborted fetus!  
Fraud!

Peggy looks in the coffin, then at Donald with pure hatred.  
She lets her poster drop and watches her husband speak with  
doubt in her eyes.

DONALD

Baby killing is making big bucks in  
America....(He reads the speech from  
breakfast.)

113 EXT. AROUND THE BLOCK FROM CLINIC - CONTINUOUS 113

Barbara, getting out of her parked car, passes Ardy's car.

114 INT. ARDY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 114

Ardy looks-up from his taping to see Barbara walk towards  
the clinic. He watches her walk with a predatory gaze.



115 EXT. ELI'S BUILDING - GARAGE - AWHILE LATER

115

Melanie and Eli are about to get in Eli's red BMW, when Robert steps-out from behind a pillar on the other side of the garage. Keeping his distance.

ROBERT  
Melon!?

Melanie stops turns, Eli touches her arm.

ELI  
Let's get in the car. I don't want  
any violence, Robert.

ROBERT  
(looking at Mel's eye)  
God - Honey! I am so sorry. Baby, I  
never wanted to hurt you.

Robert takes a step towards them, Eli opens the car door for her.

MELANIE  
If you care so much, where were you  
last night?! I called our place  
til' after four!?

ROBERT  
.....I made a big mistake,... got  
drunk..That girl from class came by  
the bar and...(seeing tears roll  
down her cheek) I'm sorry Mel... But  
I know I love you, that nobody else  
is as important to me...

MELANIE  
..You were with her? Last night?  
How could you be with someone else -  
now!? Jesus Robert! What kind of  
man are you? You're the only one  
who's important to you. Eli, get me  
outta here.

She gets in and locks the door. Robert runs across the garage. Eli comes around to the driver's side, blocking Robert.

ELI  
Haven't you hurt her enough, Robert?

ROBERT  
Stay out of this you faggot, what do  
you know about it!

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

He shoves Eli and runs to Melanie's door, trying to open it.

ROBERT (CONT'D)

Melanie, Listen to me. I want you!  
I need you, Mel....

She won't look at him. He bangs on the window. Melanie is shaking with tears, as they pull out of the garage. Robert runs after them till he is completely out of breath.

116 EXT. - HOLLYWOOD WOMEN'S CLINIC

116

Donald's speech continues, as the CRUSADERS stop a few WOMEN from entering. Forcing one to look at "Baby Choice", they have at least one CONVERT.

A van pulls up, letting out SEVERAL WOMEN and MEN. Some wear PRO-CHOICE T-shirts, buttons, etc. They move to escort the WOMEN across the line, breaking through the linked arms of the Crusaders, as they are verbally attacked: ie. Child killers, devils...One ADVOCATE has a bullhorn. The Advocate seems to be waiting...The NEWS VAN arrives, the CREW and ANCHOR get out.

ADVOCATE

(continues through  
action)

You are violating the constitutional rights of these women... Scare tactics and terrorism are not civil disobedience. You are all breaking the law.

Barbara is walking toward the clinic with growing apprehension. She looks at the grotesque signs, the faces of the protesters, hears the roar of angry voices...

ADVOCATE (CONT'D)

- How dare you bully women into having children that they cannot afford or do not want with the threat of your punishing God and Hellfire. Your "Crusade" makes no effort to improve the lives of children already born with daycare, healthcare or education.

Val is standing against an adjacent building, lingering, scared of what she sees and hears.

ADVOCATE (CONT'D)

You do not lobby drug companies for more effective birth control.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ADVOCATE (CONT'D)

In fact, it is a well-known aspect of your agenda to get rid of all birth control; and, to add some irony,

Barbara looks at Val, who, ashamed, then relieved - smiles. Barbara smiles back.

ADVOCATE (CONT'D)

.. at least 60% of you support the death penalty. It is not life that you support, but repression - The repression of the women of America. If I let you force me to have a child I don't want today, what is to keep you from forcing me to give up a child I do want tomorrow...

