

"JENNIFER EIGHT"
A
Policeman's Story
by
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June 1991

1: INT. COMMUNITY HALL. DAY.

The Church of St. Peter Los Angeles. "WHOEVER YOU SEE HERE - WHATEVER YOU HEAR HERE - STAYS HERE." That's a notice on a wall. Here's another notice "NO SMOKING." Everyone is smoking. This is an AA meeting. There's a lot of Faces to look at. I don't know when we'll get to the one that's talking, but when we do it's like this. Eyes like glue. 50 years old with a face the color of a snuff-users hanky. He says this:

BENNY

.. after my third recovery my wife made me swear I'd never bring another bottle into the house. And I never did. I bur-

ied it under the lawn. Cut out a turf & stood it upright with a piece of tin-foil instead of a cork. So here we are out in the yard, and she's happy because I'm getting healthy in a pair of swimming shorts & no way near no booze. She decides to prune the roses. Meanwhile, I'm laying there with a straw stuck into the fucken lawn doing a quart of red ..

Curious thing about drunks. Their disease often amuses them.

That's how crazy I was - I was sick for half a life till I finally found my sanity again in these rooms. Don't take that drink - And for the one or two new faces I see here, I say this: just do it by the day. You gotta do it by the day - Don't take that drink. And keep coming to these meetings. Because here is where it works ..

CHAIR

Thank you, Benny .. We have a few more minutes .. Anyone else like to share? ..

Ash into an ashtray and now a face. He's around 40 years old. Intense eyes & dark hair. Probably good looking when the angle's right. But this is a bad angle. His name is JOHN BERLIN.

BERLIN

My name's John .. and I'm an alcoholic ..

ALL

Hi, John.

BERLIN

I didn't intend to speak today. Matter of fact, I wasn't gonna come to the meeting .. But I wanna say a couple of things I hope may be of use, particularly as Benny says, to the new faces here. I first came into this fellowship ten months ago. I came to a meeting I was convinced was gonna be my last - how could a buncha drunks help me? - Then someone got up, I think it was Micky, and described himself as "the shit around which the universe revolved." I don't know if that was original to him - it doesn't matter, it was the first time I'd heard it, and I still can't think of a better way to describe how I felt - We all have our own place in the darkness, and I was in such a

mess I could hardly fucken see - I'd lost someone very dear to me - she hadn't died - I had - I don't know whether she left coza the drinking, or whether I drank coz I knew she was gonna leave - either way, the booze won - I replaced her with alcohol & anger - I was angry with her, myself, everyone and everything - Where I was I wanted to be someplace else - any place but here - any moment but now - But here I am, and it is now, and there's a big change about to happen in my life - and I'm going for it coz this time I know I'm not running away - I'm actually two miles into a 600 mile journey, and I feel good about myself going there - So I stopped off to share that with you - and to thank everyone of you, and everyone in this fellowship for letting me walk out of here, free ..

2: EXT. OAKLAND BRIDGE. SAN FRANCISCO BAY. DUSK.

High above the Golden Gate. Too high for specifics. But there is something down there of interest to the Camera. Descending with the Music it seems to isolate a particular car. Too many and too distant to know which it is. But the Camera is following and already a mile up the 101 Interstate travelling north.

Maybe via a dissolve. And maybe not. But red and white either way as the headlights are coming on. The Camera is closing on the highway. And a car has definitely been selected. There is nothing much of interest about it. It's a blue Mercedes sedan.

Mussorgsky will choreograph the pace of these cuts. The first puts the frame directly in front of the car. In a few moments its brights snap up. And Titles continue in a dazzle of light.

3: INT. MERCEDES SEDAN. 101. DUSK.

Nobody in the car except BERLIN. And a lot of cigarette smoke. Just time to wedge in a P.O.V. There's an intersection coming up. He hits the indicators and crosses lanes winding his window down. Takes a last hit at his cigarette and exits the butt.

4: EXT. FREEWAY INTERSECTION. DUSK.

An instant of red as the cigarette shatters up the highway. A heavy sky of red and black cloud. The Mercedes turns off heading east. This time the Camera doesn't follow. Remains static over the intersection until the tail lights finally disappear.

5: INT. LIVING ROOM. HOUSE. DAWN.

Bare wooden boards and the sound of singing birds. This house hasn't been lived in for years. No furniture other than a new mattress in the middle of the floor. Still in polythene wraps.

BERLIN just about awake on top of it. Ten seconds of disorientation while he puts this together. A stone fireplace. Stairs leading to what's got to be a tiny room above. With enough effort this place could be charming. But right now it's a wreck.

6: INT. KITCHEN. HOUSE. DAWN.

This kitchen was out of date by 1963. A huge china sink and a fat fridge. But the cooker works and a battered old kettle is already on the gas. T-shirt and instant coffee. BERLIN checks cupboards out. Crockery includes a cup and that'll do for now.

His lips articulate a silent expletive. The gas has just gone out. Tries to relight it without success. On hands & knees he explores a rubber supply pipe that snakes under the back door.

7: EXT. OPEN END GARAGE AND YARD. HOUSE. DAWN.

In the garage he finds the gas cylinder. Empty and so is the bastard with it. He drags fingers through hair in frustration. Looks around at the heaps of crap that need clearing out. The view beyond he hardly cares to look at. But if he does it is as follows. Clouds massing on the horizon. Fields getting ready for rain. His nearest neighbor is around 200 yards away. His nearest Cow about 50. This house is remote and rural looking with a veranda out back. But BERLIN has no inclination for sight-seeing. As he walks away a dreary female Voice seeps in.

8: INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. HOUSE. DAWN.

The Voice comes via a police scanner. Most of this dialogue's bullshit. Illegally parked autos and a few drunks still about. BERLIN sits on the mattress eating a breakfast of chewing gum and milk. He unwraps another Juicy Fruit and regrets it. Goes round his mouth like a shoe in a washing machine. A reluctant decision is taken. Spits gum at the sink as he arrives in the kitchen. Starts unloading his leather bag. A flotsam of stuff is excavated including a 9mm Beretta and a pack of cigarettes.

He lights up and takes a cruel hit full of nicotine and guilt. Wouldn't need a clairvoyant to realize he's trying to give up. Something on the scanner interests him and he wanders back to the living room. There's a call going out for "David 72 Sam 3." David 72 acknowledges and BERLIN clearly recognizes the voice.

"We have a 927D/ Springfield Street/ City Dump." But David 72 is already hired. "I'm outside Emersons/ I wanna be the first

horrible face of her day." BERLIN exhales through a smile. The Controller needs an E.T.A. for the 927? David 72 doesn't know. Advises her to roll a couple of cars and "Secure the location."

9: EXT. HILLSIDE. SPRINGFIELD STREET. EUREKA. DAY.

A Chevrolet zig-zags up a shabby canyon. It's the road to the city dump. Its final bend reveals a line of bellowing garbage trucks. Everything is backed up. Nothing moves except the car. The cause of the hold-up is explained at the top. A Sheriff's car blocks the road. A Uniform moves to wave the Chevrolet in.

10: EXT. ENTRANCE/TRACK/INFILL. CITY DUMP. EUREKA. DAY.

The car parks at a weigh-house and a man in his 50's gets out. Looks like he hasn't slept in a while. And got the mood to go with it. Sports jacket and cowboy boots. A lot of laugh lines around the eyes. But you wouldn't want to get arrested by him. And especially not this morning. His name is FREDERICK T ROSS.

TRAVIS

You can drive down there, Sir ..

ROSS

I'm already walking. Where is it?

One of those walking with him is a 10-year-old Kid with a Dog. TRAVIS looks almost too young to own his struggling moustache.

TRAVIS

On the infill. The guy from L.A.'s just gone down there ..

ROSS

He has? .. What's he doing here?

TRAVIS

He was waiting for you, Sir. Wait-ed a good while. Said he'd go down and take a look. I hope that's O.K.

The track sinks through a valley of a million discarded tires.

ROSS

Damn A, it's O.K. With a bit of luck I'm goin home. What we got?

TRAVIS

A derelict.

TRIMBLE

They cut his throat ..

The information comes from freckles and a missing front tooth.

ROSS

Who are you?

TRIMBLE

Trimble.

He wears glasses and wields a rusty .22 pump-action Remington.

ROSS

Where do you fit in, Trimble?

TRAVIS

His father's the manager, Sir.
The kid was up there shooting
vermin, and he found the body.

TRIMBLE

Get ready for it, coz I'm tell-
ing ya, you're in for a shock ..

TRIMBLE speaks with some enthusiasm. ROSS looks back with none.

They slit him from "ear to ear."
Ya want me to make a statement?

ROSS

Not right now. No. Thank you.

11: EXT. WORKING FACE. INFILL. GARBAGE DUMP. DAY.

A series of terraces have been created as the canyon fills up. Black smoke drifts from a distance at will of the wind. Gulls and bulldozers. Plus a stinking ten foot cliff of human filth.

Several cars parked here including the blue Mercedes. Several On Lookers behind yellow police tape. ROSS negotiates it looking pissed off. Looks up and somewhere in the smoke is BERLIN.

ROSS

Did you bring it with you?

BERLIN

I hope I'm not intruding?

ROSS

Be my guest. What you got?

BERLIN

Old guy, offed himself with a

knife. I can't find the knife.

And the next thing ROSS is looking at is a death in the trash. A massive dozer in the background. Everything else is garbage.

TRIMBLE

They cut his throat.

ROSS

Would you get outside the tape.
And tell your dad to put that
fire out ... that ain't legal ...

Another face here is so familiar ROSS hasn't bothered to acknowledge it. BLATTIS is a 32 year old local newspaper reporter. Little is visible of the body except a blood-stained raincoat.

TRAVIS

I wonder what would make
him do a thing like that?

ROSS

Don't annoy me, Travis.

TRAVIS

No, Sir.

Truck horns wail in the distance. On the horizon it's thunder.

ROSS

So where's the knife?

BERLIN wears surgical gloves. Removes film from a small camera.

BERLIN

I dunno .. Guess the dozer
musta shifted him? You need
some hands up here to look ..

ROSS

You heard. Look for the knife.

Swatting smoke ROSS directs anger at a fat cop called VENABLES.

You, too .. Move that ass ..

BERLIN hands the film to ROSS as he gets into identical gloves.

You done the pockets?

BERLIN

No, Sir. I haven't started

till Monday. I'm a "tourist."

ROSS

"Welcome to Eureka."

By now ROSS is crouched next to the Corpse examining the wound.

How long's he been feeling like this?

BERLIN

Week or two. Musta been on the kerosene. Stinks like a diesel engine.

BLATTIS

Fucken noddle's hanging off ..

ROSS

Mr Blattis, of our local newspaper. You sure it's a suicide?

BERLIN

Uh huh .. He's well rehearsed ..

BLATTIS

What does that mean, Sergeant?

BERLIN

Cut your own throat, you're nervous about it, tend to hesitate. He's got three trial cuts, lower left side of the neck, before he works up courage for the big one.

BLATTIS looks vaguely impressed. ROSS begins searching pockets.

BLATTIS

You think Popeye would know that?

ROSS

I don't think Popeye would be here.

VENABLES (V.O.)

Dead dog over here, Sir ...

ROSS

Find the knife. And Venables, is the coroner called?

VENABLES

Yes, Sir .. He's delayed ..

BLATTIS

Alright, gentlemen, I'm gonna leave you. I got a couple of questions for the paper, Sergeant? Mind if I swing by later, wring out a tea-bag with you?

BERLIN

My pleasure .. Who's Popeye?

BLATTIS

Your predecessor. He didn't like to get outta bed. Catch you later, Freddy T ..

Off he fucks under an ailing sky. BERLIN lands a friendly grin.

BERLIN

So what happened to the barbecues, and fishing?

ROSS

Watch my lips, coz you're not gonna believe this - this is a rare occurrence. We haven't had a body in eighteen months.

He finds keys and change and a sandwich in the Wino's raincoat.

How does anyone dead as this lose a knife?

BERLIN

What about that kid, Ross?

ROSS

Oh, shit. Of course. The kid.

(Stands to shout)

Travis. Find that kid and get the knife off him. He's gonna lie to you - but he's got it - so get it. Well, go on, get on with it. Whatta you staring at?

TRAVIS stares up like he just stuck his dick in a light socket.

TRAVIS

I think I found something horrible, Sir

ROSS

Whatta you mean, "horrible?"

TRAVIS

I think I've found a hand.

12: EXT. INFILL. GARBAGE DUMP. DAY.

ROSS crouches in garbage. Peers into a trash sack with assistance of a flashlight. "You're right. It's a fucken hand." Passes the light to BERLIN. His turn to examine the ruptured bag.

BERLIN

Looks like a woman's hand?

BERLIN finally stands. Offs the flashlight. And hands it back.

ROSS

What do you think?

BERLIN

I think you're here all day.

13: EXT. INFILL. GARBAGE DUMP. DAY.

Pissing with rain and unspeakably miserable. The 'grid-search' is in progress and 50 square yards of the dump have been ripped to pieces. Intermittent voices from police radios. More vehicles down below including an ambulance with hazards revolving. Up here half a dozen arc-lights scald off vapor. BERLIN searches under a busted umbrella. Looks up and runs into ROSS's eyes.

ROSS

How much longer we here? We're not gonna find nothing else .. ?

He wears a rubber cape & looks like a huge pissed-off Napoleon.

BERLIN

We give it one more hour. Did the photographer do the dogs?

ROSS

The dogs?

BERLIN

Two dogs. He should do the dogs.

And both turn towards a Voice shouting from deep in the gloom.

VENABLES

Sergeant - we got a brassiere over here. Looks like it could be blood.

ROSS

Oh, shit.

BERLIN
Alright, I'm coming ..

Another intrusion from the radio. TRAVIS repeats the question.

TRAVIS
The coroner wants to know if
we can release the derelict?

ROSS
Ask him.

BERLIN
Yeah, he can go ...

ROSS
Think I'll lay down with him.
Only way I'll get outta here.

Did someone say something funny? Does BERLIN just about smile.

BERLIN
It's good to be with you, Ross.

And this is probably the only time ROSS will look happy today.

ROSS
Glad you finally made it, Bro ...

14: EXT. CAR PARK. POLICE STATION. CITY OF EUREKA. DAY.

The Mercedes descends an incline and parks. Brown Chevys and black & white patrol cars. Dismal lights and raining like it doesn't end. BERLIN gets out and unloads the trunk (aquarium & insulated picnic box). Slams the trunk and reveals BLATTIS.

BLATTIS
You want some umbrella?

Proffers a big yellow one plus assistance carrying equipment.

BERLIN
Is this normal?

BLATTIS
Average rainfall, 48 inches.
Pisses down, October to June.

Raining hard enough to hurt. A brisk intimacy across the lot.

Better in the summer. You
get to fuck a few tourists ..

He hits a security code at the door. Obviously familiar with
the station. Dialogue continues as they step into a corridor.

15: INT. CORRIDOR/ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BLATTIS [BERLIN]

Not married are you, Sergeant? [No.]
That's good, you get to fuck a few
more. So how long you known Freddy?

BERLIN

Freddy? Forever - he was my serg-
eant when I was a kid - don't get
to see a lot of each other - but
we been buddies two hundred years ..

BLATTIS

Did he get you the job?

BERLIN

I think he would have if he could
have - been trying to get me up
here long enough - I think he may
have bribed the old guy to retire ..

BLATTIS

Popeye wasn't old. Younger than you.

They push through doors into the biggest room in the building.
A dozen desks back to back and all the clutter and clatter of
typewriters and paperwork and Secretaries swapping the gossip.

Too many cops to describe and no time to remember them anyway.
But here's one making introductions. About 60 years old. Face
a mix of brick and fat. The Chief of Eureka Police is CITRINE.

CITRINE

Sergeants Serato, and Taylor.

Any handshakes and greetings that fit in around the equipment.

Mr Travis, I think you know ..

BERLIN

Do me a favor, Travis? Bring in
the resta the stuff from my car?

BLATTIS tosses his parasol "Don't lose it" and follows BERLIN.

BLATTIS

Did you find the knife, Sergeant?

BERLIN

No .. But we have a theory ..

BLATTIS

Kid told me he didn't take it?

BERLIN

Maybe he's lying to you?

By now they're in an L shaped room with wood benches and bulletin board all over the walls. Bullshit everywhere in packing cases. Dusty Playboy spreads amongst other junk on the boards.

BLATTIS

Is it true you found a hand?

And he benches the aquarium as BERLIN loses the insulated box.

Is that it?

CITRINE (O.S.)

Interview over, Blattis ...

BLATTIS

C'mon, Chief, if it's sensitive, tell me .. I'm not taking notes ..

Right now the box contains camera equipment which is unpacked.

CITRINE

.. we got a body part. We don't know what it is - probably some kind of hospital debris - we're gonna try and check it out. O.K. Now you know as much as we do ..

BLATTIS

Grateful for your candor, Sir.

CITRINE

Then do me a favor, and keep this outta the newspaper - that dump serves a dozen different communities, we don't even know if it's ours? Till we do I don't want no one worrying about ..

BLATTIS

Wasn't frozen, was it, Sergeant?

CITRINE

Come on, Michael, outta here, the guys trying to move in. I told you what we know, something else, you-'ll be the first to hear about it ..

A Woman's face around the door. "Los Angeles for Sergeant Berlin." And goodbye BLATTIS as Berlin reaches for the telephone.

BERLIN

Why did he ask if it was frozen?

CITRINE

That, I couldn't tell you .. And don't worry about anya this crap, by the time you're back it's gone ..

CITRINE splits as BERLIN picks up "Hey, Ronzo, good of you to call." A long phone lead and he continues to unpack equipment.

BERLIN (Phone)

Listen, my time isn't good - but two things - really important - the brassiere I sent you? - I need to know if those stains are human blood - and if they are, do they match the blood in the sample? - C'mon, gimme a break, I don't know anyone up here, it would take two weeks - C'mon, Ronny, I'm asking nice? I really need to know whether I'm interested in that brassiere? ..

A cut-out of Popeye The Sailor with fist round a camera on the wall. Telephone resistance is collapsing and he breaks a smile.

You're my favourite man - raining - I gotta go - Ronny - I gotta go - I got a house fulla removal men and a date at the morgue - And, Ron, Congratulations - you're my first call ..

16: INT. MORGUE. COUNTY HOSPITAL. EUREKA. DAY.

ROSS has a Vic inhaler up his nostril. An inadequate defense. A sudden stink slams into his neck muscles. Head and inhaler travel rearward. He shifts eyes to BERLIN who scans the Bum's autopsy reports. A PATHOLOGIST comments on his handiwork into a microphone hanging from the ceiling. "Except as previously noted, the liver is not remarkable." ROSS doesn't believe it.

PATHOLOGIST

.. if the knife hadn't killed him, the booze would .. I never seen such a bad cirrhosis ..

BERLIN

You say the cut's left to right?

(He does)

Isn't that unusual? He's left handed?

He picks up a nicotine-stained left hand. Simultaneously a LAB TECHNICIAN wants BERLIN to sign in exchange for the picnic box.

PATHOLOGIST

I guess he was so drunk, he didn't know which hand he was using.

(Re box)

What are you gonna do with it?

BERLIN

Depends how healthy it is. If it's any good, I'll try and get a print ..

He hands the clip-board back and remembers a question for ROSS.

Oh, Ross, that newspaper guy at the station, asked me if the hand was "frozen?" Why would he ask me that?

ROSS

Frozen? .. I've no idea ..

Another fast fix on the Vic and BERLIN chews fresh gum. A needle on a weighing machine quivers. "The liver weighs 1420 grams."

A few beers wouldn't do that to you, would they?

PATHOLOGIST

No, Freddy .. Not a few ..

17: INT. KITCHEN. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. EUREKA. DUSK.

An explosion of hugs in the kitchen. Everything happens at once. MARGIE ROSS is slim and dark and still looking "twice as pretty." She's got compliments for BERLIN too if they can get out of each other's arms "You're looking wonderful, John." But greetings are better performed than described, so I'm leaving it to the actors.

ROSS

You do a rush on three pizzas?

He emerges from the refrigerator wielding a bottle of champagne.

MARGIE

I'm not giving him Pizza. I haven't seen him for a year? I'm gonna cook him a dinner.

ROSS

Dinner's another night, darlin' .. This is a drive-by. I got an hour ..

He detours via the kitchen door to shout upstairs. "Hey. Bobby..?"

MARGIE

Bobby's out .. What's the hurry?

ROSS

Friday night at City Hall. Got a great chance to frighten the fat.

MARGIE

Freddy's new obsession ..

BERLIN

Who is who?

ROSS

A professional, whining, con-person bitch with an ass the size of Africa ..

ROSS fights a difficult cork "You wanna get some glasses, Honey?"

She's an accounts-manager, very pal-ly with our mayor, up to her elbows in fraud, and I just can't prove it ..

MARGIE

So tonight she confesses?

ROSS

Tonight I'm feeling lucky ..

The cork explodes and he goes for glasses but one isn't willing.

BERLIN

Not for me ..

ROSS

What d'you mean, I just opened it for you? This is French champagne.

MARGIE

No it isn't .. It's Californian ..

ROSS

Even better.

BERLIN

Not today .. I'm on a diet today .. I'll take a diet soda ..

ROSS

Since when did you drink diet soda?

MARGIE

Stop nagging him. If he doesn't want it, he doesn't want it. You're quacking like an old duck ..

And she's already at the fridge and popping a can of diet cola.

Here you go, Honey .. You're looking wonderful, John .. I can't believe we got you here ..

ROSS

How's the new residence?

BERLIN

O.K.

ROSS

What does that mean?

BERLIN

Not too good in daylight ..

ROSS

C'mon, just shut your eyes until it's painted. You're gonna love it. This is "God's Country," John.

18: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAY.

This in huge close-up. Focus hardens on a finger tip. A shock of light. The focus adjusts and a flash bulb fires again. BERLIN moves away from the view-finder. Chewing gum stuck to the side of the camera returns to his mouth. He activates an automatic rewind. It fills the silence while he heads for a phone.

A lot of paraphernalia and technical type of shit. The bulletin board is filling up. Photographs chronicle the hours spent on the dump. He dials with eyes on the pictures. A dozen catalogue discovery of the bra. "This is Mike Blattis/I can't take your call right now/ If you have a message/You know the sound."