A YOUNG MAN in a PRO-CHOICE IS PRO-LIFE T-shirt comes up to them both, extending his hand.

YOUNG MAN

May I escort you across the line so you can exercise your civil rights?

Val does not move, but Barbara takes his hand, and gestures for Val to take hers, which Val does. Val grips Barbara's hand with desperation.

The Three cross the barricade, amidst aggressive shoving and verbal attacks: "You're murdering yourself." - "You're a young woman, this might make you sterile." " You're the sinner. Let your baby live." Etc... The Convert is in tears, confessing she is the guilty one - selfish to want her child to pay the price for her sin. Closest to the coffin, Val sees "Baby Choice" lying in the white satin. She is revolted; clutching her pelvis protectively.

117 INT. ELI'S CAR - SIMULTANEOUS

117

Melanie is limp, her eye seems more black and blue from crying. Eli is irritated at the traffic jam onto Hollywood Boulevard.

ELI

It will all be over soon... Robert isn't worthy of you... This is definitely the right thing.

MELANIE

I know. It just hurts so much. I loved Robert. He was my whole life.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

MELANIE (CONT'D)

He's the only man I've ever been  
with.....

Eli is shocked by this, but tries to normalize it.

ELI

Really? (She nods) You're young and  
beautiful - There'll be plenty of  
men in your life, infinitely better  
than Robert. You've never been with  
anyone else? Wow! (referring to  
Traffic) What is going on?

118 INT. HOLLYWOOD WOMAN'S CLINIC - RECEPTION - LATER

118

Barbara thanks the Young Man, who goes out to escort others.  
Val is stunned. Barbara gets her to a chair, then goes to  
Receptionist.

BARBARA

I had a 9:00 a.m. appointment. The  
protest made me late.

RECEPTIONIST

Sorry, you'll have to take a seat,  
we're all running late. They wouldn't  
let one of the doctors in. And one  
isn't coming in at all because of  
threatening phone calls. - It's a  
zoo today.

Barbara goes to sit next to Val who is staring at a MOTHER  
scolding her CHILD for crawling on the floor.

MOTHER

( to receptionist)  
How much longer do I have to wait?  
(to her child.) Sit still - dammit.

RECEPTIONIST

It's hard to say...without an  
appointment. Normally it wouldn't  
be a problem. I'm sorry, but we  
never had a situation like this.

The Child suddenly screams. The Mother goes to it.

MOTHER

I told you not to do that..

The Child's hand is stuck in a vent grating.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

118

The Mother frees the hand, then slaps the Child, who cries all the more.

VAL  
 (referring to the  
 Mother)  
 I guess a lotta kids aren't wanted...  
 Even the ones that get born.

BARBARA  
 .... It's never that simple....

VAL  
 I suppose, but...

RECEPTIONIST  
 Ms. Crisp ? (Barbara gets-up) The  
 doctor can take you now.

BARBARA  
 Are you going to be o.k.?

VAL  
 I'll be fine,... Good luck.

119 EXT. - CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

119

The COPS who arrested Mateo have arrived. They try to dismantle the barricade without violence, but the CRUSADERS are taking evasive action: lying down, refusing to move, praying, while inching towards the clinic doors on their knees. The Homeless Woman with her cart and Two Children are moving through the crowd, asking for money. She asks Donald, who ignores her. Peggy is in the midst of this, but disconnected from the action. Terry watches Peggy with concern. Some other COPS are using numchucks on the hands of CRUSADERS, lifting them forcibly into patty wagons. Pro-choice forces have doubled (24 people now). SOME stand on the corner, asking cars to "Honk" if they're Pro-choice. There is a cacophony of car horns.

PAN TO:

120 EXT. ELI'S PARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

120

Eli helps Melanie out. They both look at the crowd across the street with uncertainty, Melanie is afraid.

ELI  
 Who are these people? They look  
 like extras from INHERIT THE WIND.

121 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

121

A NURSE holds the door open for an ESCORT delivering a TEENAGER and HER MOTHER to safety. Through the open glass doors the words of the ADVOCATE can be heard.