19: INT. DUTY ROOM/CORRIDOR/ADMIN. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

A reel to reel tape recorder the size of a refrigerator dominates the room. A black board details day/night/weekend shifts. T.V. security monitors. A rack of night-sticks. And of course paperwork. VENABLES crouches over a desk filling something in.

BERLIN

Would you drop these off for me?

Sure he will and six rolls of film are handed across. "Are you winning, Sir?" BERLIN smiles and VENABLES follows him out into the corridor. A couple of Coppers on their way in. One big and morose looking called BISLEY. The other we've already met. Taylor is a tall balding guy with hazy reddish hair "How you doin'?" BERLIN responds a happy "O.K." with eyes returning to VENABLES.

You know something strange about that hand? I think it was frozen?

VENABLES

Frozen?

BERLIN

Yeah. What does that mean to you?

Apparently little. They arrive in the big room. It's deserted.

C'mon, Venables, you're a policeman. And policemen always have an answer?

VENABLES

Well, Sir ..

BERLIN

Well, what?

VENABLES

Well, we had a very bad murder here, coupla years ago. Not actually in our county, but south of here. Girl with no head, no hands. You didn't read about it?

(He didn't)

It was big shit. They had forty, fifty detective working it. Never identified her. Never found the head, never found the hands ..

A vacuum cleaner starts somewhere but BERLIN isn't hearing it.

So it could be that some crazy's
stored her hand in a freezer, and
only now decided to get rid of it?

BERLIN

Where do I find the file on that?

VENABLES

In there if we got anything? I
believe the code was "Jennifer."

BERLIN is already looking. A last question as VENABLES leaves.

Was it really frozen, Sergeant?

BERLIN

No. Been dead two weeks.

20: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAWN.

The atrophied Hand is emersed in some kind of fluid. Index and second fingers bound with wire just below the upper joint. BERLIN reaches for steel pliers. His face remains in close-up for a nasty "snap" as he cuts a finger off. He's filling a syringe with the same fluid when ROSS walks in. "Jesus, you still here?"

BERLIN

What time is it?

ROSS

Seven thirty-five .. Here,
"Town Gets Top Cop." I was
gonna pin it to your wall.

A newspaper featuring a small photograph and article on Berlin. Holding the Finger he carefully inserts a hypodermic needle under the wire. Gently shoots in fluid to inflate the finger pad.

BERLIN

Why so coy about the word "frozen"?

ROSS

Because, don't get into it ...

BERLIN

There's nothing in the files?

ROSS

Watch my lips .. Don't get into it ..

The Finger pad is sufficiently restored to try and get a print.

It wasn't our case, wasn't our county, and got nothing to do with that.

21: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAY.

A slide projector does its stuff on a sheet of card pinned to the door. Close-up of the Hand and off screen voice of BERLIN. "Notice anything weird about it?" The answer from ROSS is "No." A pen moves into frame and BERLIN points to marks on the Hand.

BERLIN

Look - 1 - 2 - 3/4 - 5 - 6 - 7 ..

The machine shunts up another slide. Now the back of the Hand.

I count eleven scars on this hand, and four that might be? .. Now I count em on my hand? Five. I'm 42 years old. This girl's about 18? How come she's got so many scars?

He walks out of the projection beam and neon light flutters on.

So tell me about "Jennifer?"

Reaches for a pack of cigarettes and perches on a nearby stool.

You know I'm gonna find out.

BERLIN counts out cigarettes. And destroys them in an ashtray.

ROSS

It's an "unsolved." They spent 500 thousand dollars & bought emselves a dead end - You might wanna check it with Taylor, he worked the case.

BERLIN

I already did. What's his problem?

ROSS reaches for the paper & thumb-tacks it to the wall "That."

ROSS

He thinks you stole his promotion.
(Re cigarettes)
What exactly you doin there, John?

BERLIN

It's a method for quitting smoking.

A Zippo opens (sports L.A.P.D. insignia) and BERLIN lights up. He takes a punishing hit and exhales a lungful across the lab.

ROSS

That's an interesting method?
Must help beat the withdrawal?

Back on his feet BERLIN is about to begin more work on the Hand.

BERLIN

It's a technique I read about.
If you smoke 60 a day, you buy
three packs, throw one cigar-
ette away, and smoke 59. Day 2,
you throw 2 away and smoke 58 ..

ROSS

Why don't you throw them
all away, and smoke none?

BERLIN

Because it's a ritual you gotta
go through with. I'm down to 10.

Daftest thing Ross ever heard. BERLIN is poised to make a print.

ROSS

You want my advice?

BERLIN

Maybe?

ROSS

Find yourself a farmer's daughter
with nice big fucking tits, and
shake that "bye-bye." Send it to
Sacramento, John .. I sniff grief ..

22: INT. STAIRS/LIVING ROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

BERLIN & ROSS are opposite ends of a bed jammed on the stairs.
"Bastards. I gave em a 20 buck tip." Various navigational sug-
gestions from ROSS win them another stair. Plus advice from a
12 year old called BOBBY. "You gotta go left, Dad." ROSS knows
he's gotta go left! Both heave as MARGIE walks out the kitchen.

MARGIE

You're all done except the floor.

The house is a zoo of furniture. Bullshit piled up everywhere.

BERLIN

You're a saint, Margie, thanks ..

By now she's got the apron off and her coat on. "C'mon, Bobby."

MARGIE

Don't forget the wagon, Darlin?

And off they go via a slammed door as the phone starts to ring.

23: INT. BEDROOM. HOUSE. DAY.

In they stagger. The bed goes down. And BERLIN sprawls on top of it. Devastated for oxygen. "Alright. That's it. I'm fucked."

ROSS

You gotta stop smoking ..

BERLIN

I am stopping smoking ...

ROSS

I don't mean this "system" shit that keeps you sucking, I mean stop .. I was exactly like you are .. I used to wake in the night - heart going so hard I coulda made love with my left tit .. If I can stop, you can ..

BERLIN

How'd you do it, old man?

ROSS

Someone bet me a dollar ..

BERLIN

A dollar? .. Not worth giving up for a dollar ..

BERLIN manages to find air to sit. Reaches for the Ansa Phone.

ROSS

Alright. I'll bet you fifty?

First call comes from Delaware Roofing vis-a-vis the estimate.

BERLIN

Fifty dollars? You got a bet.

During these proceedings the machine has moved to another call.

[MACHINE]

[J.B./Ronzo/Got some results for you/ First/ the blood on the bra

is human/ and it's not a popular brand/A.B. Neg and that's a rare one/Two/the blood on the brassiere is compatible with the blood from the hand/Three/If you need anything else the official answer from all us Christians down here, is fuck off/Shoot me a duck/Bye]

ROSS

What are you gonna do, Soldier?

BERLIN

I'm gonna dig up "Jennifer."

24: INT. (TELETYPE)/ADMIN. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

And here's part of the "exhumation." CITRINE stares at a teletype machine waiting for transmission on Jennifer to complete. Approximate date of birth/Approximate date of death/ Identity Unknown. Visible misgivings as he hauls it out and reads. One or two chairs already on desks. ROSS still at his pawing over documents with a detective called SERATO. Cigarette smoke and shirt sleeves. ROSS looks up and catches CITRINE as he passes.

ROSS

Chief, I gotta talk to ya about this fat lady?

CITRINE

What about her?

ROSS

She's making my life a misery .. I wanna give her a lie-detector test?

CITRINE continues up the carpet. "Alright, we'll talk about it."

25: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

A florescent glow from a T.V. monitor supplies the only light. BERLIN vacillates interest between the scanner and the screen.

CITRINE (O.S.)

What is that?

BERLIN

Laser enhancement of the fingertip .. it's really bothering me .. See these striations right here?
(Green on the screen)

It's like she's always worrying
the end of her finger? Rubbing it
with a thumb nail, or something?

But CITRINE isn't interested in finger nails. He's staring at
a polystyrene torso of a faceless girl. She wears a brassiere
stuffed with newspaper and a black wig. (Welcome Jennifer Two)

She's almost identical to Jennifer.
Slim - White - same age - bra size
is even the same. Nicely made lady.

CITRINE stares at the Dummy like he's gonna ask it a question.

CITRINE

How do you know her hair's black?

BERLIN

Hair on her hand. Plus Jen-
nifer had raven black hair.

CITRINE

What is all this Jennifer stuff?

He waves a handful of teletype before dumping it on a bench.

These cases aren't connected, John?

BERLIN

Yes, Sir, I think they maybe.
I think "Jennifer," and this
lady got hit by the same guy?

CITRINE

I don't see that at all ..

On the board is a super-imposed picture of a hand over a wrist.

BERLIN

I got four points of posit-
ive comparison on the cut ..

CITRINE

Yeah, that's all very inter-
esting, but where's the body?

A question he doesn't need because he hasn't an answer. CITRINE
has an eye on further photographs relevant to the Jennifer case.

I don't know nothing about this "Jenn-
ifer" girl, cept what some of the guys
told me - but principal feature of the

case was a gruesome display of the body. He wanted it found. So if this is the same guy, why's he hidden this one?

Another question he can't answer - and this time he doesn't get a chance - BISLEY walks in with an apology for the interruption. Got a face like Humphrey Bogart's mother fucked a different guy.

BISLEY

Just wondered if you had time to get around to my pharmacy stuff?

BERLIN

You'll have it in the morning ..

BISLEY

Alright, I'll try again tomorrow.

Bisley has gone but his tension stays. BERLIN unwraps fresh gum.

CITRINE

Probably making him feel a bit antsy seein it back on the wall. He worked a lotta time on this.

BERLIN

I thought it was Taylor's case?

CITRINE

Sucked in officers from all over the county. And it was the worst six months this station ever had.

This is CITRINE's shop and BERLIN isn't gonna row it with him.

BERLIN

What do you want me to do, Chief?

CITRINE

I'm not telling you what to do. What I will say, is right now, that child's tricycle there is more important to me than this ..

He refers to a little bicycle. Vouchered and obviously stolen. By now CITRINE is at the hinges. A pause before he disappears.

Why don't you give it a minute, & stop by my office. We should talk.

26: INT. MERCEDES SEDAN. CITY OF EUREKA. NIGHT.

Melted neon in the streets. A wet mid-town night. Nothing but sound of windshield wipers and click of a Zippo lighter. ROSS rides stoic passenger while BERLIN drives with festering eyes.

ROSS

.. what does he think it is?

BERLIN [ROSS]

Everything it isn't [make a left].
He even tried a "self-inflicted."

ROSS

It's possible.

BERLIN

C'mon, Ross, the bra and hand were
in different bags a 100 feet apart ..

They stop at a light and a beeper goes as warning to the blind.

What's she gonna do? Dump her bra
in one bag, her hand in the other,
and wander off whistling Hey Jude?

ROSS

It's the garage on the far corner.

BERLIN is worrying at his fingertip on the wheel of the Zippo.

You can't stop it, can you?

BERLIN

What do you mean?

ROSS

Worrying - clicking - picking - You
may as well be back in Los Angeles.

BERLIN

What do you mean, Ross?

The lights change and off they go and BERLIN waits for a turn.

ROSS

Why don't you dump it? Mail it off.
Give the fucking F.B.I. a present?

BERLIN

Why don't you dump the "Fat Lady?"

ROSS

Because I dislike her too much ..

BERLIN

O.K. and I'm not in love with this fucker? That's how I feel about him.

ROSS

No you don't. That's how you think you feel about him. That's how you feel about yourself. You won't give yourself one-fucking-minute for you.

And by now they've arrived and pulled up on the garage forecourt. It's indicative of their friendship that ROSS can talk like this.

Wait for me. It might not be ready.

He quits the car and BERLIN watches him scurry towards a service shop. Rain beats on the roof and BERLIN looks stubbed out. A lot of cuts coming up and here are some of them. Runs a hand through his hair in unconscious frustration. A finger constantly bothers the Zippo. Eyes towards ROSS who silhouettes in florescent light.

Somewhere in the background the lights change to red. Once again the beeping sound of traffic-lights speaking to the blind. Maybe he looks across but that doesn't matter. Something just happens inside his head he isn't yet quite aware of. Everything in close up. Big on the Zippo. Big on BERLIN. And he leaps out of the car.

BERLIN sprints through the weather. A station wagon is still in the air at the end of an hydraulic jack. Surprise from ROSS and a MECHANIC as BERLIN arrives. Fuck the fanbelt and listen to this.

BERLIN

I just had this insane idea - if I'm wrong, I'll take a week off and redecorate your entire house ..

Rain beats at the roof and the jack sinks the wagon behind them.

She's blind, Ross - that's why all the scars - hear that traffic light? That noise is to help blind people - that's why the marks on her fingertips? - this lady reads in Braille ..

27: INT. ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN sits at a desk at the end of the room. Nothing here but a legal pad and a phone. The pad is covered in names & numbers. Right now he's into a call and this is sounding promising. "How old?" And he writes 26. "How long?" About 6 weeks ago. Hope in his eyes as he looks across to a woman called ANN. She's doing

what he's doing on a different line "Wait a minute, I specifically said I was looking for a girl?" And all hope over because Lesley is a boy. But here comes ANN & this might be something?

ANN

Shasta-Trinity Institute. Line one.

Sticks a sheet of notes on his desk and he junks the last call.

BERLIN (New call)

Hello .. Yes .. This is Sergeant Berlin .. Yes, that's right .. I believe my assistant explained? .. How long ago was that? .. Uh-huh. O.K. .. Who is who? .. Whass his name? Goodridge? O.K. I'll hold ..

ROSS in transit grinning from ear to ear. BERLIN interested in little but his notes and ROSS in nothing but obvious good news.

ROSS

Pig Woman agreed to take a test.

BERLIN

I think I got something - twenty two years old, dark hair - studying mathematics - (Yes, yes, I'm holding) - Last seen 5 weeks ago ..

28: EXT. LANDSCAPE/ROAD. TRINITY FOREST. DAY.

Mussorgsky is back on a shock cut. Big music and a shattering landscape. Juniper woods and mountains. Sunlight on fresh fallen snow. Somewhere a long way off a car crawls up the valley.

Ross's car bursts into frame and as quickly the bend snatches it away. An unexpected building in the distance. Victorian at a glance but probably later. A clock tower and fifty lifeless windows. The Chevy disappears towards its somber architecture.

29: EXT. THE SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. DAY.

Pine trees and slush and parked cars. The Chevrolet swings in and parks in front of the mansion. Breath in the air and eyes on the ugly pile as they slam doors and head for its entrance.

30: INT. ENTRANCE/RECEPTION. INSTITUTE. DAY.

BERLIN first with ROSS following. As soon as they hit the entrance they trigger a recorded voice. "YOU ARE NOW AT THE MAIN ENTRANCE. THERE ARE SIX STEPS." Midway up them with ROSS looking back. "RECEPTION IS THROUGH SWING DOORS AND TO YOUR RIGHT."

31: INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICER. INSTITUTE. DAY.

GOODRIDGE is mid-50's with a beard like Abraham Lincoln. Sits far side of his desk alternating eyes between ROSS and BERLIN. The latter studies a photograph of a Girl in a file. It's possible they've found Jennifer Two? "How recent is the picture?"

GOODRIDGE

As recent as we have .. What exactly is your interest in Amber?

BERLIN

I'm afraid I can't give you an answer to that, Mr Goodridge. As I explained to your secretary, we're doing a lotta looking, but we're not even sure it's her we're lookin for ..

GOODRIDGE

Then what are you hoping I'm gonna do? Dissuade, or persuade you?

BERLIN

I was hopin since we spoke that you might have remembered something that would give us an idea where she is?

GOODRIDGE

Then you could have saved yourself a lot of driving, Sergeant. What I said on the phone's the same as I'm saying now. I got no idea where Amber is, or who it was took her there.

He doesn't like them but not as much as ROSS doesn't like him.

ROSS

A blind girl can just walk out of here, and you don't know who with?

GOODRIDGE

You find something curious in that?

ROSS

Yeah, I guess I do.

GOODRIDGE

Then let me put your mind at ease .. Firstly, Amber isn't "blind" - she has some useful vision - and second, this isn't a prison, it's a college

of higher education - a severe visual disability doesn't mean my students don't value their independence as much as anybody else - and Amber was a very independent young woman - She decided to leave - so she left ..

ROSS

And you got no idea with who?

GOODRIDGE

No, Sergeant, I got no idea with who. And I might add, that in another six weeks, a hundred and fifty students will be leaving here, & driving away for their Christmas holidays with people whose name I-won't-know-either ..

ROSS could sock him in the crop but the phone rings and he excuses himself to answer it. Whatever he hears he isn't liking.

You have an appointment with Miss Robertson?

BERLIN

Yes, Sir.

GOODRIDGE

As she's a member of my staff, may I ask what this is about?

BERLIN

Well, apparently, she saw Amber the weekend she left, & was briefly in the room with the guy she left with.

GOODRIDGE

I see .. Well, she's teaching another class at four .. I'd appreciate it if you don't detain her ..

32: INT. CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. DAY.

Looking back down a deserted corridor. Someone tried to put sunshine on the walls with yellow paint. Somewhere a long way away there is a sound like children singing. ROSS loathes this joint. Loathes its silence. Eyes back to BERLIN as he rings a doorbell.

ROSS

Where is everyone?

BERLIN

I dunno .. I guess this is
staff side of the building?

Here come footsteps and the door is opened by HELENA ROBERTSON. Early 20's and blonde and not immediately beautiful. But delicate features than need no make up and big dark eyes. They look away for introductions as though she's shy. ROSS & BERLIN grab glances as they follow in. Neither expected HELENA to be blind.

33: INT. APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. DAY.

Claustrophobia evaporates instantly. Great views down the valley from every window. Plus a bizarre jumble of furniture and colors. But no pictures on the walls. No friendly photographs. Nor any lights. Although the afternoon is shutting down there isn't a light in the room. ROSS elects to stay at the windows. BERLIN takes an offered chair. HELENA sits nervously opposite.

HELENA

What d'you wanna ask, Mr Ross?

BERLIN

I'm Mr Berlin. Mr Ross is right here. And Mr Ross is maybe gonna take a few notes, if that's O.K.?

(She nods)

O.K. .. I'd like you to tell me in what ever way you want, what you can remember about the time you spent with Amber on the afternoon she left? Take your time, and nothing's too trivial, O.K.

HELENA

Well, I think I told you on the phone .. I went up to her room to say good-bye, and we just sat on the bed and chatted a while, while her friend was coming in and out collecting her things ..

BERLIN

What kind of friend? Was he a boy friend? An old friend? New friend?

Lots of headshake. And lots of silences. "I really don't know."

That's O.K. Can you give me any idea what this fellow was like?

(Headshake)

Well, d'you know how old he was?

(Headshake)

Alright, let me put it this way?
How old d'you think I am? Twenty-
six? Thirty-nine? Or fifty-three?

HELENA

Fifty-three.

Possibly the only grin ROSS is going to get out of this place.

BERLIN

You must have some idea about him.

HELENA

When we spoke on the phone,
did you know I was blonde?

BERLIN

No.

HELENA

Why not? You heard my voice?

A good point. And a point taken. And BERLIN might even say so.

We don't have some kind of
sixth-sense, you know. Ex-
cept in ridiculous novels ..

Now another silence overtaken by a low whistle in another room.

He used a breath freshener ...

A sardonic headshake from ROSS. Well that solves the case then!

And I think his name was John?

BERLIN

John? .. You never said that
on the phone? .. What makes
you think his name was John?

HELENA

I don't know. I guess she must
have called him John? I'm mak-
ing tea. Would you like some?

BERLIN would but ROSS wouldn't. She leaves and whispers begin.

BERLIN

This looks promising .. I
think this one could be it?

ROSS

Thank Christ we got a witness.

BERLIN

Let me just keep going a while.
She might remember something?

ROSS

What? She's blind, Bro. You
may as well ask one of these
Beethoven guys on the piano?

He thumbs a cluster of cheap busts of composers on an upright.

We're better off having another
pop at old Abe Lincoln down there?
Get angry with the prick. Get
some of his "useful visions" in?
Someone must have seen something?

Negative from BERLIN. Checked it out. Sunday and no one about.

This is fucken crazy. Two hours
here, two hours back, and the
only word I've written is John ..

A touch later and the sun is setting. ROSS stands at a window
to watch it go. Watches one or two cars driving away. Watches
a bird sitting outside on the fire-escape. BERLIN's voice can
just about be heard off screen "You said he spoke? Can you re-
member what he said?" ROSS saunters back into HELENA's answer.

HELENA

Well, he just said, come on,
hurry up, will you, because
it's starting to snow again.

Empty teacups and empty notebook. ROSS sits opposite BERLIN.

And I remember, he was a lit-
tle breathless from carrying
the cases because the elevat-
or had gone out that weekend.

BERLIN

The elevator wasn't working?

HELENA

No, it has a mind of its own.

A clock strikes four somewhere. And BERLIN knows he's lost it.

BERLIN

Can I see your hands?

HELENA

My hands?

He takes her hands and HELENA immediately looks uncomfortable. He examines scars and she stares at him with her useless eyes.

I have a class. I have to go.

BERLIN

Is there anything else you can tell me? Anything about him or her? Doesn't matter how small?

HELENA

No. Except he smoked. Like you.

BERLIN

Me?

HELENA

Yes, I could smell it on his breath, like I can on your's.

A taut instant between ROSS and BERLIN. BERLIN caught out and he knows it. ROSS roars in silence "YOU LYING PIG" and writes in his notebook. The angle switches to see "BERLIN IS A LIAR."

I'm late .. I really have to go ..

Everyone suddenly on their feet and HELENA gets into a jacket.

BERLIN

D'you have a dog? Seeing Eye Dog?

HELENA

No.

BERLIN

Lotta scratch-marks on your door?

HELENA

Sometimes I look after friends dogs, if they go to dances, or something?

ROSS

Could I just refer you to this memo here, Sergeant?

He tries to get his notebook under BERLIN's nose. But BERLIN

isn't looking or listening but following HELENA into her hall.

BERLIN

Did Amber have a dog?

HELENA

Yes.

BERLIN

What color was it?

HELENA

I don't know.

She opens the door and ROSS is barely through before it slams.

34: INT. CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. DAY.

ROSS baits BERLIN up the corridor. Ridicules in silence while counting imaginary winnings. Watch my lips! F.I.F.T.Y. HELENA walks innocent of the pantomime and BERLIN tries to ignore it.

BERLIN

.. if she writes, or calls, or anything at all, you let me know, O.K.

He bells the elevator refusing to acknowledge ROSS's bullshit.

I'll leave a number with the office ..

Lips drill a whisper into his ear. "Fifty fucken dollars, O.K."

What exactly do you teach, Helena?

HELENA

Music composition .. and cello ..

ROSS

Fifty of em. And I want em now.

Meanwhile the elevator arrives triggering a Voice. "YOU ARE NOW ON THE FOURTH FLOOR." Doors slide open and Christ look at this? What kind of eye-defect needs glasses like this? Lenses like either half of a glass ball. He's early 30's and decidedly "iffy." Is he student/staff or what? As he exits they enter staring after him. As the doors close the MYOPIC turns to stare after them.

35: INT. CHEVROLET. TRINITY VALLEY. DUSK.

ROSS drives and BERLIN studies Amber's file. "Wanna beer?" No answer but cans appear anyway from a pack between Ross's legs.

BERLIN

Had a seeing Eye Dog since she was eighteen .. didn't I tell you those dogs meant something ..

ROSS

No, you didn't.

BERLIN

Alright, I didn't, but I nearly did, and if I had I'd have been right .. I knew there was something about that Labrador, that dog was too good to be dead .. We gotta get back up that dump ..

ROSS

No way .. not me, Mister. I'm not going up there again. Might find someone's prick in a hot-dog roll.

BERLIN

We're going.

ROSS

Forget it. They got stringent hygiene rules. He's long gone in lime.

ROSS pops cans and hands one over. But BERLIN doesn't want it.

BERLIN

Maybe not? I'm feeling lucky ..

ROSS

So am I. But where's my money?

BERLIN

Don't start again. If you win a bet, you can't keep winning it ..

ROSS

Pay me, and I shut up.

BERLIN

I haven't got it.

ROSS

Then give me that Zippo.

BERLIN

Why?

ROSS

I need some security. I
don't trust you anymore.

BERLIN

I had one puff on a pipe.

ROSS

I don't want excuses, I want that
weird-looking stuff called "cash."

Snaps fingers "Gimme the lighter." And he does to shut him up.

I'll tell you what I'm gonna do?
I'm gonna do you a big favor ..
Forget the 50 and I'll keep this.

BERLIN

What do you want it for?

ROSS

To throw out of the window.

Does it as he says it. Bye-bye Zippo! BERLIN can't believe it.

BERLIN

What are you doing, Ross?
I've had that 15 years! ..

ROSS

It's not your friend. It
keeps you sucking. Remem-
ber the old Bum's lungs?

BERLIN

I remember the old bastard's
liver! I don't believe you
did that. I had a great sent-
imental attachment to that.

ROSS

You want me to stop the car?

An academic question considering the Zippo went down a ravine.

BERLIN

No! Get me to that garbage dump!
I'm gonna find that fucking dog!

36: EXT. CITY DUMP. CITY OF EUREKA. NIGHT.

Gloom congeals around flashlights. A winter mist falling down.

TRIMBLE and Doberman watch as BERLIN goes at it with a shovel. A dozen graves already dug and he's halfway into another. Despite the cold he sweats in shirt sleeves. Also breathless and rests to catch his wind. "Don't you have to go to bed?" No he doesn't. He wants to see the victim. Digging recommences with TRIMBLE supplying the light. BERLIN suddenly stops. "Get that lamp down here." White lime. Black fur. They've found the Dog.

BERLIN begins an examination holding a tiny flashlight in his teeth. Eyes excitedly back to TRIMBLE and gesturing towards a bag. "That bag there. You find a knife and a paira long-nosed pliers." TRIMBLE does it relishing the snap of a switch-blade.

BERLIN still busy with the light in his mouth. TRIMBLE pissed because he can't see what's happening. BERLIN removes a crumpled bullet from the back of the Labrador's skull. Holds it up for scrutiny. Small calibre. Badly distorted. "Looks like a 22?"

BERLIN

You didn't shoot him did you?

TRIMBLE

Me .. I love dogs .. Ask him?

37: INT. ANTI ROOM/ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

LETTERS BIG AS A HOUSE. And Loud. The printer reciprocates as fast as its mechanics are capable. Details coming in from San Diego. VICAP Case Number/F.B.I. Case Number/Victim Status/etc etc. Letters smacking into paper too fast to read. But one detail is repeated constantly and underlined. "Identity Unknown."

Transmission ends and BERLIN hauls at least a yard of homicide out of the machine. Can't believe what he's looking at. "Jesus. He hit six." Reads as he walks back into the big room and gets interrupted by a call. "Miss Robertson. Holding." He heads for the phone with eyes following ANN "Find Ross for me, will you?"

BERLIN (Phone)

Berlin .. yeah .. that's nice of you, Helena, but I already found out .. black, yes .. No, no, of course not, good of you to call .. You heard a what? .. A hollow car?

A hand shoves papers at the edge of his vision. TAYLOR looks a mite cheesy. "You got a minute for this?" And BERLIN nods sure.

Yes, I'm still here .. Why didn't you mention that? .. I see .. Alright, we should talk again .. No, I'm just south of my eye-lids in

it right now .. How about Sunday?

38: EXT. COAST ROAD. HUMBOLDT BAY. EUREKA. DAY.

The first shining day of November. Sand dunes and an infinite stretch of beach. Behind the sea-break is a lagoon and a tiny harbor. Berlin's Mercedes descends the coast road towards it.

39: EXT. HARBOR. HUMBOLDT BAY. EUREKA. DAY.

Ross's boat is a 35 foot fisherman. Shining brass and varnish. But like him it's getting on and often grumpy. This last quality presently evident in both. Engine roaring and ROSS is covered in oil. BERLIN has to shout above the racket to be heard.

BERLIN

.. I put the slug in for a ballistics report, the man tells me, for get it. Soft lead, it's worthless .. I think, fuck it. And fuck Citrine. I call a friend of mine in Los Angeles, and he runs our whole damned show through a main-frame looking for anything similar to our ladies shot with a twenty-two - you don't believe what he finds in San Diego ..

ROSS detours eyes to wave at his Son. "Watch those revs there."

Would you shut it down a minute, Ross? This is important.

ROSS signals BOBBY to turn off. And the diesel splutters down.

ROSS

Alright, let's take a walk around the block .. I gotta buy a gasket ..

40: EXT. QUAY/HARBOR. HUMBOLDT BAY. DAY.

Seagulls and sunshine and probably Saturday because the place is busy. ROSS walks with BERLIN up a wooden quay. Their journey will take them across a small bridge towards a Marine Shop.

BERLIN

Six girls over a period of 18 months, and give or take a head or two, the M.O.'s exactly the same. Dark hair. No hands. All shot with a high velocity twenty-two in the back of the head.

ROSS

How come the F.B.I. don't put
anya this together? They work-
ed over "Jennifer" for months?

BERLIN

They possibly did - but they nev-
er had a head, so they never had
a bullet - and they never got an
I.D. - not on any of em - never
bust a homicide unless you know
who your victim is - we're the
first to get a positive identity.

ROSS

Identity of whom? You got a girl,
doesn't even have a driver's lic-
ense? .. She's untraceable, John ..
You need fifty detectives on this.

BERLIN

That's what I'm here for. I want
you to come and see Citrine with
me? He's not gonna here it from
me but I know he'd listen to you.

ROSS

Listen to me saying what?

BERLIN

I wanna take that fucking Blind In-
stitute to pieces .. Every address
book, every phone call, everyone in
and outta there in the last 5 years ..

ROSS

For a dead dog?

BERLIN

We've fused into a major series,
Ross. This girl isn't the second
victim. This is "Jennifer Eight."

And this is the second time they stop and stare at each other.

That old Wino on the heap wasn't
a suicide. He stumbled into some-
thing, saw something, and whoever
took him out knew how to fake it.

ROSS

That isn't what you said before.

BERLIN

I was wrong.

Says it with remarkable humility considering he's the "expert."

I'm going in to see Citrine this afternoon. Will you come with me?

ROSS

You're not .. He's in hospital .. He was trying out a new pair of skis in his hallway. The phone rings, and he goes for it, and falls off. He must be the only skier in Northern California to break a leg in his living room.

They arrive at the Chandler's with BERLIN in no mood to smile.

BERLIN

You believe me, don't you?

ROSS

What does it matter what I believe? .. What you gotta worry about is what Citrine believes ..

But he doesn't really believe it. And doesn't enjoy saying no.

But I can't help you with this. We can't go through the door with two contentious issues, you with a mass murderer, and me with the Mayor's best friend. Do that, we lose both. I'm sorry, Bro, you're on your own.

41: EXT. TRINITY VALLEY. DAY. (HELICOPTER)

The Mercedes and Music travel north. The latter made sinister by this landscape. Forest plunging into dark ravines. The sun colors the mountains red. But most of the valley is in shadow.

42: EXT. DRIVE/PARKING. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. DAY.

A high wind in the chimneys. And the view is still from above. Like someone's looking down from the top of the building. And maybe someone is? BERLIN parks it and gets out. Stretches and walks towards the institute. He looks very small from up here.

43: INT. GYMNASIUM. INSTITUTE. DAY.

HELENA plays Elgar in an empty gymnasium. Sunlight streams in staining the air red. As BERLIN arrives doors on the opposite wall flap together like somebody just hurried out. Did he see someone? Perhaps not. The trees outside move a lot of shadows.

Music stands. Vacant chairs. BERLIN takes one to watch her rehearse. Realizes just how beautiful she is. And HELENA realizes someone is there. Before she can ask he identifies himself.

HELENA

Have you been here long?

BERLIN

No, just a minute or two .. I knocked on your door - no one home, so I followed the music ..

HELENA

I'm sorry. I'll get my things.

BERLIN

No problem. I'm not in a hurry.

But she's already fussing about stuffing sheet music in a bag.

Matter of fact, I saw a little restaurant place down the road. Looked kinda pretty? I thought maybe we could have some lunch?

No answer but the answer is no. BERLIN finds her book for her.

Alright, whatever .. Was someone in here with you? When I came in the door was flapping?

HELENA

I don't think so .. No one comes here at the weekends ..

44: INT. STAIRCASE. INSTITUTE. DAY.

The gale shouts its head off. The Camera looks down from above. Nothing to see except the stairwell and a hand on the banister.

HELENA (O.S.)

I suppose I'm the worst witness you've ever had?

BERLIN (O.S.)

I gotta admit, you're one of them. Just wish I knew what

you meant by a "hollow car?"

HELENA (O.S.)

Well, some cars sound fat and
some cars sound thin, and this
kind of car sounded "hollow" ..

Any moment now they turn a corner of the stairs into close-up.

Maybe it was a foreign car?
Our kinda cars sound "fat."

The elevator is parked on this floor with its doors half open.

Are you sure you wanna see it?
It's another three floors up?

Despite breathlessness he does. "How often does it break down?"

Oh, all the time. They keep
threatening to have it re-
placed, but they never will.

45: INT. ATTIC APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. DAY.

Gloomy windows and a wardrobe. BERLIN walks in leaving HELENA
at the door. "I sat right there, on the bed." The bed is gone
but why tell her? He checks the wardrobe. Guess what? Hangers.

HELENA

If I came to the diner with
you, would you bring me back?

BERLIN

Of course I would ..

His smile deteriorates as he realizes she's "staring" at him.

What are you staring at, Hel-
ena? .. I mean .. I'm sorry ..

HELENA

That's alright. You suddenly
reminded me of him .. He was
standing right where you are,
kind of breathless, like you.

Nothing happening except the wind. Then a smile as she leaves.

I'll get my coat, wait
for you downstairs ..

And he begins an exploration. Musty bathroom with old-fashioned fixtures. A tap leaking behind shower curtains. Nothing in the cabinet. Nothing under the sink. Six steps and he is in a kitchen. Finally finds something worth looking for. Tears the sack out of a vacuum cleaner. Discovers a knot of hair from a black dog. Simultaneously the door slams. Shock powers him into the sitting room in time to hear a key turning in the lock. Hits the door and shouts. Hears footsteps moving rapidly away.

46: INT. RECEPTION. INSTITUTE. DAY.

A huge Christmas poster advertises SHASTA-TRINITY ARTS/CRAFTS. HELENA sits in the deserted foyer reading Braille. The volume is the size of a phone directory. BERLIN appears via the main entrance. Windswept and wasted and surprised she's still here.

BERLIN

I'm sorry, someone slammed the door on me. I couldn't get out.

HELENA

It was probably the wind.

Hellava wind that turns a key! But he says nothing. Takes the book while she gets into her coat. She's obviously made an effort. A change of clothes and her hair pinned up. But she has got the sweater on inside out and the label is under her chin.

BERLIN

What are you reading?

HELENA

Hamlet. Have you read it?

BERLIN

No.

HELENA

You should. It's wonderful.

By now they're at the doors with BERLIN escorting her through.

47: INT. RESTAURANT/DINER. TRINITY VALLEY. DAY.

Red brick walls and help yourself to salad. All but empty and their food is yet to arrive. BERLIN is clearly having a tough time with the conversation. Basically because there isn't any.

BERLIN

.. I'll tell you what, if I promise to stop being a cop, will you promise to stop being a witness?

HELENA sits frozen like she's waiting for results of an X-ray.

I mean, we don't havta sit here waiting for me to ask the next question? You could ask one, too?

HELENA
Are you wearing a uniform?

BERLIN
No.

HELENA
Oh.

BERLIN
Well, I'm glad we got the conversational side of lunch over with.

HELENA
I'm sorry .. I don't like sitting in the middle of a restaurant .. I feel like everyone's looking at me ..

BERLIN
There's no one "looking at you" .. There's hardly anyone in here. The only person looking at you, is me.

And he likes what he's looking at. And maybe HELENA senses it.

HELENA
Are you married?

BERLIN
Was. But I don't like to talk about it.

HELENA
You just asked me to ask you questions.

BERLIN
I know, but you pick on the one time in my life I like not to remember. I was in the bad lands. Really not well. It's something that happens to a lotta cops. We don't wanna talk about that.

HELENA
"Thoughts that lie too deep for tears."

BERLIN

Yeah, that'll do .. Is that "Hamlet?"

HELENA

No, Wordsworth .. Do you like poetry?

His attention is temporarily elsewhere. A Lunch Party just arrived. It's clear GOODRIDGE is profoundly unhappy to see BERLIN.

BERLIN

I don't know, I haven't read much. I don't think poetry's my kinda thing?

HELENA

Do you pray?

BERLIN

Pray?

HELENA

You said, you were in the bad lands?

BERLIN

No, I don't pray .. Had a dream once, about God, just around the time I was getting well .. He was a nasty lookin little guy, moved into the apartment right on topa me .. I said, don't you listen to people's prayers? He said, prayers? Not often. They're Junk Mail.

48: INT. MERCEDES SEDAN. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. DAY.

Big pines either side of the driveway. The Camera sits in the back more interested in the approaching institute than BERLIN.

BERLIN

.. I got really sick of the street .. so I went to school and became a Scientific Services Officer, which is basically a Scene of Crime Officer. Then this came up, and I got what they call a Lateral Transfer ..

Pulls into a parking spot and the next sound is the hand brake.

I couldn't take another minute of Los Angeles .. Felt like I'd said sorry in every street in the city ..

HELENA

Sorry?

BERLIN

.. sorry your father, mother sister, whatever .. I couldn't take another day of it .. Come on, I'm gonna rob you of a cup of coffee ..

49: EXT/INT. FIRE ESCAPE/APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. DUSK.

BERLIN looks down from the fire escape. For the first time the place sounds busy. Cars arriving and doors slamming. Voices of Students coming back from the weekend. "Why were you out there?" HELENA waits inside and didn't realize he was back in the room.

HELENA

Coz I wanted to feel the snow on my face .. I think that's when I heard her call him John?

Time to go and both know it. Stale shadows and growing silence.

Is it snowing now?

BERLIN

No. Getting dark though.

And his eyes are searching her so hard she must be aware of it.

You think you'd know this man? If he was in the room with you again?

HELENA

You've already asked me that ..

The silence is almost uncomfortable. BERLIN continues to stare.

Amber's dead, isn't she?

BERLIN

Yes. I'm sorry.

50: EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. CITY OF EUREKA. DAY.

Pretty houses in a pretty little street. Hills in the back and sunshine out front. BERLIN pulls up in his Mercedes and does a bit of tie adjusting as he walks up a path and hits the chimes. This could only be MRS CITRINE. A budget smile and he's inside.

51: INT. "STUDIO"/CONSERVATORY. HOUSE. DAY.

Dozens of repulsive paintings. A truly repulsive painting "By Numbers" of the Mona Lisa in progress. The color codes are completely fucked up. CITRINE wears a wooly hat and hates walking

on crutches. BERLIN picked a bad day to come in here with this.

CITRINE

You're pushing this too hard. It's like you want me to say stop? You must know that's the way this is going, John? There's other work to do, why don't ya ease off a little?

BERLIN

Coz this is a major & we're closer to this bastard than anyone's ever been.

CITRINE

Then where's the body? .. Where's the body, and why's he hidden it?

BERLIN

He hasn't hidden it. He never made a hit this far north before, and he never read a weather forecast .. She's probably fifteen feet from the highway, three feet under snow.

CITRINE

Have you got a match on the bullet?

BERLIN

No.

CITRINE

Have you got a print from the hand?

BERLIN

No, Sir.

CITRINE

It could be anyone's hand. Illegally disposed of hospital debris ..

BERLIN

It's her hand. Her scars. Her dog. Her dog's shot. And she's missing.

CITRINE

She's not "missing." Did she shout? Did she scream? Did he coerce her? No. She left of her own free will .. And if she gets on a plane and goes to Peru with the prick, she's still not missing. You got no case, John.

BERLIN

If you're not gonna hear me, Chief ..

CITRINE

I have heard you. You just don't like hearing me. You got this whole damned thing outta proportion. I don't know what you gotten used to in Los Angeles, but I don't believe there's a Police Chief, in this country, would put a task force together for a body part ..

BERLIN

We have a multiple homicide, Sir ..

CITRINE

We have a body part in suspicious circumstances - a tailor's dummy wearing a brassiere - and a bill for seventeen dollars for its wig!

52: INT. CORRIDOR/ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN arrives at the station in the same mood he left Citrine. Heads for his room and runs into ROSS's stare. Problems on his plate too. He sits at his desk looking uncharacteristically anxious. What ever he's drinking isn't tea. He finds a bottle of J&B in a drawer and walks toward Berlin's freshly slammed door.

52: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The lab is stuffed with junk waiting his attention. (Dozens of common things made sinister by their labels and plastic sacks). ROSS delivers a dose of Scotch in a plastic cup. Pours himself another. Leans on a bench and gets into the pissed-off silence.

ROSS

Did he shut you down?

BERLIN

All but .. How you doing?

ROSS

I dunno, I daren't go in there - just about get her wired up, and the fucking mayor walks in - mad as hell - what are we doing fucking with his staff? We should be out chasing major violators ..

BERLIN

I wish he'd tell that to Citrine.

He almost does the whiskey but reaches for chewing gum instead.

He thinks the kid shot the dog ..

He looks at ROSS like what-are-you-looking-at-me-like-that-for?

He didn't.

ROSS

Did I say he did?

BERLIN

You looked like you did?

ROSS

No, I think you'll find I looked like he could have? By accident even? He's up here spraying the scenery all day.

BERLIN

He didn't shoot it, Ross. And no way by accident. There's a flash-burn. It was point-blank.

SERATO walks in with a cigarette plugged into his ashen kisser.

SERATO

Flying colors ...

ROSS

Say you didn't say that, Angelo?

SERATO

I said it.

ROSS

Oh my God Mother's shit. Are we in it?

54: INT. ANTI ROOM/INTERROGATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

This room and the interrogation room are linked with a one-way mirror. BERLIN looks through munching gum. EMERSON is 25 years old and many pounds of vexed flesh. But something about her expression expects apology. SERATO paces the place chain-smoking. ROSS listens devastated as the EXPERT explains his lousy chart.

EXPERT

This is the important one. She gets a dead straight line, and that's an exceptional reading ..

SERATO

.. this is the stupidest thing we ever done. Fucking Citrine's gonna fire one of us for this ..

ROSS

I can't believe it. I just know she somehow busted it.

EXPERT

This is an honest girl. She couldn't lie if she tried ..

BERLIN

Is she lying, Ross?

For a moment there is an intense trust between ROSS and BERLIN.

ROSS

Yes.

Alright fuck it. Let's go for broke. BERLIN grabs the read out. Fueled on residual anger he vanishes out the door. ROSS is first at the mirror to see him reappear in the interrogation room.

55: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The polygraph machine looks like state of the art. A table and two chairs. BERLIN takes one and sits opposite EMERSON. She attempts a smile but he kills it with the intensity of his stare.

BERLIN

My name's Sergeant John Berlin.

And the time is his. He knows what he's doing. And she doesn't.

I been a policeman 17 years: 16 years 9 months of which with the L.A.P.D. I witnessed literally hundreds of lie-detector tests, and I never seen one like this?

EMERSON

What d'ya mean, Sergeant?

BERLIN

Well, look at it. Look at this line? That's the important one. Dead straight down the page. Nobody gets a dead straight down the page. Even our expert says a dead straight's "exceptional."

All he's doing is telling her truth. Up to her to interpret it.

Thought you might wanna comment?

A tongue slides through the lipstick like something being born.

EMERSON

I wasn't actually lying, Officer.

And suddenly the only thing holding her chops up is Max Factor. He's got her on the roll now and all it needs is one more push.

BERLIN

You busted the box, lady! You flunked it .. You lied about things you didn't need to lie about .. The only truthful statement you made's your name .. Your name is Carol Emerson?

The quivering lip and flooding eyes amalgamate into a horrible sort of groan. She's bellied up and anxious to spill her beans. BERLIN better get through the door fast because he might laugh.