ADVOCATE

... the Constitution guarantees separation of church and state to protect us from self-proclaimed Christians like you, who would shove your image of an angry God down our throats. Well - I reject it, both as a Christian and as an American; and I remind you that it was your God who had his only son crucified thirty three years and nine months after his immaculate conception to further His plans, so don't preach to me about selfish choices....

The doors close, and the Advocate is once again a silent figure, gesturing to the growing crowd.

HER MOTHER

I've never been so humiliated in all my life. I could die of the shame.

TEENAGER

Mother, - I asked you to come to give me support. How do you think I feel?

HER MOTHER

I know, but...

TEENAGER

You didn't have to tell that woman that you agreed I was going to hell!

HER MOTHER

Sorry, It's just...The things they said... and I do worry about future children ...

TEENAGER

I heard every word, believe me. I don't need a review. Can we just get this over with. I have exams to study for.

122 INT. CLINIC - EXAMINING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

122

Barbara is in stirrups; She is covered with a sheet. There is a NURSE at her side, administering a shot. The Doctor sits between her legs. Piercing her arm, the needle burns valium into her veins.

Closing her eyes, she listens to the DOCTOR explain.

DOCTOR

Now this is going to be a little uncomfortable, like an acute menstrual cramp. - I'm clamping the cervix,.... Sounding the cavity - Now I'm going to dilate you using a series of progressively larger instruments....

Barbara winces in pain. The instruments glimmer on the metal table.

123 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

123

Ardy has joined the other CRUSADERS. He carries his "poster" proudly, gripping it with both hands.

The Homeless Woman's Son is staring at baby "Choice", his mother drags him away.

The NEWS CREW is reporting, getting in the face of hysterical women, traumatized by the Crusaders verbal abuse and threats of damnation.

Melanie and Eli are making their way through the crowd. A SURFER TYPE moves towards them. He is wearing a T-shirt picturing a saggy breasted GRIM-REAPER executing babies with a scythe that drips blood. "MOTHER?" is printed below the picture. He is fixed on Melanie.

Once in front of her, he spits in her face.

SURFER TYPE

WHORE!!!

Eli quickly gets between the Surfer and Melanie. Shock and fear register on her dripping face, her arms flutter at her side like broken wings, she is making a tiny sound, which gets higher and louder.

MELANIE

ahahAHAHAHHH!!!

The Surfer moves away, fading into the mob.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

ELI

I'm getting you out of here. I'll pay for your doctor myself.  
 (Untucking his shirt and wiping her face with his shirt tails) No one should have to go through this. These people wouldn't know a Christian thought if it hit them.

124 INT. - CLINIC - EXAMINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

124

Barbara is in the final phase.

DOCTOR

...I'm beginning the suction, try to relax - you'll feel it less..

Barbara looks down at him between her legs, then rolls her head back, closing her eyes...

FLASHBACK Barbara (twenty years younger) giving birth to Bradley. Joyous, as her newborn SON is lifted onto her stomach, umbilical cord intact.

REALITY

The Doctor is finishing up. The vacuum sounds.

BARBARA

(very softly)  
 Bradley, oh Bradley....

DOCTOR

Bradley your boyfriend?

The Nurse looks at him - "What a jerk."

125 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

125

Val is still waiting..

RECEPTIONIST

Ms. Langston ....The Doctor will see you now.

Val gets up. She opens the door to an empty hallway.

126 EXT. ELI'S BMW DOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

126

Eli opens the door for Melanie, now feeble, helpless.

Safe inside, dazed - she looks back at the vision of chaos she has escaped - NOT UNSCATHED.

(CONTINUED)



126 CONTINUED: 126

They drive away.

127 INT. CLINIC - EXAMINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 127

Barbara is alone. Her face is puffy. She sits up, there is blood under her. She moves delicately, hesitating; she begins to dress slowly.

128 INT. CLINIC - EXAMINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 128

Val is dressing behind a curtain.