You tell one more lie, you're going in a cell. Sergeant Ross is coming in to take your statement.

56: EXT. ROSS'S BOAT. HUMBOLDT BAY. EUREKA. DAY.

A wave atomizes and comes down like silver champagne. HELENA & BERLIN hang on the prow of the boat with the ocean rushing below. Another wave and more spray for HELENA. She turns like getting sea in your face is the best invention ever. Oilskins saturated and her hair streaming and she knows he's loving it too.

57: INT. WHEELHOUSE. BOAT. DAY.

Sunshine & spray on the windshield. ROSS at the wheel with MARGIE next to him. Eyes on BERLIN & HELENA playing like children.

MARGIE

Such a shame .. She's a really sweet kid ..

ROSS

She's a doll. But I wish he hadn't brought her out here.

Stairs descend to a cabin and ROSS interrupts himself to shout.

Bobby, what happened to that

beer? Rule one, is you don't
diddle around with a witness.

MARGIE
He's happy, darlin ..

ROSS
I'm sure he is. But gettin in-
to the "element" is a bad idea.

BOBBY clatters up the stairs clutching a six pack of Budweiser.

Tell em I'm going up the coast
a way, get out of this weather.

BOBBY exits the wheelhouse and walks their eyes back to HELENA.

MARGIE (O.S.)
Except for the hair color,
she looks just like Suzanne?

ROSS (O.S.)
Well, that's who she is.
Cept she can't run away.

58: EXT. FISHING DECK ABOVE WHEELHOUSE. BOAT. DAY.

Wind over and sea content and anchored about a mile from shore. Smoke from a dying barbecue and Nat King Cole croons "Unforgettable." ROSS sports shades and sits staring down the line. Someone plays lousy guitar and he shifts eyes into the well of the boat. HELENA teaches BOBBY to play chords. Hardly worth the effort but they're enjoying it. BERLIN looks down from the opposite side of the deck. His gaze interrupted by MARGIE "You want another Coke, honey?" Sure he does and her eyes travel to ROSS.

MARGIE
You want something, darling?

ROSS
I wouldn't mind another B.E.E.R.

In code so BERLIN won't understand. But he and ROSS swap grins.

How much longer you on that diet?

BERLIN
I'm doing it by the day ...

MARGIE climbs the stairs with drinks and drinks a beer herself. Popped cans change the subject. This seems like a question BERLIN doesn't really want to ask & MARGIE doesn't want to answer.

How's your little sister?

MARGIE
She's in Europe ..

BERLIN
Working?

Clearly a sensitive subject and ROSS decides the truth is best.

ROSS
She married some English prick.

MARGIE
He's not that bad of a guy ..?

ROSS
Got a handshake like a
partially excited penis.

The joke doesn't reach BERLIN. MARGIE's hand is on his shoulder.

MARGIE
Her loss, darlin ..

And she heads for the lower deck. A sweet smile as she descends.

Anyway, you're doing O.
K. She's a sweet heart.

And also playing the guitar "In My Life." And she does it well.

ROSS
Why's she blind, Bro?

BERLIN
Car accident.

Slow banging of something swaying. And this exchange goes slow.

Whole family wiped out.

ROSS
No shit.

A bleeper goes on one of the lines and ROSS twists in his seat.

Strap me in. Here comes another.

And he winds in yet another three quarters of a pound Mackerel.

Worst day's fishing I ever had ..

BERLIN

It's been a great day.

ROSS dexterously extracts the hook with serious eyes on BERLIN.

ROSS

You just go easy, Brother ...

(Looks at fish)

Alright, we're all goin home.

59: EXT. CAR PARK AT BEACH. DUSK.

Darkness in about an hour. Wide over the car park. Sand dunes surround it. Practically deserted of cars. Headlights snap on focusing attention on a station wagon exchange of good-byes.

HELENA (V.O.)

I really liked Margie ..

Silhouettes with exaggerated shadows walk across the car park.

What does she do?

BERLIN (V.O.)

She runs a kind of hair dressing and you know, beauty salon ..

HELENA (V.O.)

Have you known her long?

BERLIN (V.O.)

I was married to her sister ..

The angle changes and is closer now. HELENA has taken his arm.

You don't ask what I'm like?

HELENA

I know what you're like ..

BERLIN

How d'you know what I'm like?

HELENA

Ross told me.

BERLIN

Really? What did he say?

HELENA

He said you're quite chubby.
And you have a nervous tick.

BERLIN
He said that? What else did
he say?

HELENA
Just your age.

BERLIN
Which is what?

HELENA
Fifty-seven .. I don't mind ..

BERLIN is more amused than annoyed. They arrive at the car and his suggestion is met with an appropriate response from HELENA.

BERLIN
You wanna drive? C'mon we're
in a car park, miles from any-
where .. There's nothing arou-
nd but nothing and sand dunes ..

"I can't drive a car." Doesn't like cars. But he's not hearing.

C'mon it'll be fun. You can
drive me around in circles ..

No lady ever had a driving lesson like this before. BERLIN all but sits in her seat. Arm on the back of it. Hand on the wheel. For a split second they're doing 60. Now they're doing about 4.

The Mercedes spirals in widening circles. Instructions and encouragement from BERLIN .. O.K. .. Straight now .. The Mercedes straightens and heads through the dunes. "It's a big car park?"

We're going along a little track.

HELENA may like driving but she doesn't like the sound of that.

It's O.K. It's not a public road.

Headlights behind them approach quickly. Disappear and reappear as they follow the geography of the dunes. BERLIN only now becomes aware of them. one more dip and they slam in. Her anxiety is misinterpreted. He takes the wheel. No problem. Let him pass. The vehicle is right up behind them. As it overtakes HELENA is scared. And still scared even though BERLIN has stopped the car.

It's alright, I'm sorry. It was

my fault, it wasn't a good idea.

HELENA

That was the "Hollow Car," John.

Just time to see tail lights of a van disappearing in the gloom.

BERLIN

A Volkswagen van? Are you sure?

60: INT. LIVING ROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Rain lashes the windows. But a lot of improvements inside. New paint and now carpet. Not a lot of furniture but it looks nice enough. There's even a fire in the grate. BERLIN sits at a table on the phone. The Voice he's hearing will [talk in brackets]

BERLIN [Phone]

.. [is it a two door, slide door, a what?] I don't know [Well, you gotta get closer than just a V.W. van. You're talking maybe 10/15 thousand vehicles?] What happens if you just run the name "John" against all of them?

Heads for a sofa. Paperback of "Hamlet." TV on without sound.

[Frankly, that isn't gonna do you any good. You'll be knocking on doors all over the state. You gotta request those "Jennifer" files - maybe something in them, give us some kinda reference?]

Christmas ads interrupt the movie. BERLIN sighs in frustration. Starts doodling on the paperback. Shakespeare acquires glasses.

I can't request anything right now .. push one more inch, I lose the lot .. [Well, listen, I'll run the Bay Area for you. But if you want a print-out of every John in California with a V. W. van, that's gotta be official. I'm sorry] .. That's O.K. Thank you, Dan ..

61: INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE. POLICE STATION. DAY.

A painting of Ronald Reagan fills the screen. So awful it's almost impressive. Next to it is a formal photograph of the City Mayor (Mr Heineman) . BERLIN continues to wait with eyes switching to a picture of the Taj Mahal. "I love to paint." He turns as CITRINE walks in. "It's not great art, but I change the colors." Heads for his desk and sits dispensing with the crutches.

CITRINE

I'm shutting you down on
this "blind thing," John.

BERLIN

Is that my punishment for
embarrassing Mr Heineman?

CITRINE

Don't underestimate me .. the
Mayor's pissed - but that's
nothing to do with this - sit
down - How many times have you
been up at that institute?

BERLIN

Three or four.

CITRINE

I'm talking, outside the girl?

BERLIN

Once.

CITRINE

Got a letter from this Goodridge guy?
Says, you're upsetting his students?

BERLIN

That's bullshit,

CITRINE

He says, you freaked one of em out?
(Reading the letter)
"Asking a newly blind kid if he can
'see,' is both cruel, and dangerous" ..

He floats the letter across the desk and hears the explanation.

BERLIN

I never asked if he could "see." I
just asked one or two of the stud-
ents if they remembered anything?

CITRINE

And did they?

BERLIN

No.

CITRINE rubs his forehead in preparation to change the subject,

CITRINE

I'm not a nasty man, John, I'm a nice man .. I get a lot of Christmas cards
(a lot of cards on the wall)
.. and I'm getting a lot of complaints.
The guy you replaced was something you-
're not - a lazy sonovabitch - but the
reality is, I was getting a faster ser-
vice outta Popeye than I am outta you ..
I can't allow this to continue, John ..

If there was any argument to be had BERLIN would be arguing it.

I don't want you up at that institute
again .. and I'm flat-out about that ..
I'm sorry, I know it means something
to you - you can go tell your witness
if you feel you must - but as far as
you're concerned, the case is closed ..

62: EXT. CITY STREET. CITY OF EUREKA. NIGHT.

Colored lights strung across the street. Symptoms of Christmas everywhere. Store windows full of trashy decorations and everything soluble in mist. ROSS and BERLIN develop out of it like Polaroids. Their destination is a dingy looking downstairs bar.

BERLIN

God, it pisses me off, Ross.

ROSS

No God, Brother. If there was
a God, asses wouldn't be at
the perfect height for kicking.

63: INT. "ANGELA'S BAR." CITY OF EUREKA. NIGHT.

This is the local Copper's bar. It's full of cigarette smoke & Coppers. Laughter & sugar music. "I'll Be Seeing You." "Sentimental Journey." Either one of these is playing. Familiar Faces among those drinking at the bar. The forty-two-year-old BLONDE serving them is busy. She is in possession of very big breasts.

VENABLES

Can I buy you a beer, Sergeant?

ROSS

Don't try and ingratiate your-
self with me, Venables. But just
this once I'll have a Heineken ..
and John here will have one, too.

ROSS pokes VENABLES a surreptitious 20 with eyes on the BLONDE. Right now she's far end of the bar delivering a beer to BISLEY.

(Look at those Amazingly Bos-
oms) You wanna beer, King Jay?

TAYLOR
No, I gotta go .. I'm nights ..

TAYLOR gets a last cough out of a cigarette before stubbing it.

BLATTIS
Gimme a ride?

TAYLOR
Sure ..

And he's already gathered his shit and halfway into his jacket.

How's that hand-job comin along, John?

BERLIN makes a gesture he'd have trouble understanding himself.

ROSS
Hey, we're not talking "talk" tonight.

TAYLOR
No one's gonna make that Gent. Six months investigation, & the nearest we got, we thought he was a sailor.

BERLIN
A sailor?

By now TAYLOR is moving through the crush of faces behind them.

TAYLOR
Yeah, in and outta Frisco on the big boats .. Every lead we had went right out to sea .. Night, night, Freddy T .. John ..

BERLIN
How come he's suddenly so forthcoming? I'd like to kick him right in the ass. If he'd discussed it with me, I mighta gotten somewhere ..

ROSS
Stop it.

BERLIN

I never knew about the sailor theory, Ross. He might have that one little thing I need in his files?

ROSS

John, stop it. The case is on its ass, you're closed. (Reaches for a menu.) C'mon, let it go for once .. Have a drink. C'mon, relax, drink your beer ..

And just that one moment of insanity as BERLIN downs it in one.

Alright .. Let's have some wine ..

64: INT. BOOTH. "ANGELA'S BAR." NIGHT.

A shabby booth with black and whites of the two unrecognizable Celebrities who ate here. Hamburgers are almost over and a bottle of wine almost drunk. Both look tanked and especially ROSS.

ROSS

You gotta stop calling Los Angeles .. You're dragging L.A. around with you like an addiction. Look at the shit you're putting yourself through? For what? For nothing, I know it, I been there. Remember me? Up to my asshole in anger, living off the vitamins in cigarettes? If there's a body under the snow, fuck it. Let somebody else worry about it. You gotta accept you stopped living in that world, & try and give yourself a break in this ..

BERLIN

Just makes to so God damned mad ..

ROSS

You're a fucking great policeman, but give yourself a break. You're here 5 minutes, you find yourself a fucking homicide? .. Not many people could do that in a place like this .. And you gotta admit, there's a lot of shaky areas in this case? .. I mean, stop me if I'm going up the wrong nostril ..

Waving his empty at the bar ROSS communicates need for another.

How d'you know this girl isn't lying to you .. Not lying as such, but mak-

ing up stuff to keep you coming back?

BERLIN

She wasn't lying about the van.

ROSS

Alright, she wasn't lying about the van. But it could have been any van? Any little foreign diesel? .. She's blind, Bro .. It's sad .. She's probably lonely, and you're a nice guy to have around .. But you're getting far too far into the element, Brother ..

BERLIN

Sure.

ROSS

You don't need me to tell you what happens when you get emotionally involved?

BERLIN

Alright, enough, Ross. You'll bring on my "Nervous Tick" ...

65: INT. ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

Very late and the only light comes from coloured bulbs pulsing on a Christmas tree. Apparent BERLIN has had too much to drink. Makes it to his desk and shuffles at the messages. One is just about important enough to get a close-up. "TIME 18:52: SUBJECT: A MAN CALLED DAN STANLEY TELEPHONED: SAYS THERE ARE 109 JOHNS WITH VOLKSWAGEN VANS IN BAY AREA: WILL TELETYPE INFO THIS P.M."

66: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

BERLIN finishes typing something. Tears it out and seals it in an envelope. Shirt sleeves and yawns. He slumps in the chair & stares at "Jennifer 8." Fuck this for a Friday night. He's had enough of it. Grabs several envelopes and turns out the lights.

67: INT. ADMIN/OFFICE. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

BERLIN emerges from one office and heads for another. J.K. Taylor on the door. Delivers the envelope and on his way out when something detains him. Lights on the tree strobe through venetian blinds. Illuminate bits and pieces of rattan. Plus a board covered in Christmas cards and a pair of steel filing cabinets.

Maybe motivated by the booze? But a desk drawer is open almost before he realizes it and he searches for a key. Nothing but a bunch of business cards and family snaps. Taylor with his Moth-

er Taylor with his Sister (red hair like him) and Taylor with his Dog. The drawer slams and one underneath opens. Same flotsam of personal junk. Scotch Tape and paper clips and more business cards. A bottle of tablets and salad of loose ammo. Fuck all else and he closes the drawer. But what's this? A cane letter rack at the rear of the desk where he finds a pair of keys.

Excitement lasts as long as it takes to try them. Don't fit either lock. Now he's staring at the shadows with nothing moving but thoughts. A few moments more and he's heading for the door.

68: INT. OFFICE. POLICE STATION. NIGHT.

Massive close-up of the lock. A weird looking tool goes in and another follows it. This bastard ain't easy even for an expert. The frame widens to reveal BERLIN. He shuffles picks in a wallet on top of the cabinet. Was that a noise somewhere? He stops to listen. wipes cold sweat away. Only thieves and foxes about.

A final twist and the lock delivers. Several dozen manilla colored files from which to choose. A pair of folders titled Jennifer travel to the desk. The first is full of press-cuttings & some gruesome looking snaps. Next file and this one looks more interesting? A notebook full of random questions/answers/comm-ents. A list of ships and sailing times. "MUST FOLLOW THIS UP"

Underlined twice. "CAN'T OVER ESTIMATE IMPORTANCE." Also underlined. Lists of numbers. Street numbers? Vehicle numbers? Whatever they might be is history because the neon just flashed on. TAYLOR stands in the doorway. The surprise is mutual. The play one-sided. This is already TAYLOR's game. Smokes his cigarette. BERLIN is up to elbows in the jam jar and up to him to explain.

BERLIN

.. feel like I'm getting close to this guy .. and all the time, feel like I'm sharpening a pencil with a broken load .. I'm sorry, King J ..

TAYLOR

What are you looking for?

BERLIN

Vehicle references.

TAYLOR

Wrong cabinet.

He gestures to the right one. BERLIN feels about 2 inches tall.

I'm gonna get some coffee. When you finish in here, maybe you'll let me

know? .. I got a report to type up ..

As he exits he tosses a bunch of keys. They crash uselessly onto the desk. BERLIN looks like he couldn't get a fuck with mud.

69: EXT. ROAD. TRINITY VALLEY. DAY.

The mood is low as it goes. And so is the angle. Ultra low behind the car. Just road and a blur of tires. The frame widens & the Mercedes fills it. Brake lights on as it descends the hill.

70: INT. TRINITY VALLEY/ROAD. DAY.

BERLIN in big close-up. His face like the Music. Here come the gates of the Institute. As he turns in he stamps the brakes. A van veers past him. Nothing special about it except it's a V.W. He watches it vanish up the hill with other things on his mind.

71: INT. CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. DAY.

Christmas vacations and the building sounds deserted. BERLIN's foot steps might be the only sound in the place. They stop and a bell rings. He tries to assemble some kind of appropriate expression. But as soon as she opens the door it's obsolete. HELENA looks pretty as flowers & delighted he's here. She reaches for his hands. And every new second makes it a tougher goodbye.

72: INT. APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. DAY.

Oh Jesus look at this. She prepared him a surprise dinner. And she looks so happy about it. A pathetic little table with candles and Forget-Me-Nots and can of Diet Coke by his plate. He's barely through the door and goodbye is already in deep trouble.

HELENA

I wanted it to be a surprise.

BERLIN's face gets ready for something he doesn't say. Why did she have to do this? And why didn't he tell her over the phone?

73: INT. APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. DUSK.

A Schubert Sonata in the background. Candles low and the atmosphere junk. Evening already in the room and it feels like time to go. But first he's gotta tell her something he doesn't want to hear himself. "Would you like me to make some fresh coffee?"

BERLIN

I have to talk to you, Helena.

HELENA

I know.

BERLIN

You know? How do you know?

HELENA

Coz you hardly said a word
since you got here. But you been
thinking pretty loud ..

She stands and collects the cups and gets halfway with a smile.

I'll make some more coffee.

74: INT. KITCHEN. APARTMENT. DUSK.

A hiss of running water. Close on the kettle. Close on the tap. She knows what he's going to say. And now she's alone her face doesn't mask her feelings. She's missing him already. But doesn't know why. Simply knows she doesn't want him to say goodbye.

She reaches high into a cupboard. Her shirt stretches over her breasts. Christ this girl has a great figure. Carting hair out of her eyes she returns to the sink. For an instant she's staring out of the window and right into somebody's face. Tall and weird looking. But just a glimpse before he moves rapidly away.

75: INT. APARTMENT. DUSK.

BERLIN has moved to the sofa. A shaft of dead sunlight crosses the apartment. HELENA comes in making a brave face of it. Doesn't realize he's moved. "I'm here, Helena." And she smiles and changes direction. Puts the coffee tray on a table in front of him. No music now and all sounds in close-up. Close on the lip of the coffee pot as she pours. Close on the cup she gives him. Everything close in Helena's world or her world wouldn't exist.

76: EXT. (P.O.V. FROM FIRE ESCAPE) INSTITUTE. DUSK.

Not a lot to look at but the man is looking in. From his P.O.V. he's fortunate. HELENA sits facing him but BERLIN has his back to the window. This sort of surveillance is always ominous and here is no exception. BERLIN's explanation comes with occasional use of hands. HELENA suddenly smiles so it can't be all bad.

They stand and BERLIN reaches for his coat. HELENA crosses the room. Finds her Forget-Me-Nots and now they're his at the door. As he takes them he takes her hand. Kisses her finger tips and can't avoid embracing her. They kiss like awkward kids bumping noses. Finally part and disappear into the dark of the hallway.

77: INT. ELEVATOR/CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. DUSK.

BERLIN is already in the elevator. Resists doors determined to separate them. They shunt in and out perpetually informing him he's on the 4th floor. "I'll call, O.K." She nods and releases his hand. He watches her walk all the way back up the corridor.

78: INT. MERCEDES SEDAN. TRINITY VALLEY. NIGHT.

Headlights follow the meandering road. Another bend and lights in the distance. In seconds he's passing the Diner. Still open with cars out front including the white Volkswagen that nearly busted his fender. He's not gonna stop. Then decides to. Makes a U and pulls in. Parks a couple of vehicles away from the van.

79: INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM/BEDROOM. APARTMENT. NIGHT.

HELENA finishes the dishes. Stacks a last plate and closes the cupboard. Heads back into the living room. Something about the apartment doesn't sound right? She follows the noise through a door into a bedroom. Curtains dance in the darkness and behind them she finds a half open window. Curious because she doesn't remember leaving it open? Secures it and silences the icy wind.

80: EXT. VOLKSWAGEN VAN/CAR PARK. DINER. NIGHT.

BERLIN checks the driver's door. Locked and he explores with a pencil-flashlight. Moves to a slide door at the side. Simultaneously the door to the Diner opens releasing a quartet of middle-aged Drunks. He dissolves while they bullshit around. Laughter in chill air. The Comedian of the night keeps himself amused. Jokes about getting into the wrong car with the wrong wife. BERLIN isn't laughing "C'mon, you drunken fuck. Get outta here."

81: INT/EXT. VOLKSWAGEN VAN/CAR PARK. DINER. NIGHT.

A slide door rolls open and BERLIN peers in. Full of furniture and cardboard crates stenciled "TRINITY INSTITUTE - CRAFT DEPT." Worth the try but forget it. This bastard obviously has legitimate business at the institute. Takes a last poke around with the light. Spots something red. A cigarette butt caked in lipstick. But what's this white stuff? Some kind of powder spills from a capsule crushed in the door rails. He picks it up for a look and gets a bad one from behind! "Whatta you doing, Mister?"

BERLIN finds himself facing an irate looking Woman in her 20's. A lot of red hair and freckles. But definitely more frightened than angry. His Police Department badge is an instant sedative. Gives her some crap about thefts from vehicles round here. She should keep her doors locked. She smiles and thought they were.

BERLIN
Got your driver's license?

She hands it across and he inspects it coz that's what cops do.

I noticed you coming outta the institute. You up there a lot?

WOMAN

Oh, it was you that nearly ran into me?

BERLIN

No, it was you that nearly ran into me .. You up there a lot?

WOMAN

I guess, more than usual this time of the year. My mother & I run an Arts & Crafts center, we buy a lot from the institutes ..

BERLIN

Where's your store, Amanda?

WOMAN

Oakland.

Hands the license back and is already heading for his Mercedes.

BERLIN

Next pit-stop, you make sure your doors are locked. Merry Christmas.

82: INT. BATHROOM/LIVING ROOM. APARTMENT. NIGHT.

If there's moonlight that's the only light. Nothing to see but a pair of large taps. Nothing to hear but a bath filling. Then something starts bleeping. It's a liquid-level-indicator activated by rising water. A hand searches for taps. Shuts them off and silences the indicator. The frame expands to reveal HELENA.

She moves to a hand basin. Finds a brush and fixes hair. Finds a clip and pins it up. Close as she kicks off shoes. Pantyhose descend on top of them. Walks into the living room unbuttoning her shirt. Vanishes into the bedroom and the Camera waits. Returns with towels and the Camera follows back into the bathroom.

A creaking hinge as she closes the door. A dressing gown hangs on a hook. She reaches for it and turns and virtually bumps into the Sonovabitch. Dressed in black and stealthy as a cat. He retreats a pace deeper into the darkness. Just enough light to see he wears glasses. And just enough light to see her undress.

HELENA unzips her skirt. Slides it down her lags. Drapes it on

a chair. Removes her shirt and hangs it on the back. She wears a white brassiere and panties. And no apologies for repetition. This is a fantastic body. She checks water temperature. Either too hot or too cold. Either way a tap goes on. Now she reaches behind her back. Unclips her bra. Gets hit with dazzling light.

The Intruder is taking photographs. And if this is his turn-on he's in paradise. She stands in front of him in total oblivion. Her panties join clothes on the chair. Now she's naked and now another picture. Again the bathroom detonates with white light.

His face is concealed by the camera. But this bastard is about to run out of luck. Moves in as she silences the tap. Suddenly a lot of silence about. HELENA twists in panic. She just heard something? Didn't she just hear something? Is somebody in here? Fear kills her scream. She hits at the darkness. But he's gone.

83: INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

Big close on telephone ringing. No one home except the machine and Camera. The former answers on behalf of Berlin [John, it's me .. please call me .. I left two messages at the police station .. they said you weren't there .. please, please, call me]. The camera moves on. Breakfast remains on the table. Newspaper still in its wraps. Out the window a bonfire rages in the yard.

84: EXT. YARD. HOUSE. DAY.

BERLIN clears rubbish from the garage. Grime and sweat and the effort's got him breathless. Heaves another armful on the fire. The phone starts ringing again. This time he decides to answer.

85: INT. CORRIDOR/ADMIN. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN in a hurry to get there. Footsteps tell the story. Fast up a corridor and through a door. Faces look as he crosses the department. SECRETARIES and BISLEY and ROSS. But only one face of interest. TAYLOR turns halfway through lighting a cigarette. "Are you outta your fucken mind?" TAYLOR says nothing. "If anything happens to that girl, I'm gonna break your fucking back."

TAYLOR

Just easy on the words you're
putting in my face, Sergeant ..

ROSS

Whass going on here?

A question practically every expression in the place is asking.

TAYLOR

His blind friend got "attacked."

Angelo went up there, and somehow, it got itself in the paper.

BERLIN

You put it in there.

TAYLOR

I may have said something. I don't recall.

BERLIN

Don't lie, Taylor. I just had this Blattis guy on the phone asking me for a comment - you gave him the whole damned case!

TAYLOR

Alright, I gave him the case? ..
So the case is closed, so what?

His indifference inflames BERLIN. Smashes the newspaper at him.

BERLIN

So read it! You just hung a target around her neck!

TAYLOR

Bullshit.

BERLIN

Don't you know nothing about this guy? He reads the newspapers. Collects the cuttings. When are they gonna find her? Now he's reading Helena Robertson's name, phrased like she's a fucking witness. You couldn't have done anything more stupid if you'd sat down & tried ..

TAYLOR

Hey, c'mon, country boys, let's all line up and hear the expert.

BERLIN

Just walk away from me, Taylor ..

Now the volume is going up. Now the whole department is silent.

TAYLOR

You think you're the only guy ever worked a homicide? I was a big-city cop too. And I bust-

ed the clock on fucken Jennifer.
I know more about this man than
you'll ever know - and that's
how I know it ain't him - you-
're investigating a soap-opera ..

ROSS

Alright, guys. We stop this now.

TAYLOR

He tells her, "bye-bye," and she
gets "attacked." Well, give me a
fucking break! There is no "Ser-
ial Killer." Stick her name up in
neon, there's still no Serial kil-
ler! And I ain't the only one say-
ing it. Everyone in this building
is saying it. And I mean everyone.

"Everyone" means ROSS. BERLIN looks at him. And his gaze hurts.

ROSS

Shut up, King Jay ..

TAYLOR

No, c'mon, Freddy, let's have this
out & over. You know what everyone
thinks? They think you're making a
case coz you found yourself a nice
piece of ass. And no one's blaming
you for it, I hear she's worth the
flowers. But don't come in here get-
ting holy over us. Sure I put it in
the paper. Coz I wanted to stop this
bullshit. I don't want you drunk out-
ta your head searching my office ag-
ain. it's pissing me, & everyone off.

BERLIN

You don't know what you done, Taylor.

TAYLOR

If, your friend from San Diego was
up here, and thought for one out of
two fucken seconds, she was a danger
to him, he'da taken her out weeks ago ..

His cigarette is already stubbed and he's already walking away.

Why don't you get yourself a dict-
ionary? Look up the word "witness?"

BERLIN

I know what a "witness" is.

TAYLOR

Well, her, it ain't. That bitch
is blind as a blonde fucken bat.

A big mistake Mister Taylor. Mister Berlin suddenly turns into Harrison Ford. TAYLOR slams into filing cabinets right next to the Christmas tree. Gets BERLIN's forearm under his throat and fucking lucky not to get the knuckles in his gut. Both men are heaving. No volume necessary in this room of paralyzed silence.

BERLIN

I'm gonna do something you never
did, Taylor. I'm gonna catch this
bastard. And when I do, he's gon-
na find out just how good a "wit-
ness" she is .. Meanwhile, you be
aware of me - coz I wish you ill ..

BERLIN moves away and the silence is brutal. Nothing happening but bad vibes. ROSS and BERLIN exchange glances, And this shit is really bad. BERLIN vanishes into his lab and the door slams.

86: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN and his Dummy wearing a bra and his photographs and his rage are all alone. And that's how they wanna be. But the door opens and here is ROSS. Have to be a friend to survive in here.

BERLIN

Nothing you gotta say do I wanna hear
right now. So save yourself saying it.

ROSS

I'm not in here to apologize, John.
I told you what was gonna happen &
it's happened? "Good-bye, Princess,"
& the same night she gets attacked?
That's a tough one to swallow, Bro?

BERLIN

I'm already familiar with Taylor's
opinion.

ROSS

You don't really believe this?

BERLIN

One hundred fucking per cent! ..
And you know why? Coz I never

told her good-bye. O.K.? Is that good enough for the "committee?"

And as long as you like evaporates before ROSS can speak again.

ROSS

Well .. I didn't know that ..

BERLIN

No .. You didn't know that ..

BERLIN is drinking whisky. Sticks another slug in the cup. Now realizes whose bottle this is. Slams it somewhere on the bench.

Here. You left your booze in here.

ROSS

Who d'you think it was?

Ross gets the kind of smile a smart guy wouldn't give an idiot.

You think it was him?

BERLIN

That's a very stupid question, Ross.

ROSS

I'm asking it.

BERLIN

How the hell do I know who? Some jerk-off. Some peeping-tom prick.

His hand has found the switch-blade. A nasty click as it opens.

.. but definitely not him. This guy's in the trade. He's not gonna stand there looking at her ass, if he's in the room, she's dead ..

BERLIN puts the knife in his Dummy. If she's alive. She's dead.

ROSS

Ease off, John ..

BERLIN

I'm sick of this toy town shit.

ROSS

Everything you say sounds reasonable. But there's also a reasonable explanation for the opposite.

BERLIN

Don't give me that! Not another word! When you had the Fat Lady in there, and I asked you if she was lying, you looked me right in the eyes and said yes. So as far as I was concerned, she's lying. And if the King of fucking England had walked in & told me different, I wouldn't have believed him - because you told me ..

This atmosphere would stretch any friendship to breaking point.

And now I'm telling you. I'm looking you right in the eyes and telling ya, there's a "bad man" out there, and I don't know if he's in the next room, or the next state: and I don't know what his trigger is? But if he reads her name in the newspaper, I believe he'll be inclined to do something about it. I've got a bad feeling. And I been doing this too long to be wrong.

There are tough eyes to look into. And ROSS finally looks away.

ROSS

I dunno what I can do to help you?

BERLIN

I dunno what I'd do with your help. I've gotta take her out of there ..

ROSS

What about Citrine?

BERLIN

Screw Citrine. He can fire me.

87: EXT. LANDSCAPE. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY.

Wide over the countryside. The car is a long way off. A pretty magic looking dawn. Cows on hills and mist in the hollows. The Mercedes finally arrives. Up the track and into the (refurbished) garage. Engine off and little but a sound of singing birds.

88: INT. LIVING ROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

HELENA sits on the sofa. She's a lousy liar and having a tough time with the phone " .. my aunt called twice .. well, soon, I

hope so .. right now, I'm scared to be there .. who? .. just a second .. O.K. .. just a second.. Goodridge wants the number?" She seeks decision from BERLIN who doesn't want him to have it.

HELENA (Phone)

Mr Goodridge? .. I can't find it ..
No .. there's no one here to read
it right now .. Well, yes, I know ..
of course I will .. yes, promise ..
I'll get it and call you tomorrow ..

And that's it except for "Goodbyes." He takes the phone and replaces it. Her expression is a toss up between guilt & anxiety.

I feel really bad about it, coz
they invited me for Christmas ..

BERLIN

Has he got your aunt's address?

HELENA

I don't think so .. He said the
police had been calling .. want-
ed to ask me some more questions ..

BERLIN

Who?

(She doesn't know)

Probably Angelo .. I'll take
care of it .. Don't worry, we-
're gonna find this guy, and
everything'll be O.K. .. O.K.?

Only thing he fails to mention is which guy he's talking about. Anyway the subject is already changed. He notices tapes in her bag. "Would you like me to put your music on?" No, she doesn't want music. O.K. He's gonna light the fire and make them lunch.

99: EXT. WOODSHED. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

BERLIN is splitting logs and HELENA is sitting on a step "watching" him. She's looking almost happy with only worry in the way.

BERLIN

You're looking worried again, Helena?

HELENA

No I'm not.

BERLIN

You're looking more worried now than
when you "decided to stop worrying"?

HELENA

Alright, I'm worried about Christmas.
I wish I hadn't told him I'd be back ..

A log tangents off. BERLIN retrieves it. Tosses it in a barrow.

BERLIN

He'll get over it. I'll roast
us a chicken, O.K. With cand-
les around it. How about that?

A distant owl hoots. She knows he's smiling. She's smiling too.

HELENA

Wouldn't it be better if I cook
it? You said, you can only boil?

90: INT. LIVING ROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The Music is Puccini. Part one/Act two/The Humming Chorus from Madam Butterfly. Giant close of the spinning cassette. The Camera remains close as it explores the room. Candle light & firelight. Along a mantelpiece. Eleven thirty-five on a clock. Two Christmas cards. Several photographs from the happy years. One a picture of Ross & Berlin in uniform. Another features Berlin with his arm around a beautiful young lady with long dark hair. For a moment it could be Helena? But the Camera's already gone.

HELENA cuddles knees in the corner of a sofa. Looks considerably more relaxed. But there's a tension here and both are aware of it. Stifled yawns. She stares at him and BERLIN stares back. A billion people in love have been through this. It's bed-time. [A suggestion of Berlin's bed to be is heaped in pillows/blankets at the end of the couch.] "Come on, I'll take you up there." She finds his hand and stands. The Music follows them upstairs.

91: INT. BEDROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

Moonlight through the windows. They are silhouettes. They want to embrace but in a situation like this a bedroom is the worst place to be. No sound except the Music. And what's anyone supposed to say? This atmosphere is about kissing and nothing more.

Christ hear this Music. A sweet pulse of Puccini. Big close of lips meeting in moonlight. Now in each other's arms. They kiss. And then they're kissing. And nothing else is happening in the whole fucking universe except a telephone just started to ring.

Still ringing. Still kissing. Somebody has got to give in. The phone finally gets answered. The voice at the end isn't expected. But BERLIN sounds pleased to hear it. It seems one problem

got solved. "I gotta tell you, Margie. You are Mrs Santa Claus."

92: INT/EXT. KITCHEN/REAR ENTRANCE. ROSS'S HOUSE. DAY.

Is Ross throwing a party or opening a bar? Crates of booze and stack upon stack of beer. A bit of "where do you want it?" acting from BERLIN as he staggers in with a delivery of Bud. ROSS makes room on a table. Rips a beer out the plastic and pops it.

BERLIN

Can't thank you enough, Ross ..

ROSS

Don't thank me. Thank Margie.

Swallowing beer ROSS exits the back door with BERLIN following.

It's her invitation. And as far as Citrine in concerned, better we keep it like that.

The wagon waits outside with a few crates left to unload, BERLIN heads for his Mercedes with ROSS calling after him. "John. Here." Pulls a six pack from his supplies and throws it across.

There's an old desperado in one of the cells. Why don't you give him this, and tell him happy Christmas from me?

93: INT. BEDROOM. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

The Girls prepare for festivity. They got a full length mirror. A wardrobe of dresses. A menu of shoes, What they do with them in this scene is their affair. Right now MARGIE's holding some blue number in front of HELENA. "It's blue silk. You like blue?"

MARGIE

Not "you" blue. This isn't you.

She slings the dress on the bed. It joins a pile of rehearsals. Moves deeper into her dresses and HELENA appears in the mirror.

HELENA

When did John divorce?

MARGIE

Two or three years ago.

HELENA

What was she like?

MARGIE

Suzanne? Very pretty. She was a semi-professional model. But a policeman's wife she wasn't. So one day, she just packed it and left. And his whole life went straight down the nearest toilet.

HELENA

What does that mean?

MARGIE

You know, he crashed. He just couldn't come to terms with it .. John hates to lose, and he hated losing her .. Every spare minute, he's driving down to San Diego, having a terrible time with her, getting drunk, and driving back .. you just don't believe the amount he drank ..

She pirouettes with black sequins. "What do you think of black?" Evidently not much and MARGIE is getting short of alternatives.

Wait a minute, I just had
the most brilliant idea ..

HELENA

You think he still loves her?

MARGIE

Think he still thinks about her. But not like then. Then was an obsession.

She emerges from the wardrobe with red satin high heeled shoes.

Here .. try these .. if these
fit, we got the perfect dress ..

HELENA

I haven't worn heels since I was 16.
I don't think I could walk in these?

MARGIE

Sure you can. Anyway, parties
are all about standing still ..

HELENA is excited to try them out. The experiment is a success.

I'll go get the dress .. It's kinda
sultry .. I only wore it once, coz
in reality, I can't get away with it ..

HELENA

You think John would like it?

MARGIE

I think John, would love it ...

94: EXT. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The Ross residence looks like an ad for J&B. Warm yellow light from the windows. Holly wreath on the front door. The Mercedes pulls up and BERLIN gets out with his bag and suit on a hanger. A hard wind around the house. He walks inside without knocking.

95: INT. DEN. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The den looks like a little museum. Walls decorated with Civil War memorabilia. One wall occupied by a cabinet of modern guns. ROSS looks like Roy Rogers trying to look like Fred Astaire. A powder blue evening suit. He dumps ice in a barrel full of Budwieser and BERLIN produces a couple of presents. "This is from Helena. And this is from me." The first obviously a music tape. ROSS holds it to his ear. "Sounds like Frank Sinatra?" And the second a bottle of (Ross tears the wrappings off) Chivas Regal!

ROSS

Let's do one of these right now,
then we'll hide the sonovabitch.

But he's already lost BERLIN's attention. MARGIE walks in with HELENA. Jesus what have you done to her? Bright red lipstick & jet black mascara and dress made of blood red sequins. Sexy it is but her it isn't. She looks like one of those big tit dopes from Tennessee. She also looks like 37 million dollars. Christ that smile works with paint. An appraisal comes from ROSS "Wow."

96: INT. LIVING ROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The whole house is going around in a haze of booze and colored lights and laughter. Buddy Holly supplies the music "True Love Ways" and ROSS is a victim of the nostalgia. Dances close with MARGIE. Among the kaleidoscope of passing couples are HELENA & BERLIN. Eyes closed and oblivious of everything but each other.

But someone is staring at them. About forty years old with big hands. Too old for acne but the skin is bad. Got a scar on his cheek like a ladder in a stocking. He continues to stare until the dancers separate. Music ends and he's already in the crowd.

BERLIN arrives with a whisper for MARGIE and next thing HELENA is on her arm heading for the stairs. Obviously a "ladies room" run. Everly Brothers next record up and SERATO appears through the crush. Spots ROSS who wants to know "What happened to you?"

SERATO

Duty Sergeant fucked up .. can
you believe it, I'm on tonight ..

"How long have you got?" "One big drink." And they head for it.

Did you get my message?

BERLIN

No.

SERATO

I left a message on your machine.
It wasn't me calling. Sam around?

This last question to ROSS who delivers a typically large shot.

ROSS

Yeah .. I guess she's in the kit-
chen .. We got a so-called prof-
essional cook out there having a
nervous breakdown over a turkey ..

BERLIN

Are you sure you didn't call?

SERATO

I spoke to old whass-his-name
a couple of times. But not to
her, and I never asked for her ..

ROSS

Her who?

BERLIN

Someone's calling the institute
to talk to Helena. Says he wants
to ask her some more questions ..

SERATO

Not guilty ..

And he pushes off to see his wife. BERLIN looks around worried.

BERLIN

You got a quiet phone somewhere?

ROSS

Hey, John, don't start getting
antsy over this tonight. It may
well have been the local cops?

BERLIN

That's just what I wanna find out.

97: INT. BATHROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

MARGIE fixes HELENA's lips. Big on the lipstick. Another layer of magenta is going on "Are you sure I look O.K." Her question interrupts the Revlon "You're the prettiest girl here by about two hundred per cent." MARGIE moves in again for the lower lip.

MARGIE

How you doing on those shoes?

HELENA

Don't mix very well with beer.

Perhaps she is a tiny bit tipsy? MARGIE smiles and says "Press."

MARGIE

Girl like you should be drinking
chill white wine. Press. All done.

A knock on the door. "Come in" and BOBBY sticks his head inside.

BOBBY

That woman in the kitchen says
if she doesn't get help within
10 seconds, she's gonna resign.

MARGIE

That woman is a disaster ...

She turns to the mirror in exasperation and mends her own face.

Alright, tell her I'm coming. No,
wait a minute, honey. Take Helena
for me, and find John? And don't
let go of her hand until you do ..

INT. LIVING ROOM/DEN. HOUSE. NIGHT.

A pause in the Music amplifies conversation. Bullshit and beer and everyone talking about nothing. BOBBY leads HELENA through the row. Can't find Berlin and now they're in the den. The serious Guzzlers have made it base. Everyone talking and everyone lying but no Berlin and BOBBY is about to make a major mistake.

BOBBY

I'll just go see if he's in the
kitchen .. you stay right here ..

Her protest is absorbed in sound. And anyway he's already gone.

At once she is vulnerable. Doesn't know if she's staring at the back of a head or straight into someone's face. "Didn't we meet somewhere?" The question comes from the man with the scar. He's drunk as a dog and already got a tattooed hand around her waist.

VENABLES

Hey, Popeye!

POPEYE

Hey, Fat Guy! Gimme 2 minutes. I'm about to ask this lady for a dance?

Trash aftershave and lousy breath and clearly the answer is no.

If I told you I'd driven all the way from Oakland would you dance with me?

Willy Nelson starts to sing. And HELENA attempts to break away.

What's so special about the other guy?
You like cops, don't you .. I'm a cop ..

HELENA finds the top of a couch. Holds it like a raft of security. But where ever she goes this frightful mouth is following.

.. let me ask you a question? How do you know the difference between one guy and another? .. Maybe you don't .. Maybe you only know the "difference" when you're dancing? (he laughs) If you knew what I looked like, you'd dance with me. I look like John Wayne ..

HELENA

I know what you look like. Excuse me.

She navigates the back of the sofa. Collides with somebody and apologizes. "I'm sorry. Is anyone sitting there?" Enough ambivalence in the question for the guy not to know she's blind. No. No one sitting there. Simultaneously a pair of middle-age crew cuts occupy the sofa. A second later HELENA sits bang into one of the laps. Spilt drinks and surprise all round. Pleasant surprise for the victim. He's a lecherous looking old bastard and Helena's dress rides up for a damned good view of the lingerie.

FLESHY VOICE

Happy Christmas, Max ...

MAX

I normally get socks ...

Every humiliation there is. However HELENA gets out of this is

however she achieves it. But by the time she does she's crying.

99: INT. HALLWAY/STAIRS. HOUSE. NIGHT.

A calm spot between kitchen & stairs. In the background Guests raid the kitchen for food. BERLIN looks like he should be smoking a cigarette. At last MARGIE comes downstairs with the news.

MARGIE

She wants to go back
to the institute ..

ROSS already arrived. BERLIN looks desolate. She can't go back.

You better go talk to her ..

ROSS watches him walk upstairs. His eyes an assessment of this absurd relationship. "All sorts of people fall in love, Darlin."

ROSS

I know .. ain't it a shame ..

100: INT. BEDROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

A wedge of light as BERLIN walks in. Then moonlight again. HELENA sits at the edge of a single bed. Hair a wreck and mascara streaks down her face. He sits identifying himself with an embrace. Clears the hair from her eyes and kisses where the tears were. "It was an accident .. everyone has accidents." Whatever he said would be the wrong thing to say. Because he doesn't understand. And her only explanation of this misery is new tears.

HELENA

I can't walk in these shoes ..