DOCTOR

You're definitely too far along for our facilities. We'll have to induce labor at a hospital.

VAL

I'm going to have it!

The Doctor mistakes this for a question.

DOCTOR

No definitely not, it won't be viable for another month or more. It's just too late for a simple D&C.

Val steps out.

VAL

You don't understand. I want this baby!

DOCTOR

You realize you signed a release that allowed us to test for illicit drugs.

VAL

I don't understand.

DOCTOR

I'm aware that you consume large amounts of cocaine, most likely "crack", on a daily basis.

VAL

( undefensive )  
I want to quit... Can you help me?

The Doctor is thrown by her frankness, he retreats into clinical formality.

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR

It's an unfortunate truth that no rehabilitation program for crack allows pregnant women to participate. It's too risky. And legally, Ms. Langston you're in a very bad position. You see if you have the baby it will be born addicted, if not severely retarded as well, which will result in your arrest and you will most likely lose the child and go to jail. It's a losing proposition, either way.

VAL

I'm going to have this baby. You just told me it's too alive to get rid of without a hospital, well - it got a chance for a reason.

Val opens the door and walks out. The Doctor follows.

129 INT. CLINIC - RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

129

Barbara is settling her bill, when Val stalks in.

The Doctor follows her, self-conscious, trying to be discreet.

DOCTOR

Ms. Langston, please. I don't think you understand, let me explain more clearly - in my office.

VAL

Are you saying you know what's best for me, cause you don't... You are not God, you can't see into the future. You don't know me, no matter what your test said. Your test can't know the love I feel for what's growing inside me. (to Receptionist) What do I owe.

The Receptionist looks to the Doctor, who shakes his head - "nothing"

RECEPTIONIST

There'll be no charge.

Barbara stands next to Val - protectively. The Two walk to the glass doors...

130 EXT. CLINIC - ARDY'S P.O.V. OF BARBARA MOVING TOWARD THE GLASS DOOR - SLOW MOTION - CONTINUOUS 130

Ardy rips the poster of the FETUS IN THE TRASH off his gun barrel...

As he steps back to take aim....He knocks the white coffin off balance....

131 INT./EXT. CLINIC DOORS - CONTINUOUS 131

The Women walk-out together.

132 EXT. CLINIC -SLOW MOTION - CONTINUOUS 132

Ardy does not look to see what he has knocked over. He has dropped the rifle to his side, has focused on Barbara as his target...

Peggy looks down at the coffin, which totters precariously - then falls - as "BABY CHOICE" rolls from the coffin, to land on her feet....

Ardy raises the rifle above his sight line, then lowers the barrel...

Val sees this gesture - Her mind FLASHES on the drive-by shooting she witnessed yesterday -

SLOW MOTION

THE DESCENDING BARREL TRIGGERING HER REACTION....

VAL TURNS TO PUSH BARBARA BACK INTO THE CLINIC....

PEGGY STARES AT THE CRUMPLED BODY ON HER FEET - AND SCREAMS.....

PEGGY

(spoken in real time  
over slow motion  
action)

I am not a murderer! I'm not.

THE BULLETS CRACK THE AIR ... ARDY'S ARM KICKS-BACK...

THE BULLETS ENTER THE BASE OF VAL'S SPINE - VAL'S BODY FLIES FORWARD WITH THE IMPACT - KNOCKING BARBARA, BACKWARD, INTO THE GLASS DOOR OF THE CLINIC ... IT SHATTERS ... VAL'S LIFELESS BODY COLLAPSES ONTO BARBARA, WHO HAS BEEN KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS.

REAL TIME:

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

Terry grabs Peggy, who is still screaming, pulling her to the ground. The CROWD is in complete shock. FEW react by dropping to the ground. MOST look on, paralyzed by shock.

The stunned COPS don't react. Finally, SGT.. KEANE pulls his gun from his holster, pointing it at Ardy.

SRGT. KEANE  
Freeze!... Police.