Gently he reaches down and takes off her shoes "You don't have to dress like this for me." And suddenly the mood is different. He is amongst her tears. Kissing her mouth. Already undressing her. Her dress glides up. Silk stockings. He unclips them. She feels his hands drift down her legs. Hears the zip opening her dress. She returns his desire and helps him with her brassiere. He kisses her breasts and by now the Camera's too close to see.

101: INT. BEDROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

HELENA asleep in BERLIN's arms. Just the worry of the wind. He kisses her and slips out of bed and everything slams into MASSIVE CLOSE-UP. PLUS A MASSIVE AMPLIFICATION OF SOUND. THE SLIDE SNAPS BACK ON A 9 MILL BERETTA. THE MAGAZINE SHUNTS OUT. SLUGS LOADED AND MAG BACK IN. THE SLIDE TRAVELS FORWARD BIG AS A CAR.

BERLIN is fully dressed. Geared up for work. Black leather glo-

ves and black leather jacket. Shoves the Beretta into his belt. From somewhere a very soft sound of Christmas carols drifts in.

102: INT. STAIRS/LIVING ROOM/DEN. HOUSE. NIGHT.

This is deep past midnight, The house is quiet and gone to bed. Fallout from the party everywhere. Still that distant sound of carols. BERLIN dumps his bag and walks into the den. Just darkness and the forgotten tape machine. Flips on a lamp and tries to open the gun cabinet. Still trying when startled by a voice.

ROSS (O.S.)
You can't get in there ..
That's "Comanche Proof."

BERLIN swings round in surprise. ROSS is half asleep on a sofa.

BERLIN
Jesus. What are you doin'?

ROSS
I spose I'm drinking myself to
sleep. It's Helena's Christmas
songs .. they're really pretty ..

"Silent Night. Holy Night" and about two inches of Chivas left.

BERLIN
Have you got any Glasers?
(Ross does)
Twenty fives?

BERLIN sticks a foot on a table. Pulls a .25 Walther automatic from an ankle holster. Ejects the mag and clicks out the slugs.

ROSS
What exactly you doing, John?

BERLIN
I'm going up to the institute.

ROSS
Now?

BERLIN
This "cop" that's calling, thinks
she gonna be there over Christmas.

ROSS unlocks a cabinet and BERLIN is about to load the Glasers.

I checked with the locals and our
station, no one's called. Whoever

it is, isn't the police. I think this bastard's getting worried about something? .. and I think there's just a chance he'll turn up.

ROSS

Well, let's hope he does ..

ROSS selects a 12 gauge Winchester and rams the mechanism open.

And if he does, I'm gonna drop a bomb on the fucker.

BERLIN

Listen, you don't havta come?

ROSS

Hey ..

ROSS is stuffing solid lead "car killers" into the pump action.

Watch my lips. I'm your partner.

103: EXT. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

This is probably a crane shot. A gale works up the valley. The institute is in total darkness. Not a vehicle out front. Not a sound except the marauding wind. Ross's Chevrolet is concealed amongst trees. Been here long enough to allow slow flurries to accumulate. It stares towards the building maybe 75 yards away.

104: INT. CHEVROLET SEDAN. NIGHT.

BERLIN wears a black wool hat. ROSS a big black overcoat. Both got shit frozen out of them. A bottle available and anyone who wants a slug better help himself. Plus sleet on the windshield and a lot of stale time. BERLIN asks what time it is? And ROSS takes a heave on the booze and waits for about a week to go by.

ROSS

Where's your watch?

BERLIN

I guess by the bed.

ROSS

It's twenty of three.

Yawns do a circuit. ROSS flops in his seat and the angle changes. The view from the rear covers windscreen and back of heads.

A little young for you, Bro?

(Gets his eyes)

You think if she could see,
she'd be hanging around with
an old dog like you? You got
a stomach growing around to
meet itself behind your back.

BERLIN

Bull shit .. I'm in my prime ..

ROSS

Bits.

BERLIN

What d'you mean, "bits."

A star-light on the windshield. Distant and nobody seen it yet.

ROSS

Policemen's bodies age at different rates. Look at me. Gut in its fifties. Balls in their sixties. And feet in their eighties ..

BERLIN

Hit those wipers, Ross.

Urgency snaps him into close-up. Big noise as wipers clear the screen. "I thought I saw a light?" BERLIN stares at the institute through small binoculars. "There. Flashlight went right across those windows!" Instant excitement as the adrenalin pumps in. "Fourth floor. See it? He's fucken in there!" And suddenly everything including super-sinister Music is happening at once.

105: EXT. CHEVROLET. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Pines singing as the gale tears into them. Clutching his Winchester ROSS opens the trunk. A dim light and a fluster of equipment. BERLIN sorts out a pair of radios. Selects a channel and ROSS whispers "What are you on?" ("local Tac.") Here come huge 12 cell flashlights and the intense whispers continue. "Local?"

ROSS

What if we need a back up?

BERLIN

We're not here. I don't
want the desk to hear us ..

O.K. it's channel 4 and copy? And they're already on their way.

106: EXT. BACK OF BUILDING. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

The storm bullies its way around the building. Lights approach quickly. But one of them is already fading. It belongs to ROSS. This fucker's got about 5 minutes in it. And whatever the plan was it just got changed. BERLIN looks around in apprehension - going in there alone ain't no joy - his flashlight ascends the fire escape. And there it is 2 floors up. A half opened window.

BERLIN

Alright. I'll start at the top, and work down.

ROSS

You ain't going in alone?

BERLIN

That's a liability, Ross. I don't want you hanging on to my shirt. Anyone but me comes down these stairs, take em out but try and keep him alive. I want this bastard living ..

Takes off up the stairs. ROSS watches him vanish. (Waiting out here ain't so tasty either.) The wind rages in nearby trees. A door slams repeatedly somewhere a long way away. [Ross?] "10/2" [I'm going in.] Big on ROSS and the radio. "You take care, Bro."

107: INT. REAR STAIRWELL. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

BERLIN climbs through the window. Drops down and waits to orientate himself. He's on a small landing midway between flights of stairs. Different kinds of noises in here. One hundred per cent more sinister. "Ross. Ross? You hearing me?" [10/2]. "I'm going upstairs." Snaps the safety-catch on his Beretta. And it sounds ominous. Every shadow in this place is animated with foreboding.

108: INT. STAIRWELL/CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Looking down the stairwell. The light comes up. BERLIN arrives on another floor. Hard to sweat in here but he's doing it. His progress is distinctly cautious. A harsh wind rockets down the stairs flapping a pair of owing doors. BERLIN eases through into the corridor. At its far end is the elevator. He travels towards it in an eerie piston of light. [John? What's happening?]

109: EXT. REAR OF INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

ROSS has moved into the shelter of a wall. Sleet passes almost horizontally. His flashlight is over. The color of a tangerine.

ROSS [BERLIN]

[I'm on Helena's floor .. I'm just gonna take a look at her apartment .. You O.K.] Fucken flashlight's kaput .. [Door's locked .. shit] What's happening, Brother? [I can hear something? .. Something upstairs?]

110: INT. CORRIDOR. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

BERLIN stares up at the coiling "I can hear footsteps .. right up above?" They disappear into the gale. Doors beat at the end of the corridor. He moves towards them and pushes out onto the stairway. Nothing but the wind. He's about to climb when an alarming voice shocks him rigid. "YOU ARE NOW ON THE THIRD FLOOR."

BERLIN is already running. Light swinging wildly as he sprints back up the corridor. Fifteen yards to elevator/stairs. Breathless as hell he hits the radio. "Fucker's in the elevator." Almost jumps stairs in haste. Bursts out onto the 3rd floor. Hammer back on the Beretta. Just in time to see the doors closing.

"Get ready, Ross. He maybe coming down." But he isn't. He's going up. By the time he's recovered breath the Voice is back in business. Whoever rides the elevator is now on the fifth floor.

111: INT. STAIRWELL. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Totally breathless now. Eyes ascend faster than feet. Whine of a swinging door. BERLIN rounds the stairwell. The door's still busy. Top of the building here and the ceilings are closing in.

BERLIN'S P.O.V. as he heads for that door. Closer. Three steps to go. Closer. Two steps more. One step. Reaches for it. Whamm! The door smashes into him like it hates him. So fast it hardly happened. He staggers back. His flashlight clatters downstairs.

Banisters capsize as the light passes. Every shadow goes crazy. The flashlight arrives at a lower level. Rolls away and stops. Wastes power into a corner. Can't see Berlin and can't see his radio. But Ross cuts into the silence with increasing disquiet.

[John? John? Are you alright? .. Come in, John?]

112: EXT. REAR OF INSTITUTE/FIRE ESCAPE. NIGHT.

ROSS savaged by the gale. In considerable anxiety. Less than a volt in his batteries. His failure to contact Berlin accelerates his concern by the moment. Calls repeatedly "You hearing me?"

Big close on the radio. Fingers switch channels. Tries calling

on five/six. Still nothing and goes to channel eight. "Come in, John?" Alright fuck it. Light or no light. He's going up there. Still calling he barges at the wind making for the fire escape.

[You hear me? Just be careful now, coz I'm coming up]

Stares up into the gloom of the iron stairs. Hardly got a foot on the first before a Figure rushes down. Dressed in black and very breathless. A powerful flashlight floods on dazzling ROSS.

Is that you, John? .. Answer. NOW .. Or I blow this fucken staircase to pieces.

BERLIN [?]

Me, Freddy.

Thank Jesus the anxiety's over. The 12 gauge drops to his side.

ROSS

What the hell's going on up there, Brother? I been calling 10 minutes.

The light remains steady and blinding and straight in his face.

Hey, c'mon, John .. Talk to me ...

Just the sound of breathlessness. Plus a .25 Walther automatic.

Jesus Christ .. What are you doing?

It glints at the peripheries of his vision and ROSS is alarmed.

What the fuck are you doing? - It's me - Holy shit! - John - John - Not you - Don't shoot you crazy bastard!

Two deathly flashes in quick succession. The first practically taken Ross's hand off. The second slams into his guts and he's down. The Glaser is unequalled in ferocity by any other bullet.

113: EXT. FIRE ESCAPE (ATTIC LEVEL). INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

The MYOPIC JANITOR looks down. Five floors below a man lays on his back. His shotgun discharges uselessly into trees. Another man leans over him. Illuminates his agonized face with a flashlight. Shoots him again point-blank in the upper body. The MYOPIC isn't staying for more. Hurries back along the fire escape.

114: INT. ATTIC APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Wind breaks on the roof like waves. An utterly dismal room lit by a starving light bulb. The MYOPIC arrives from the fire escape. Huge eyes behind those orb-like glasses. Picks up a phone and dials. Piles and piles of old newspapers. Hundreds of fuck magazines. In the kitchen section a mass of photographic equipment includes an enlarger on the table a flash camera. On the wall behind him a collage of snaps of half dressed girls. Plus a special enlargement of Helena standing naked in her bathroom.

MYOPIC

Gimme the police. Quickly.

115: EXT. REAR OF INSTITUTE. FIRE ESCAPE. NIGHT.

Close on a bulb in a flashlight. The merest glimmer of energy. Barely the light to see the blood. It seeps into a long-frozen footprint in the ice. Fills it fast and expands over the sides.

Somebody say this can't be happening? BERLIN crumples to knees in the snow. Dumps his light gasping for breath. Oblique light creating desperate silhouettes. BERLIN howls like a dog. Howls into his radio. "Nine - Nine - Nine." Blood all over his hands.

"This is a Nine - Nine - Nine - officer down." ROSS is heaving like an old bull elephant. On the verge of unconsciousness. He tries to speak. Got hit in the throat. BERLIN fights off tears.

"Don't talk old man." Repeats the emergency code but this time he can't be heard. Almost imperceptibly a Carol filters in (In The Bleak Mid Winter) and the Camera moves slowly away. BERLIN cradles ROSS's tragic head and the song drowns the raging wind.

This beautiful Christmas carol will articulate rhythm of these cuts. And there will be no other sound until the sequence ends.

116: EXT. CITY STREET. CITY HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

A blue emergency light. Revolving in slow motion. Like a dream. The city streets are a blur. The light accelerates into sudden reality. Ambulance plus police convoy speed to a city hospital.

117: INT. EMERGENCY ROOM. HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

Close-up of MARGIE kissing her husband's lips for the last time. Tears spill down his cheeks from her eyes. FREDDY ROSS is dead.

118: INT. WAITING AREA. HOSPITAL. NIGHT.

Outside in the corridor. Looking in at BERLIN. He sits head in hands on a bench. This is somebody's point of view. The camera travels up the windows. Waits at a distance as CITRINE arrives. Pajamas under his clothes. He walks with assistance of a stick.

Neither say anything because both know what this is about. BERLIN stands and hands over his badge. Exits the mag and now his Beretta. A brief word from CITRINE and he turns and walks away.

119: EXT. LANDSCAPE. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAWN.

A little house in winter meadows. Kind of pretty now it's painted. Just the first tint of pink on its roof. The Carol dissolves into birdsong. Here comes the sun for a fine Christmas day.

120: EXT. VERANDA. HOUSE. DAWN.

All new paint and all new things in expectation of happy times. A barbecue still in polythene wraps. Price tag and unconnected gas pipe shift gently in the breeze. A brand new swinging seat.

BERLIN sits in it with shock wearing on. Expressionless of sorrow. Though he suffers every sorrow and guilt and regret there is. Sunlight reaches the veranda and colors the end of it red. silent and motionless he watches the lousiest dawn of his life.

121: EXT/INT. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Lights glow on the Christmas tree. Unopened presents still underneath. SERATO sits smoking in silence. Listens to a sound of plates getting stacked in another room. He looks up but not in surprise. He just wasn't aware BERLIN had arrived in the house.

BERLIN
Where's Margie?

Stunned and studdled and full of grief. And that's just SERATO.

SERATO
Taken Bobby to her sister's ..

This atmosphere is unbearable and even these whispers seem loud.

They were going there anyway.

BERLIN
Does he know?

SERATO shakes his head. Loses his cigarette. And SAMMY appears.

SERATO
Thinks his dad's in hospital.

SAMMY SERATO is 30 and pretty. She continues collecting plates.

Why'd you go up there, John?

Knows he's not going to get a reply and doesn't bother to wait for it. HELENA materializes from the den like a shadow. Sallow for want of sleep and glad to have BERLIN's hand to hang on to.

BERLIN

I want you to go to your Aunt's.

A suggestion that surprises HELENA. And clearly doesn't appeal.

HELENA

Why can't I stay with you?

BERLIN

It's not possible right now.

HELENA

Why?

BERLIN

Please don't ask no questions now .. Not right now ..

If silence can intensify it's now. Sound of the front door and then footsteps. BERLIN freezes as MARGIE appears. Wracked with grief. Dead sickness of tears. Like she cried bones out of her face. But no weeping now. Maybe shock. Maybe brave. Maybe both.

HELENA

Is that Margie?

MARGIE

I'm here, honey. I'm right here.

The strongest face in the house. And now HELENA is in her arms.

Don't cry darlin .. he was a big old cop and he didn't like tears ..

Dead echos of plates in the kitchen. And song of birds outside.

Feels like every second in my life, was just the moment leading to this.

BERLIN

Margie ..

MARGIE

Don't.

Raises her hand to silence him and this is silence Margie owns.

Don't.

Christ this is just awful. HELENA crying and BERLIN on the way.

What's gonna happen now, John?

BERLIN

She has an aunt, in Vermont.
I'll take her there tonight.

HELENA

I'm going back to the institute.

BERLIN

No .. not now ..

MARGIE

Helena can stay here if she'd like
to .. I'd like her to .. I'll look
after her .. and she can look after
me .. I'm tired now .. I must sleep ..

Footsteps again as she walks out and silence again like before.

122: INT. BEDROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

The Camera will slowly crane down on BERLIN. Fully dressed but wiped out he lays an the bad. Last thing he needs is booze. He is clearly full of it. Drifting in and out of consciousness. A nightmare either side of the line. He relives that night again. And Ross is alive again as guilt and regret demand to be heard.

(ROSS)

You want me to make a prediction? This guy ain't turning up.

(BERLIN)

Maybe not .. What time is it?

(ROSS)

Twenty-six minutes past two ..

(BERLIN)

You shouldn't have come, Ross.

(ROSS)

Don't worry .. You take your
time .. I just wanna be back
in time for Bobby's presents ..

A memory that is too terrible to bear. BERLIN gets up and sits at the edge of the bad. Head in hands. Wants the pain to go aw-

ay. But anguish is stronger than alcohol. Hears noises outside and makes it to a window. Tears curtains back revealing lights. His Mercedes hangs in space as though staring into the bedroom.

123: EXT. FRONT YARD. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The Mercedes descends onto a low-loader courtesy of a car lifting truck. BERLIN out of his door. Almost too ruined to appreciate what's happening. Crane lights and flashlights and chains getting tightened. Couple of Strangers and a Kid he recognizes.

BERLIN

What are you doing, Travis?

TRAVIS

I been told to take your car in, Sir.

BERLIN

Why?

TRAVIS

I dunno, Sir. Brought you up a Chevy.

Flashes his light at a standard issue (brown) police Chevrolet.

I'm sorry, Sergeant. I did knock a couple times. Didn't get any reply.

BERLIN

You got a warrant for this?

TRAVIS

Yes, Sir.

BERLIN

Who sought the warrant?

TRAVIS

The man from the F.B.I.

124: INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The man from the F.B.I. is 50. Black suit and wing tips. All F.B.I. Investigators are either lawyers or accountants. And this fellow looks like both. When he smiles it's a decaffeinated exercise. Bothers nothing but lips. This smile's always the same.

BERLIN

I want a 24 hour protection of Margie's house. Otherwise I'm not saying nothing. You give me that, or read me my

rights, and talk to a lawyer.

BERLIN looks awful. Showered and shaved but just fucking awful. CITRINE slips focus to the man. And St ANNE imperceptibly nods.

CITRINE

Alright, you got it. And I'll be putting an Observer in with you.

BERLIN

I want Serato ..

(Negative)

Why can't I have Serato?

CITRINE

Coz I'm short of men & Angelo won't do it .. Who ever I got free first - you get ..

125: INT. ANTI ROOM/INTERROGATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

Close on a pair of dancing needles. They react to voice-levels on a twin spool tape recorder. But no sound of yakking in here. St Anne's ASSISTANT sucks a pencil. Busy with a cross-word puzzle. Fills in a word but the Camera isn't interested. It moves away to discover head phones. And moves closer to hear St ANNE.

[Always figured I'd like to retire to a little town like this - maybe buy a boat even, do some fishing?]

126: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

A change of chairs. A wood chair for the subject. Mobile chair for the man. Castors give him considerable freedom. Enable him to back off or move in with the intimacy of an ophthalmologist.

St ANNE

You fish, John?

BERLIN

I have done ..

A side table features several pin sharp pencils. A Sony pocket recorder. Two packets of Pall Mall reds. Two yellow legal pads. The chair moves into reverse and he breaks a puke colored file.

St ANNE

Alright, let's not beat about the bush, what ever that may mean, and get down on it. You were specifically instructed by your chief, not

to go anywhere near the blind institute? So why did you go up there?

BERLIN

Because of a feeling. I had a bad feeling this man was gonna turn up.

St ANNE

Which man is that?

BERLIN

The man I detail in my report, Sir.

The report that's in his hands. (St Anne knows well which man.)

Is this an interview, or an interrogation?

St ANNE

It's an enquiry ...

BERLIN

I'm not prepared to be interrogated. I'll be interviewed as an officer, who may be expected to cooperate with the investigator.

St ANNE

Well, that's fine by me, John. And I'm sure that's fine by your Chief.

He smiles the non-smile. Tosses his pencil down. And sits back.

So you thought your man might show?

BERLIN

Yes.

St ANNE

Bit of a long-shot, wasn't it?

BERLIN

It was the only shot I had ..

St ANNE

So the one night you decide to go up there, he goes up there?

BERLIN

That's right. Except I'd decided to go up there every night ..

St ANNE
Despite the wishes of your Chief?

BERLIN
Yes.

St ANNE
You were prepared to falsify your reports to him?

BERLIN
I had very good reasons for do....

St ANNE
Just a second, John. I knew there was something missing.

St ANNE cuts him off to pick up the phone. Obviously something vital is needed. "Could you bring an ashtray in here? Got a coupla guys who smoke in here." And attention back to the file.

You don't mind if I jump around a little this morning, do you? Just while I'm easing my way into this?

BERLIN
You're asking the questions, Sir ..

St ANNE
You had an argument with Ross? Assaulted one of the officers, right?

BERLIN
I wouldn't use the word "assault."

St ANNE
You got a "racy temper," Sergeant?

BERLIN
Not especially.

St ANNE
Just something they did, on this occasion, made you lose your rag?

BERLIN
Not they. He. Taylor put a piece in the newspaper, which in my opinion put my witness in jeopardy.

St ANNE
From whom?

BERLIN

From the man I detail in my report. A crazy man, who to my certain knowledge has killed at least eight girls. Six in San Diego, one someplace else, and one up here ..

St ANNE

Not a lotta support for that "scenario" though, is there?

BERLIN

Not a lot.

St ANNE

Not even from Ross?

BERLIN

No.

St ANNE

Is that why you lost your temper with him? Frustration? No one believing you?

His ASSISTANT brings the ashtray. And St ANNE smiles gratitude.

So what can you tell me about you man?

BERLIN

What do you mean, Sir?

St ANNE

I mean, who is he?

BERLIN

I don't know who he is. Who's "Jack The Ripper?" He's Jack The Ripper with an automobile.

St ANNE

You didn't run a profile?

BERLIN

No, Sir .. I didn't have the resources, and it isn't my expertise.

St ANNE

This crazy man? What makes you think he wants to eliminate Miss Robertson?

BERLIN

You read my report, Sir.

St ANNE

I'm asking a question ..

BERLIN

Because he reads I'm investigating the disappearance of her friend, & Miss Robertson becomes the focus of his anxiety. How good of a "witness" is she? He's crazy, but not stupid, he's intelligent. Got a flexible M. O., and he doesn't wanna get caught.

St ANNE

Just like "Jack The Ripper?"

This is meant to humiliate and meant to annoy and it does both.