Ardy has already dropped the rifle, his arms are limp at his side...

ARDY  
( to himself)  
Thy will be done.

DISSOLVE TO:

133 TEST PATTERN ON IN STUDIO MONITOR - REVEAL 133

134 INT. T.V. STUDIO - TALK SHOW - SIX MONTHS LATER 134

A MAN in a HEADSET cues a CAMERAMAN by counting off 1,2,3 with his fingers in the frame.

135 INT. STUDIO STAGE - CONTINUOUS 135

Terry and Peggy sit together on one side of the stage.

Donald, looking very haggard, is seated next to his LAWYER on the opposite side.

Barbara is seated in the middle.

On SATELLITE hook-up screen, Ardy wears prison blues.

SALLY  
Welcome back. We're here with the key people involved in the scandal surrounding the alleged conspiracy in the Hollywood clinic shooting six months ago. Terry, you were saying Donald was secretive...

TERRY  
..As I made clear in my new book, BLOOD ON THE CROSS, Donald trusted me, he had no idea that I was a NOW plant - obviously he would not have confided in anyone because his plan was so desperate... But I felt afraid when I saw them (pointing at Ardy's  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TERRY (CONT'D)

face on screen) that's why I took the photo - I was sure something was going on when Donald didn't insist he march with the others and wanted him to drive alone.

PEGGY

.....He kept it from me, also, but I could tell his obsession with the Crusade was building violent impulses. His personality was becoming more militant with every clinic.

DONALD

( (irate)

I don't know how you can say such a slanderous, ignorant thing about me? We were married for five years! You know I have the greatest respect for human life.

PEGGY

Well, you certainly had no respect for my life and tortured me every chance you could during that marriage. (to the audience) It's taken me months in therapy to begin healing the damage this man did to my self-esteem.

DONALD

God help me! - How can she lie like that ....

Donald's Lawyer tries to calm him. Whispering counseling in his client's ear.

DONALD (CONT'D)

( (continuing)

My lawyer has advised me to state for the final record that I did not conspire with Mr. Stone to shoot anyone; and a jury of my peers found me innocent of all charges. The day Terry took that now famous picture of me shaking hands with Mr. Stone -

SALLY

( (interrupting)

Let's get that photo up on the monitor..

INSERT: Photo Ardy and Donald shaking hands - beneath stained glass window, in front of the clinic map.

(CONTINUED)

DONALD

( (annoyed)  
 ....That was the first time I ever  
 met the man; and our conversation  
 was purely social.

TERRY

Why did you let him take his car,  
 rather than marching with the rest  
 of us, if it wasn't a conspiracy?  
 You made everyone march - he'd even  
 have people in wheelchairs wheel  
 themselves in the march on the  
 clinics! Why did Ardy drive, Donald? -  
 You've never really answered that,  
 have you?!

DONALD

The trial cleared me of all charges.  
 You have made many aspersions on my  
 character, but none stood-up in a  
 court of law.

TERRY

Well the law has been shamefully  
 negligent in protecting the women of  
 America's Civil rights in terms of  
 Choice. And you slipped through a  
 gigantic crack in the system.

SALLY

.... Ardy, did you conspire with Mr.  
 Ingersol to shoot a woman coming out  
 of the Hollywood Women's Clinic?

ARDY

( (on screen)  
 My orders came from no man, Sally.  
 my orders came directly from God.

SALLY

And the woman you shot, how did it  
 affect you that she was not seeking  
 an abortion, and has lost the fetus,  
 and is now crippled...

ARDY

That was an unfortunate mistake, but  
 the Lord works in mysterious ways,  
 cause I was aiming at her.

Ardy points at Barbara on his small monitor in prison.

(CONTINUED)

SALLY

Ms. Crisp credits your victim with saving her life. (directed at Barbara) You've been very quiet. What would you like to say to the man who targeted you.

BARBARA

Sally, I... this whole thing has been a nightmare, and if not for my family's love I might have collapsed under all the pressure and lies.