Alright, we'll have plenty of time to discuss your "Mystery Man," and his "flexibility" later, Right now, I'd like to talk about the "event."

127: INT. ANTI ROOM/INTERROGATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

CITRINE rests on his cane staring through the one-way glass. A menu of anxieties. But perhaps sadness is his principal expression. His eyes slide to the ASSISTANT "Can you turn that thing on?" Glad to oblige and Voices cut in. This is CITRINE'S P.O.V.

St ANNE [BERLIN]

Alright, the door comes back and hits you? Knocks you down? Knocks you out? For how long? [I don't know] Approximately, you figure? A minute? [O.K.] O.K. then what happened? Immediately you get up?

128: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN

I realized the flashlight was at the bottom of the stairs

St ANNE

Did you check your weapon?

BERLIN

Maybe. It would have been instinctive. All I know was I was in possession of it ..

St ANNE
You didn't check it?

BERLIN
Not that I specifically remember.

St ANNE
Why not?

BERLIN
I don't know. I wasn't thinking about it .. I was dazed ..

St ANNE
You were woozy? Confused?

BERLIN
I was unconscious 10 seconds ago.

St ANNE
I understand. Then?

BERLIN
Then I picked up the flashlight, tried to get Ross on the radio .. Nothing. Static. I got blood on my hand, realized my eye was cut.

St ANNE
Could you see out of it?

BERLIN
Yeah, I could see. Then I ran. Climbed out of the window, ran down the fire escape, and right at the bottom, I found Ross ..

St ANNE
Were you breathless?

BERLIN
Sure I was breathless ...

St ANNE
When did you realize you were no longer in possession of the .25?

BERLIN
Not until I was in the hospital.

St ANNE

You figure you lost it in the hospital? Or on the way there?

BERLIN

No, I thought it must have fallen down the stairwell.

St ANNE [BERLIN]

Like the flashlight? [Yeah] Had you been drinking that night?

BERLIN

It was Christmas Eve.

St ANNE

That wasn't my question?

BERLIN

Yes.

St ANNE [BERLIN]

How about Ross? [Sure] Were you drinking in the car? [?] There was a bottle in the car?

BERLIN

I think Ross had a mouthful?

St ANNE

But not you?

BERLIN

I may have had a nip?

St ANNE

To keep out the cold? .. Very cold that night, very windy, wasn't it?

St ANNE motors off & refers to notes without looking at BERLIN.

Which hand was the flashlight in?

BERLIN

My left hand.

St ANNE

And the Walther was in your right?

BERLIN

The Beretta was in my right hand ..

St ANNE

You said you didn't check it? So how
d'you know which gun you're holding?

The chair moves back in and its pilot has an icicle up his ass.

You said you figured it had fallen
down the stairs with the flashlight?
You said you were confused? You pick
up the flashlight in confusion, how
d'you know you didn't pick up the 25?

BERLIN

Let's not start playing games, Mr St Anne.

St ANNE

Games?

BERLIN

I told you, I'd lost the Walther ..

St ANNE

You told me you didn't know you'd
lost it until you were in the hos-
pital? So, if you didn't know till
then, it coulda been either weapon?

BERLIN

The gun in my hand was a Beretta.
And for the record, I want that
note corrected. Now, please, Sir.

The dead smile and rubber in action. St ANNE changes his notes.

St ANNE

O.K. I'm corrected. I'm
sorry, I made a mistake.

BERLIN

With respect, Sir, you didn't make
a mistake. I know who you are, and
you're far too experienced for mis-
takes. Now if you have doubts over
the content, or veracity of my rep-
ort, I wanna be made aware of them?

St ANNE

Sure.

BERLIN

I wanna be made aware of them now.

St ANNE

Do you want a lawyer, Sergeant?

BERLIN

There you go again? "Do I want a lawyer, Sergeant?" It's a game question. What do I want a lawyer for? I got nothing to hide ..

St ANNE

You don't?

BERLIN

You know I don't. So let's quit the bullshit and get down to it. What's your "angle," Mr St Anne?

For the first time St ANNE moves his chair into BERLIN's space.

St ANNE

Where's the little gun, Sergeant?

BERLIN

I've no idea.

St ANNE

You don't?

BERLIN

If it isn't in the institute, the man who shot Ross took it.

St ANNE

The man who shot Ross, used it ..

Implications are ganging up quicker than BERLIN can focus them.

And you don't know where that little twenty-five calibre Walther's gone?

BERLIN confirms it. Looking very concerned. The wheels retreat. St ANNE shakes out a cigarette and takes his time with matches.

O.K. Sergeant, here it is. I intend to produce evidence, that will prove you shot Frederick Ross with malice aforethought. My angle therefore, is to prepare a case on behalf of your Chief, to prosecute you for first degree murder.

129: INT. ADMINISTRATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The lights on the Christmas tree are off. That just about sums

it up. The word's out and it talks in barren silence as BERLIN appears. TAYLOR and SERATO in conference at a desk. The former looks. The latter turns away. BERLIN walks the room into close-up. "Like some coffee, John?" Seems like ANN is the only benevolent face around. She gets a lost smile & bewildered shake of his head. Disappears into his room And quietly closes the door.

130: INT. CRIME LAB. POLICE STATION. DAY.

A picture of Ross fills the frame. Snapped the day they searched the dump. Blasted with rain. A waterproof cape and a finger raised in defiance. BERLIN shifts eyes from the bulletin board. Pours a last inch of whisky and drinks. Eyes back to the board for a last photographic/panoramic record of his time in Eureka.

The photo of Ross again before his eyes sweep quickly on. Picture of Amber Stone. Thumb tacks and maps and tape. Information relating to specific areas in San Diego. Carlsbad/Ocean Beach/Point Loma. "Jennifer Seven" "Jennifer Eight." But who gives a fuck anymore? Two dead dogs on a refuse dump. And now the dead face of a Dummy. BERLIN stares till someone knocks on the door. St ANNE comes in smoking a cigarette and eating a ham sandwich.

St ANNE

You go home, John, get some sleep.
I don't wanna talk any more today.

BERLIN

Aren't you gonna arrest me?

St ANNE

You know better than that ...

He will exit when he stops speaking. Before he does he wanders the lab showing particular interest in the Dummy of Jennifer 8.

I arrest you, you'll get bail, and
be walking outta here anyway - and
I'll have no one to talk to - Your
Chief said he'd make you available
to me. If you go to the store, call
in, and let your duty officer know.

131: INT. BOBBY'S BEDROOM. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. NIGHT.

BOBBY is in hysterics. A gale of tears. Fits his words between them. His Mom does her best to cope with his grief and her own.

MARGIE

Your Daddy would have wanted
you to be strong .. We gotta
be strong for Daddy, darling ..

BOBBY

I don't want her in this house ..
I want my Dad. Why did she have
to come here .. I want my Daddy ..

132: INT. KITCHEN. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

Fingers search out and identify phone numbers. Dial for information and HELENA whispers "I need the number for a cab, please."

133: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The Camera's getting closer and so is St ANNE. And today there is a definite change of mood. Still very measured. Still a professional demeanor. But a bad sense of shit about to come down.

St ANNE

.. there was a gale that night .. all the doors are swinging .. so this door swings back and clips you .. and down you go .. within 35 seconds of unconsciousness, you're back on the fire escape, and you're confused, really confused .. you don't know if Tuesdays come in two's or happen once a week ..

Bit of a cold coming on and near enough for BERLIN to catch it.

You see a figure coming up the stairs. Ross ain't meant to be on the stairs? He challenges you .. and this ain't a piece of wood with a nail through it .. this guy's got a 12 gauge Winchester up your nose .. and he's drunk .. and you're dizzy .. and your eye's fulla blood .. you ain't thinking good, and you're seeing worse .. Wow! .. it just went off! .. You just put him down? .. and you get hit by a Glaser, you stay down .. But he ain't dead .. Now, you realize you shot your partner .. "Oh, Suzanna, how do I get outta this?" I know .. The "Serial Killer" shot him .. And here comes the malice, John .. 17 seconds later, you put another one in his throat .. Isn't that what happened?

BERLIN

No.

St ANNE

Tell us what happened, then?

BERLIN

I already told you what happened ..
You're looking for an inconsistency,
and you're not gonna find one,
because I'm telling you the truth.

St ANNE

Tell me the truth again.

134: EXT. TRACK/FRONT YARD. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

A yellow cab splashes through puddles and pulls up in front of the house. HELENA gets out and pays. No she doesn't need assistance. Picks up her suitcase and the cab vanishes into drizzle.

135: INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

Back door opens and HELENA walks in. First thing she senses is cold. This place smells like it hasn't been lived in since she was last here. And last time she was here she was happy. Dumps her case and heads for the living room. Can't see it but feels the overwhelming gloom. Finds a couch and now she sits to wait.

The silence is almost total. But something disturbs it. HELENA looks around. Back on her feet she tries to discover source of the sound. Finally arrives at a table lamp. She feels the bulb and it's hot. A large moth beats itself crazy inside the shade. Reaches in and turns it off & the house is in virtual darkness.

136: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

St ANNE lights a cigarette. Attention with his notes. Sniffing a fair bit. He's acquired a toilet roll to deal with it. Occasionally will tear a sheet or two off to blow his nose. Glances at BERLIN "You want a cigarette?" No he doesn't "I've given up."

St ANNE

You have? .. How about the booze? ..

How does St ANNE know? Perhaps he doesn't? Sounds like he does.

Too much booze can be very dangerous ..
memory black outs .. stuff like that ..

His attention still with notes like a quack about to prescribe.

"The Man Takes a Drink, Then the Drink
Takes a Drink, Then the Drink Takes
the Man?" .. Something like that, isn't
it? .. Anyway .. why did you give up?

BERLIN

I guess I was drinking too much.

St ANNE

I was talking about "cigarettes?"

(Score: 10 outta 10)

Find yourself getting breathless?

BERLIN

Sure.

St ANNE

Specially if you're running? Which

floor did the elevator run up to?

BERLIN

Five.

St ANNE

You ran up to the fifth? You must

have been real breathless by then?

BERLIN doesn't know where this is going but he doesn't like it. Eyes to BERLIN now and his smile looks real for the first time.

We're gonna get our "observer" in here this afternoon. Keep an eye on us? (He smiles) Notorious for withholding information, the F.B.I.

St ANNE makes a note. Junks the pencil. Sits back in his chair.

Were you aware there was a janitor in the institute that night?

BERLIN

No.

St ANNE

You didn't check?

BERLIN

There wasn't time ...

St ANNE

That wasn't my question?

BERLIN

No, Sir, I didn't check.

St ANNE breaks off to blow his nose. BERLIN looks very worried.

St ANNE

I'm really catching cold up here? Must be all this fog?

BERLIN

What's the relevance of the janitor?

St ANNE

The janitor? Let me just ask you a question - before I forget - do you take any medication for that?

BERLIN

For what?

St ANNE

Breathlessness?

BERLIN

No.

St ANNE

Alright, let me answer your question?
"What's the relevance of the janitor?"

Hits the cigarette like this is the one that caused the cancer.

Why don't I take you through it, from where I'm sitting .. At some time between 2 & 2:30 a.m. the janitor thought he heard a vehicle approaching through the woods. He looks out, and sees nothing, no lights, nothing. Figures it must be hunters. Some time later, he thought he heard something else, like a door, or a window slam? He gets up, and between half past two and a quarter of three, he makes a search - with a flashlight - of the top 3 floors. Finds nothing untoward, & goes back to his apartment in the roof.

BERLIN looks grey as sick. Knows what's coming. And here it is.

The flashlight you saw, was his. The "footsteps" you heard, were his. The elevator you were chasing up and down after was empty, and is prone to such activity, due to an electrical fault .. Apparently it happens frequently during gales. The gale that was swinging the door. That knocked you down. That

confused you so much? And here we are,
back to where I'm sitting. You wanna
tell me what really went on that night?

It seems St ANNE has effectively destroyed the "Serial Killer"
scenario. Stubs his cigarette and waits for BERLIN's response.

BERLIN

Two people know I didn't kill
him, Mr St Anne. One's me, and
the other's the man that did.

St ANNE

What man?

St ANNE is winning. And they both know it. And he almost grins.

We just dealt with "the man?"

BERLIN

How d'you know the Jan-
itor didn't shoot him?

If St ANNE can raise an eyebrow he does. By implication BERLIN is
ditching his "Killer." During this St ANNE rewinds his Sony.

You're telling me it's his
flashlight I saw, O.K., he
sees my flashlight? And I'm
coming up the stairs with a
Beretta in my hand. And he's
frightened. He hits the door
on me. Picks up my gun. He's
running. He runs into Ross,
and in panic, he shoots him.

The little Sony snaps to a stop and St ANNE looks at his watch.

St ANNE

Not unless he had a gun in one
hand, and a phone in the other,
he didn't. Ross was shot at ex-
actly two fifty-seven a.m. The
janitor put a call through to
the local police, at 2:57 a.m.
You obviously realize how I can
get so accurate with my timing?

St ANNE backs off and carefully replaces the Sony on the table.

Ross switched into channel 8, &
we got a recording of the whole

incident. I was gonna play it to you, but I got a meeting, we'll have to do it after lunch. It's one, let's make it back by three?

137: INT. BEDROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DAY.

HELENA is curled up under blankets. Maybe day-dreaming but not asleep. She's maybe here to keep warm as much as anything else. Sound of a vehicle approaching and she sits to listen. The car pulls up and its engine silences. HELENA is already out of bed.

138: INT. LIVING ROOM/PORCH/FRONT YARD. HOUSE. DAY.

Silhouette of a figure outside the front door. Someone rattles the handle but it's locked. And by the time HELENA reaches the door the visitor has gone. Thinking it's Berlin she twists the key and steps onto the porch. A stale winter fog settling down.

Hardly a sound except her own voice. "John? Is that you?" Just the rattle of local Crows and a Bull heaving somewhere in some distant field. "John?" She cautiously descends wood stairs and walks two or three paces before bumping into a brown Chevrolet.

Exploration of the car establishes nil. More confused than concerned she listens. Country sound and not a sound out of place

Then suddenly she is alert. Something clatters somewhere. Like cans kicked in the garage? Was it the garage? "John, is it you?"

139: INT. KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM/BEDROOM. HOUSE. DAY.

HELENA locks the front door. Moves into the kitchen. Locks the back door. Glum silence in the house. Nothing but an old alarm clock ticking. Then a sound like something moving. Like a door creaking open? Was it in the garage? The living room? Upstairs?

She returns to the living room. Curtains drawn and almost dark. The endless silence is interrupted by a rush of water in pipes. If anybody's here they're upstairs? HELENA moves to the bottom of them "John, are you up there? It's me, darling. I got a cab."

The only reply is more silence. She begins to climb the stairs.

One hand on the wall. She ascends slowly. Her helplessness giving way to suspicion with each new step. At the top she pushes into the bedroom "John, are you here? Darling? Are you alright?"

Apparently no one is here. Certainly no one in the bed. And no one in the bathroom. She reappears with an expression suppressing anxiety. Feels her way past an antique wardrobe. Curiously its door is open. A full length mirror inside. Shuts it as she

passes and for a split-instant the Man in the room is revealed.

Almost simultaneously fingers in black leather clasp her wrist. HELENA in speechless with shock. Both she and the INTRUDER are breathing hard. The only other sound is the wardrobe door whining open again under its weight. Manifests a reflection of his back. Totally in black. Black wool hat. Leather jacket. Gloves.

INTRUDER

Got really fucken lucky, didn't ya?

He backs her to the bed and sits her before releasing his grip. The frame remains static and staring into the mirror and still on the INTRUDER's back. HELENA stares unseeing at her own face.

I was getting kinda concerned about you Jenny. Like, how blind are you? Blind as your friend? Or less blind? Coz she could see, you know. Had a view outta one of em. But you don't see nothing do you? Nothing at all?

He reaches into his jeans and produces a stainless steel knife. Even closed this thing is 10 inches long. A leather loop attached at one end. He teases the metal in front of HELENA's eyes.

Can you see this, blind girl?

Not a switch-blade but by snapping it like a whip it locks out.

Gimme your hand.

Too terrified to obey and her inability momentarily angers him.

Gimme your fucken hand.

HELENA lifts her hand and he takes it. He runs the edge of the blade over her palm. Then closes her fingers around the handle.

You like it?

She is paralyzed except for the tears spilling down her cheeks.

I cut your friend's
head off with that ..

Words come out she can barely hear herself. "You are a coward."

You say something, Jenny?

In this terrible silence she hears a double hiss of an aerosol.

I'd like to cut you. I'd like to cut you so bad .. But ain't life strange? You're my little buddy now .. I guess we all got lucky?

140: EXT. CAR PARK. POLICE STATION. CITY OF EUREKA. DAY.

Fog and dusk in that order. Headlights descend the slope. Park and CITRINE plus cane get out. As he crosses the lot a Uniform fires up a Harley. Next face is SERATO heading for his car. He accosts the Chief with a piece of paper. It is read with escalating incredulity. This would be comic if it wasn't so serious.

SERATO

She's in love with him,
Chief, and try anything?

CITRINE

Are you going up there?

SERATO

No, I just sent Travis.
I've got a call to make.

CITRINE

What about the man? .. Has he seen this? .. [No he hasn't] .. Alright, make your call, and get up there ... Bullshit or not, I wanna proper statement ..

141: INT. ANTI ROOM/INTERROGATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

CITRINE walks in in his overcoat. BISLEY looks across from the window. And the ASSISTANT up from a crossword. "Are they busy?"

ASSISTANT

No, Sir, they just got back.

CITRINE

Would you ask Mr St Anne
to come in here a moment?

The ASSISTANT does it via phone. And BISLEY looks over unhappy.

BISLEY

I hear I've been nominated
as an official "observer?"

CITRINE

It's either you, or Taylor?

BISLEY

He don't wanna do it either.

CITRINE

I'll toss a coin for you. But
one of you is going in today ..

St ANNE comes in blowing his nose. CITRINE shoves him the message. He reads it with similar incredulity (but perhaps a touch more amusement than Citrine) "What d'you wanna do with it, Sir?"

What do you wanna do with it?

St ANNE

Let him have it .. I don't
mind putting a little salt
at the edge of his plate ..

142: EXT. FRONT YARD. BERLIN'S HOUSE. DUSK.

A single light in a downstairs room. The house is stifled with fog. A brown police Chevy parked out front. Here comes another to join it. As BERLIN gets out SERATO appears on the porch. He descends stairs with the impartial expression of a working cop.

BERLIN

I need a friend, Angelo.

SERATO keeps it dispassionate. Ignores BERLIN's desperate eyes.

SERATO

You got one.

Puts a thumb towards the house and already heading for his oar.

She's a bad witness, John.
But a fucking lousy alibi.

143: INT. LIVING ROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

This isn't a good place to be. A dismal lamp supplies light. A close-up Of HELENA on the sofa. Hears a sound of booze getting poured. But nothing else in the house except for a harsh voice.

BERLIN (O.S.)

.. I know why you did it darlin,
but you're not helping me. Every-
thing they're hearing they think
is a lie. Now here comes the man
I'm desperate to prove exists, &
whadda-ya-know, he turns up at my
house, and has a "chat" with you?

By now BERLIN and his glass of anaesthetic are well into frame.

No one in the State of California is gonna believe that. They got the man in there - an A/1 F.B.I. interrogator, and he's taking me to pieces - doesn't believe a word comes outta my head - not a word - no one believes me - I don't believe me ..

HELENA

Don't say that. Don't you dare say that .. I believe you ..

BERLIN

I know you're trying to help me, but you don't understand.

HELENA

Then explain it to me. I got enough darkness, don't I?

He doesn't want to. But now he's got to. And so here it comes.

BERLIN

The man who killed Amber is a psychopath. He was up at the institute to kill you - he don't wanna kill Rose - he was there to kill you - that's the truth - and I didn't wanna tell it to you - but that's the reason I want you to stay at Margie's - coz I can't protect you here ..

HELENA

Why does he want to kill me?

BERLIN

Coz he thinks you're a witness.

HELENA

I can't identify him ..

BERLIN

He don't know that. I didn't.

HELENA

Then why didn't he kill me?

Back at the booze and he's almost inaudible "Stop it, will you?"

Why didn't he kill me, John?

Something snaps in BERLIN and he throws his glass at the grate.

BERLIN

Will you fucken stop it. I'm not
Serato .. He didn't kill you coz
he wasn't here .. he isn't in the
room with you, and lets you live ..

And just as suddenly he's full of remorse. Takes HELENA in his arms with a lot of sorrys. But she isn't interested in apology. There's a passion in her face. And fire even in her blind eyes.

HELENA

Kiss me, John .. Kiss me [he does]
I love you, kiss me again [he does]
I love you .. Are my lips lying to
you? Kiss my mouth [he does] Is my
mouth lying to you? He. Was. Here.

144: INT. GARAGE. HOUSE. NIGHT.

Music slams in on the cut. Berlin is about to take this garage to pieces. He searches cans and boxes and stacked timber. What ever it is his eyes are looking. The Camera looks down from above. Bits & pieces all over the floor but he discovers nothing.

145: INT. BATHROOM/BEDROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

Close on a hand searching underside of the bath. Pipes and cobwebs. He reaches toward the taps. His hand is literally inches from the Walther (taped to the end of the tub). Fingers almost touch it. Just a fingernail away when HELENA interrupts "John?"

HELENA (O.S.)

I just remembered something ..

And BERLIN rolls out and stares up like a mechanic under a car.

He used a breath freshener.

BERLIN

A "breath freshener?"

HELENA stands in the doorway and BERLIN is already on his feet.

HELENA

I heard it hiss, twice.

BERLIN wipes a thought through his hair with fingers. "I don't

know what that means." Walks past into the bedroom. Everything taken apart. Every drawer open and the bed heaped with clothes.

BERLIN

... he's either here to take something .. or leave something .. I don't find nothing ..

146: INT. LIVING ROOM. HOUSE. NIGHT.

BERLIN pours last of the whisky. Looks totally snuffed out. He and HELENA sit on the same sofa but the atmosphere puts them a mile apart. A yellow pad on the table covered in notes. BERLIN swallows scotch and reads to himself "I guess we all got lucky?"