SALLY

Your son Bradley is in the audience today. Bradley, stand up.

Bradley rises shakily, suppressing tears.

SALLY (CONT'D)

How do you feel knowing your mother was almost shot by a sniper?

BRADLEY

Disgusted as hell! And grateful to Val for saving her from that psycho with a gun and the self righteous bastard up there!

DONALD

Miss Langston was a crack addict and known prostitute.

BARBARA

She was a hero. She saved my Life! You don't know what your crazy crusade has cost her, she's ...

DONALD

( interrupting)

I want your audience to know, my organization donated \$200.00 to Ms. Langston's hospital costs when we found out she was not seeking an abortion.

PEGGY

There you go, passing judgment again! You make me sick!

TERRY

Besides, \$200.00 in today's health care fiasco barely pays for aspirin!

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: (4)

135

The HOST diffuses the conflict.

SALLY

Let's stick to the issues.

DONALD

Let's be fair.

TERRY

You don't know what "fair" is. She saved a woman's life. I thought saving lives was your greatest ambition..

DONALD

..and I have saved thousands of lives..

TERRY

No - Donald - You've saved fetal tissue. And whether you conspired with Mr. Stone is immaterial. It was the rage you incited and the inflammatory methods you employed that inspired a violent attack on this woman - all women. Ms. Langston was a victim of your misguided vision, Donald....My book...

SALLY

Sorry, Terry - We have to go to a commercial break now. And we'll be back - With one of the most controversial issues of the day.

136 T.V. SCREEN - COMMERCIAL FOR SIT-COM - CONTINUOUS

136

Family home: FATHER, MOTHER - DAUGHTER (MELANIE) FAMILY bickering interspersed with synthetic laugh track.

DAUGHTER

Mom, Dad's a fascist. He opened my mail! That's, that's,... Why that's an invasion of my civil rights. We learned about it in American history.

FATHER

Don't tell me about civil rights young lady. You haven't got any! You know why? (Melanie shakes her head innocently) Because I never gave you any. And if you even think about that boy again, you won't live to get any.

(CONTINUED)



136 CONTINUED:

136

DAUGHTER

Shame Daddy, Shame! Thomas Jefferson  
would be so disappointed in you!

FATHER

Go to your room! Now!

MOTHER

Don't shout dear. It spoils your  
appetite.

Melanie runs up the stage set stairs, crying.

DAUGHTER

( (turning to pose)

You tyrant. I hope your meat packing  
plant blows-up and you loose all  
your money, and then you go bald!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The funniest new comedy of the season.  
Join us Friday for the show everyone's  
raving about. DINNER TIME.

REVEAL:

137 INT. T.V. SCREEN - TWILA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

137

VAL (O.S.)

Turn it off, Mamma. Turn it off...  
It's all lies...

138 INT. TWILA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

138

The room has been remodeled to accommodate a wheelchair. Val  
lies on a hospital bed with a crane wrigging. She wears a  
stained t-shirt, her hair looks lumpy. Grandma is seated by  
the bed, beading.

GRANDMA

People love gossip and lies.

TWILA

You coulda gone to New York and said  
your piece to the whole world.

Barbara enters with a tray of ice tea.

BARBARA

Did the show end?

Barbara and Twila communicate as if performing a jolly scene  
to cheer Val up. Val is uncheerable.

(CONTINUED)

TWILA

Miss thing here wanted it turned off.

BARBARA

Good! I'm sick to death of thinking about it. Nobody cared what really happened... The ramp looks great, Twila.

TWILA

Your husband is a real carpenter. (to Val) Wasn't it nice of Barbara's husband and son to offer to build that ramp. Now maybe you'll use that expensive wheelchair and go out.

VAL

I don't have anywhere to go.

TWILA

You could at least bathe, girl. The day gets any warmer and you'll be ripe.

Barbara is uncomfortable with Twila's sarcasm.

BARBARA

I could help you.

GRANDMA

You ought to let her. She scrubs my back real gently.

Val smiles for the first time.

They all smile and laugh, Grandma seemingly aware of the irony.

Jack and Bradley put the finishing touches on a wooden ramp with a safety bar.

JACK

That was a nice design you came up with, Brad.

BRADLEY

It was fun. Mom seemed convinced if we made it easy for her she'd go out, but I don't know.

140 INT. MATEO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 140

Mateo parks his car in front of Twila's, but hesitates. He is surprised to see two white men working there. He watches Twila exit the house and offer the men a plate of sandwiches. He grabs a wilted bouquet of grocery store flowers off the dashboard and gets out of the car.

141 EXT. TWILA'S - CONTINUOUS 141

Mateo approaches apprehensively. Twila sees him and waves.

He is taken aback by her friendliness and looks behind him reflexively.

TWILA

No! It's you I'm happy to see. Bet you never imagined that!

Mateo smiles.

MATEO

No, ma'm.

TWILA

These handy fellas here are Jack and Bradley. They came to help Val and me out.

Jack, Bradley and Mateo exchange nodded greetings.

TWILA (CONT'D)

( continuing)

You know ... about Val?

MATEO

I heard, but...

TWILA

Well, now, she may get back on her feet, that is if we can get her outta bed. Maybe you can do something, cause I can't.

142 INT. TWILA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 142

Twila leads Mateo down the hall. Barbara is helping her mother tie a knot at the end of a strand of bright beads.

TWILA

( calling-out)

You got a visitor, Val!

(CONTINUED)

Val presses a series of buttons, attempting to adjust her hospital bed to see down the hall. Though it jerks into motion, she can't get a view down the hall.

BARBARA

It's a man.

GRANDMA

Good looking - dark. Not dark as you.

Barbara looks embarrassed. Val loves Grandma . Twila ushers Mateo in. He is definitely over his head.

TWILA

Well, look what the cat drug'in.  
Come on in. Maybe you can talk some sense to her.

Mateo stands there with his wilted supermarket bouquet, which he manhandles nervously. He waits for Val to speak, but she looks away from him.

TWILA (CONT'D)

Let's give them some privacy.

Barbara hustles her mother together.

BARBARA

Come on, Momma.

GRANDMA

I want to hear him.

Barbara pushes her out.

TWILA

Now you get her to get outta this room.

MATEO

I'll try.

Twila shuts the door.

MATEO (CONT'D)

Sorry they're kind'a dead, I left'em in the sun...

Painfully self conscious, Val touches her two day old stained T-shirt.

VAL

They're nice.

(CONTINUED)

Once in the room he cannot help staring at the apparatus Val is laying on.

MATEO

Who was that?

VAL

Friends. The old lady's funny. They're good people... You find out who your real friends are when your flat on your back.

Mateo feels indicted.

MATEO

That's good.

Awkward silence.

VAL

I need a bath. You should'a called.

MATEO

I was gonna come a week ago .... I figured if I called and then shined you on I'd be a real asshole, so ....

VAL

I look like shit!

MATEO

I didn't come to look at you.

Val reacts defensively. Wanting to leave makes being trapped unbearable.

VAL

Don't strain yourself then. Just leave your sad ass flowers and get out then!

MATEO

It's not like that. It's like I had to know before I came. I don't want to mess with your head. It's no disrespect.

Val's vulnerability trembles beneath her hostility.

VAL

So what is it? You thinking if you want to shine me on?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VAL (CONT'D)

You always did that! That's no news.  
You're just like every sorry man in  
my sorry life.

Mateo moves to her, taking her hard-set face in his hands.

MATEO

No way Val! I'm your friend, I'm  
not like those guys and you aren't  
you when you're with them. I know.  
I want to take care of you.

Val melts into his touch.

VAL

You can't take care of yourself.  
What you gonna do for me?

MATEO

I can start by giving you a bath.

He lifts her small body easily in his arms.

MATEO (CONT'D)

I could take care of you! I want  
to...

VAL

Maybe we could take care of each  
other.

THE END