HELENA

You gotta stop drinking, darling.

Another mouthful of scotch & she hears the glass hit the table.

He's glad you're drinking. Every drink you take you're helping him.

BERLIN

He doesn't need my help.

HELENA

I know about alcohol, John.

BERLIN

You do?

HELENA

I'm blind because my father drank.

That's what she knows about alcohol and he'd prefer to be dead.

I lost everyone I ever loved .. I lost my hopes .. my future .. I'm in love with you, John .. I don't want them to take you away from me ..

147: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

St ANNE is close enough to kiss BERLIN. Right into his space & talking right into his face. And today he's not in a good mood.

St ANNE

He humiliated you. In front of every one .. In front of a bunch of secretaries? .. Well, that would piss anyone off? ... That would piss me off ..

I'd be real mad if a guy did that to me, & called himself a friend .. Coz that ain't a friendly thing to do? .. You side with "friends" .. You don't go bitchin on them behind their back?

And he suddenly switches gear. And whispers like it's a secret.

He wasn't much of a "friend" at all?

BERLIN

Ross was my best friend.

St ANNE

Did you shoot your "best friend?"

BERLIN

No.

St ANNE

The next time I ask you that question, you're gonna tell me the truth.

St ANNE shunts back in his chair. Expands the frame as he goes. Sergeant TAYLOR sits on a chair with his back to the wall. Cigarettes and ashtray on the table next to his. St ANNE lights a Pall Mall and as if it's an after-thought he snaps the Sony on.

[TAPE]

.. "Just be careful now, coz I'm coming up." .. [Footsteps on cast iron stairs] "Is that you, John? .. Answer .. Now .. or I blow this fucken staircase to pieces." [Sound of someone breathing hard]

BERLIN already looks devastated. He's about to get annihilated.

"Me, Freddy." .. [Just the gale] "What the hell's going on up there, Brother? I been calling ton minutes." .. [Lungs heave for air) "Hey, c'mon, John, talk to me?" [Just the sound of breathlessness] "Jesus Christ .. What are you doing? What the fuck are you doing? It's me - Holy shit - John - John - Not you - Don't shoot you crazy bastard! [2 shots]

St ANNE clicks the Sony off & BERLIN is too stunned to breathe.

St ANNE

That's second degree - you wanna stop at that? Will you give me that, John?

BERLIN gives him nothing but silence. A knock on the door "Come in." And the ASSISTANT hands St ANNE a note. Reads it and excuses himself. Leaves the silence for BERLIN. But TAYLOR breaks it.

TAYLOR

He's offerin you a deal?
Why don't you take it ..

BERLIN

He ain't offerin me shit.

TAYLOR lights a cigarette and exhales. Something of a real red-headed fuck about him. And BERLIN would like to break his neck.

You're letting it show, King Jay.

TAYLOR

I don't like you. But don't kid yourself .. I don't take no pleasure sitting in on another cop ..

He rolls ash off his cigarette and pushes it round the ashtray.

Your an alcoholic, aren't you?

(BERLIN stares)

It's written in your file ..

The phone rings and TAYLOR answers. Puts his red eyes at BERLIN.

They want you to look in the mirror.

BERLIN has to find every strength for this one. Humiliation compounds. Gets up and stares at his own haunted face in the glass.

148: INT. ANTI ROOM/INTERROGATION. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The MYOPIC peers into BERLIN's face. St ANNE stands close with his toilet roll. Light refracts in the MYOPIC's lenses "I seen him up there quite a lot." St ANNE blows his nose "Is that the man you saw that night?" He stares again at the tormented face.

MYOPIC

Well .. I dunno .. it could be?

St ANNE

Alright, thank you, Mr Dawson ..

He's escorted to the door and his space is occupied by CITRINE.

CITRINE

What's all this "deal" business?

St ANNE on his way to the door now. He pauses for the question.

St ANNE

I can have him out of here on a second degree this afternoon. I own him, and he knows it. And, Chief, I'm still waiting for that warrant on his house?

149: INT. WAITING AREA. POLICE STATION. DAY.

HELENA waits on a bench in the empty room. Maybe a few scruffy magazines? But nothing of use to her in here except she's near Berlin. He arrives like every hope got abandoned and sits next to her. They clasp one another's hands before she embraces him.

BERLIN

You don't wanna sit here any more, sweetheart ..

HELENA

I wanna be near you ...

Something difficult to tell her and doesn't know how to say it.

BERLIN

I think they're gonna arrest me.

HELENA

I don't want them to arrest you.

BERLIN

It's not as bad as it sounds .. They can't refuse me bail. Raise bail of my own cognizance & find the best damned lawyer there is ..

Her tears are close to his face. No one but him could hear her.

HELENA

Oh, John, I'd do anything, anything, to get you free.

150: INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. DAY.

If the waiting room felt bad try sitting in here. Both St ANNE and TAYLOR are smoking and the Sony playing again. This is the final part of the tape. No speech but a lot of labored breathing. Ross groaning and now the sound of his shotgun. More desperate inhalations and now sound of the last shot into his neck.

St ANNE

.. and that one's with malice ..
that one's first degree .. why
don't you stop lying to me?

(Clicks Sony off)

C'mon, John, I can help you? Why
don't you tell me the truth?

BERLIN

I've told you the truth. It
isn't me .. I've never call-
ed Ross "Freddy" in my life ..

TAYLOR

I've heard you call him Freddy.

BERLIN

You haven't. And you got no voice
in here, Taylor, so keep it shut.

St ANNE

Tell a lotta lies, don't you? Some-
thing that comes naturally to you?

BERLIN

I don't lie.

St ANNE

Prepared to lie to your Chief?

BERLIN

Under exceptional circumstances.

St ANNE

What were the circumstances that
caused you to lie to Freddy Ross?

BERLIN

I never lied to Ross ..

St ANNE

You didn't?

Shakes his head in confirmation. And St ANNE finds a notebook.

Well, he thought you did? .. Wrote
it down in his book? "John Berlin
is a liar." Right here, underlined.

BERLIN stares at the book & can barely credit what he's seeing.

Dated the day you got your first
"break" with your "Mystery Man?"

You don't know why he wrote that?

(He doesn't)

Maybe he thought there was no "Mystery Man?" That the investigation was bullshit? That you were making it up?

And during the next attack St ANNE will work himself into rage.

Coz you wanted to be "Top Cop?" Isn't that why you went running up that garbage dump, so everyone could stand in awe of the "Top Cop?" Isn't that why you came up here? Coz you couldn't make it in L.A.? Get yourself a pissy little degree, come up here, and be "Top Guy?" But Ross was "Top Guy", wasn't he? Always would be Top Guy? And you know what? He did it without even trying .. Everybody loved him. He had everything you wanted, didn't he? - Great woman - Great kid? - Everything you couldn't have? - And you wanted it to go away? Coz your life was lousy, wasn't it? - A lousy life, with a lousy wife, who was fucking everyone, wasn't she? Is that why you pick on a little Blind Girl? - coz you can control her? - Is that it? - Control who she's fucking?

Tears of grief and tears of rage. BERLIN can't restrain either.

You wanna lose your temper with me?
C'mon, John, lose your fucken temper?
You're good at losing your temper..

BERLIN

No way, Mr St Anne.

St ANNE

Lost your temper with Ross, didn't you? C'mon, tell me the truth. Is that what happened? You had an argument in the car? Lost your temper with him? Stood over him, blew his fucking larynx out with a Glaser? - Where were you aiming, John? Going for his face? Blow his fucking face away, because you hated him so much.

BERLIN is a wreck of despair. But somehow he keeps his dignity.

BERLIN

I loved that guy .. & the hardest thing to take in here .. is knowing he thought I killed him ..

St ANNE

Well, that he did .. And that do I, Sergeant Berlin ..

And at last he looks pleased. Because he's got this man busted.

What do you take for that breathlessness, Sergeant?

Can't take anymore questions. Answers with a shake of his head.

How about Aminophylline?

BERLIN

I don't know what that is.

St ANNE

You don't? It's ant anti-asthma medication, prescribed for breathlessness?

Produces a capsule in a plastic bag and throws it on the table.

Came out of the ashtray of your car?

Every cell in BERLIN's body freezes. Misinterpreted by St ANNE.

But you "don't know" what it is?

But he does know what it is. The pill he found in the V.W. van.

You don't know how it got there?

TAYLOR stares a rock drill and St ANNE stares something similar.

You don't use it for breathlessness?

BERLIN focuses a fragment of hope. But no sign of hope in here.

I'm running outta questions, John, and you're running out of lies? I'm offering you one last chance, and you better take it, or the U.S. Attorney is gonna put you in the God-damned gas chamber ..

BERLIN

I need .. some time .. to think Sir ..

St ANNE

Alright. Think about it. But don't you make a fool of me. You come in here with one more lie, and I bullshit you not, I'm gonna press for the maximum penalty there is. And that's the death penalty, Sergeant.

151: INT. WAITING AREA. POLICE STATION. DAY.

BERLIN hurries in and grabs HELENA's hand. Instantly transmits the adrenalin. They head for the door with him whispering hard.

BERLIN

We got a break - isn't much, but it's a break .. the man that murdered Ross gets asthma - it's not a breath freshener, darling - it's an asthma inhaler ..

152: INT. KITCHEN. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

BERLIN/HELENA couldn't have been in the house longer than it's taken to call Los Angeles. MARGIE infected with the excitement although as yet she hardly knows what's going on. BERLIN paces the tiles on a long phone lead. Eyes to MARGIE while they wait.

BERLIN

This capsule came out of a V.W. van - I didn't even think about it - stuck it in the ashtray - if I'd been smoking, ita been thrown away weeks ago ..

(Phone)

No, Amanda - it's definitely Amanda ..

Another excruciating wait plus further explanations for MARGIE.

I had the van - this guy drove that van takes his medication and loses one .. (Phone) - Dan - Hearing - Are you sure? - Would you try Frisco for me? - I'll try and get a second name ..

Dumps the phone and stokes anxiety in HELENA and MARGIE's eyes.

No Amanda with a white Volkswagen .. You don't have a Yellow Pages for Oakland, do you? (She don't) I gotta get down there, find that store ..

Everything happens in a hurry. He embraces HELENA. She'll pray for him. Already out the back door with MARGIE in tow. A black & white parked in the drive with VENABLES stuffed inside. Plus a grim wind tearing trees. BERLIN pauses as he reaches his car.

BERLIN

You be careful .. This man's close ..

Catches her eyes. Can barely look at them. They're full of hate.

MARGIE

If you find him, John. I want you
to call me. I wanna know his name.

153: EXT. HILLSIDE. OAKLAND. DAY.

Wide over the bay area. Wind swept and rain swept. City lights beginning to come on. In the distance the docks and far beyond the ocean. Somewhere here is a solitary phone booth. "I'm looking for a special type of rattan .. friend of mine recommended you, said I should ask for someone called Amanda .. You don't? O.K. .. Thank you." Followed by sound of a phone slamming down.

154: INT. PHONE BOOTH. HILLSIDE STREET. DAY.

A stack of coins and a pair of ripped out Yellow Pages. BERLIN crosses off another number. Running out of craft shops and running out of quarters. A new number hears the same old bullshit. But this one is answering good! Fights to keep his voice light.

BERLIN (Phone)

She's not there? - Let me just make
sure I got the right Amanda - lotta
freckles, right? .. Right .. That's
right, that's her .. Well, eh, what
time d'you expect her? .. O.K. I'll
eh, try and pop over this afternoon.

And he comes out of there running. The Chevy roars up the hill.

155: INT. ANTIQUE MARKET. CRAFT EMPORIUM. DUSK.

The kind of store heads open in abandoned warehouses. A jungle of jewelry and cane furniture and ethnic junk. Many chairs of the ilk Berlin saw in the Volkswagen van. And now he's staring at its driver. His P.O.V. through windows. He watches as a red headed Girl clears the till in preparation to close up. within moments the lights are dead and AMANDA is heading for her door.

156: EXT. MARKET/WAREHOUSE. CAR PARK. DUSK.

Plenty of rain to hurry in. AMANDA. drives a red Datsun. She exits the car park with a man in a brown Chevrolet following her.

157: EXT/INT. CAR/STREETS. SUBURBS. OAKLAND. NIGHT.

The Chevy tails the Datsun through city streets. A lot of rush hour traffic. Music to go with it and it's probably Mussorgsky.

A final cut and headlights are navigating the hills. Disappear and reappear as they ascend. Steep inclines and the houses are middle class. Too dark to see much now but lamp posts and rain.

Still climbing the Datsun takes a side street. BERLIN keeps 50 yards behind. She turns off and parks in a sloping driveway. A white Volkswagen van at the top of it. BERLIN has already pulled over. Kills his lights and watches her hurry into the house.

158: EXT. STEEP STAIRS. PORCH. HOUSE. NIGHT.

BERLIN just rang the doorbell. Imposes an impartial expression. But this is his last chance and he knows it. The front door is opened & secured on a safety-chain. AMANDA carries a white Cat.

BERLIN

I'm sorry to trouble you, but eh ..
Wait a minute, don't I know you?

And she stares like he does not. Before she stares like he does.

You're Amanda? Remember, you nearly
ran into me? Way up in Trinity?

His smile disarms the securities. And she opens the front door.

AMANDA

As I said, Sergeant, you nearly
ran into me? What's the problem?

BERLIN

I'm afraid it's the "van" again.

AMANDA

The van?

BERLIN

Is it your vehicle?

AMANDA

No, my mother's .. You better stop
in .. I'm just here to feed the cat.

159: INT. HALLWAY. HOUSE. NIGHT.

So far so good. Inside without showing an I.D. he doesn't have. This is a gloomy place. She shuts the door. Shuts out the gale.

BERLIN

I'm sorry to worry you with this, but we had a real serious robbery, and we're chasing a white V.W. van? You guy came up an the computer, so as a matter of routine we have to check. Could you tell me who's driven it recently?

AMANDA

Only me and Mom ..

BERLIN

How about any guys on your staff?

AMANDA

We only got one .. He doesn't drive.

BERLIN [AMANDA]

Would he have lent it to anyone? [No]
How bout your Dad? Husband? Boyfriend?

AMANDA

He is my boyfriend. My father's dead, and I'm divorced.

BERLIN

I see ...

His hopes are collapsing by the moment and nothing else is left.

Would you mind if I took a look at it?

AMANDA

I thought this was "routine?"

The Cat cries for its food and AMANDA begins to look suspicious.

The only man that has driven it in the last 6 months is my uncle. And no way is he involved in a robbery.

BERLIN

Could I have his name? Just so I can officially eliminate him?

Maybe too much charge in his head and she doesn't like the vibe?

AMANDA

Could I see your badge again?

Sure she can and he searches for it. "Must have left it at home?"

Then you better go and get it. I

feel uncomfortable without an I.D.

AMANDA opens the front door just long enough for BERLIN to leave.

160: INT. LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN. HOUSE. NIGHT.

The emerging Music is full of threat. Like it's part of the darkness. Too dark to see much of anything here. A sound of somebody hammering at a door. A light outside and the Camera moves closer. Creeps towards the door as though it's going to answer. Suddenly glass shatters. The door flies open. Flashlights and Men rush in.

161. INT. CHEVROLET SEDAN. STREET. NIGHT.

BERLIN stares towards the house. Music and rain and a downstairs light just went out. Headlights go on and the Datsun drives away.

162: INT. CHIMNEY FLUE/BEDROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

A flashlight searches cobwebs and soot. Descends the chimney and TAYLOR emerges from a long-sealed-off fireplace. Blinks dirt out of his eyes and moves back into the bedroom. Upended bed against the wall and everything upsidedown. The search looks like it has been thorough. St ANNE appears at the door and TAYLOR looks over.

TAYLOR

We're not gonna find nothin here.

163: INT. MASTER BEDROOM. (AMANDA'S) HOUSE. NIGHT.

BERLIN searches the bedroom. Anxiety and antiques. Does a vanity and now a wardrobe. Nothing much in either. But finds a shoe box full of letters in the latter. Postcards/birthday cards etcetera.

164: INT. BATHROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Half the floorboards already up. VENABLES levers at another. The music is nervous and louder. Next floorboard is next to the bath.

165: INT. BEDROOM/WARDROBE. (AMANDA'S) HOUSE. NIGHT.

Big close on a postcard (a fantasy yacht on a blue sea). The caption reads "JUST ANOTHER DAY IN SAN DIEGO." Close enough to read the message ".. too hot .. asthma not too good .. as soon as I'm settled I'll write .. love John .." Next letter out is also post-marked San Diego. Inside is a happy snap of Sergeant John Taylor.

166: INT. BATHROOM. BERLIN'S HOUSE. NIGHT.

Almost too close to see what's happening. But a gloved hand just found a pistol under the bath. Out it comes with BISLEY shouting. And St ANNE and TAYLOR arrive. "Got a little Walther. It's a 25."

167: INT. LIVING ROOM. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

HELENA looks at the floor and listens. MARGIE looks at the T.V. and listens. Big close on the screen. This scene will intercut between the television and those in front of it as appropriate.

[1] An exterior shot of Berlin's house. Sheriff's cars parked out front. Various people come and go. One of them is Sergeant Taylor. Perpetual wind on the sound track interrupted by a V.O.

MALE REPORTER

Detectives spent several hours this morning at Sergeant Berlin's home .. various property was removed for examination. Later in the morning, Mayor Heineman arrived for a meeting with police officers from Shasta Valley ..

[2] Heineman's B.M.W. pulls up outside the police station and this is conducted on the move. A Reporter asks "What's the nature of this meeting, Sir?" HEINEMAN is sorry but can't comment. He pauses briefly as the steps with the wind savaging his hair.

HEINEMAN (T.V.)

Jim unable to say anything right now, except, this is a very sad and tragic day. John Berlin lied to us all. Lied to me, and much worse, lied to every man, woman, & child in this community ..

WOMAN REPORTER (T.V.)

Where was Mr Berlin arrested, Sir?

HEINEMAN (T.V.)

Near the Ross residence .. six a.m. ..

MALE REPORTER (T.V.)

Who made the arrest?

HEINEMAN (T.V.)

Sergeant John Taylor. Assisted by Sergeant Angelo Serato ..

HELENA looks in utmost despair. "Is it true he resisted arrest?"

You'll have to put that question to the Chief. I've nothing to add.

BOBBY appears somewhere behind the Ladies. T.V. commentary continues. "Meanwhile, Sergeant Berlin remains in a cell at police headquarters arraigned on what is believed to be a \$500,000.00

bail. As Mayor Heineman said, this, is a 'sad day' for Eureka." Except for the one face that isn't sad and it belongs to BOBBY.

168: INT. CORRIDOR/CELLS. POLICE STATION. DAY.

The cell window is reinforced glass. BERLIN smashes on it like an insane man. TRAVIS (apparently on cell duty) has never seen nothing like this before. CITRINE doesn't want to see any more.

BERLIN

I'll sign anything you want. Please.
Bring here her .. I want Helena here ..

CITRINE

You ain't talking to no
one, till you calm down.

BERLIN

I am calm .. I am calm ..

But he isn't and CITRINE moves off. BERLIN cracks blood out of knuckles on the glass. Hollers up the corridor after the Chief.

Get St Anne .. I want St Anne ..

169: EXT. DRIVE. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

Gale still making a mass of the trees. A police Chevy pulls up and TAYLOR gets out. Puts a knuckle on the window of a black & white. A Uniform wakes and TAYLOR interrupts his apologies "Go." And the young Cop does the drive as TAYLOR heads for the house.

170: INT. STAIRS/LIVING ROOM. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DAY.

HELENA descends the stairs with her luggage. She's towards the bottom when TAYLOR appears via the kitchen. Lights momentarily stall as the gale sucks their electricity. Ignorant of his presence she loses her bags and disappears into the den. He moves after her and startles the shit out of MARGIE as she comes out.

MARGIE

Jesus. What are you doing here?

TAYLOR

Been trying to call, your line's
down .. I just wanna let you know
we're taking the guard off today.

MARGIE heads for a table and unloads a strong-box of documents.

Is she going somewhere?

MARGIE

I'm taking her back to the Institute. Her new term starts tomorrow.

He watches her select various papers aware of what she's about.

TAYLOR

Not gonna try and bail him are you?
I really wouldn't bother, Margie ..

HELENA reappears wearing a coat and TAYLOR is in generous mood.

You want me to drive her? ..
I'm through with my shift ..

MARGIE

No .. I'll drive her ..

171: INT. CELL. POLICE STATION. DAY.

Here's a classic twenty-two. BERLIN is consumed with anxiety & rage. But get mad in here and get nothing. No shoe strings and no wrist watch. But a wrist-band like something medical summarizing his charge. St ANNE sits impassive as BERLIN walks floor.

BERLIN

I'll sign anything you like - you write it, I'll sign it. But I want her and Margie here. I want an opportunity to talk to them - that's all I'm asking? - That's my deal? ..

St ANNE

O.K. I'll put it to your Chief?

BERLIN

Well, you'd better put it to him pretty dammed quick, Mr St Anne, because if you don't, she's dead.

St ANNE

Didn't push her down stairs on their previous meeting, did he?

BERLIN

He was up there to plant the gun.

St ANNE

Did Taylor plant this, too?

Produces a Zippo in a plastic sack and BERLIN's senses capsize.

Is it yours?

A question for which St ANNE expects no answer and he is right.

We found "Jennifer Eight." At least,
we've found a headless and handless
girl. A couple of hunters found her.

Maybe BERLIN asks him "Where" or maybe his expression's enough?

About 4 miles south of the institute,
less than 50 feet from the road. This
was less than 100 feet from the body.

BERLIN can't believe it and knows St ANNE wouldn't believe him.

Is it yours? - (no answer) - I know
it's yours? - You know it's yours?
The only prints on it are Freddy's?
You wanna tell me how it got there?

BERLIN wouldn't believe it either. Door open and TRAVIS enters.

TRAVIS

Margie Ross put up your bond, Sir.

St ANNE and BERLIN look surprised. And BERLIN looks at St ANNE.

BERLIN

Are you getting in the way of it?

St ANNE examines the bail/bond paper and raises eyes to BERLIN.

St ANNE

I don't make the law.

172: EXT. THE ROSS RESIDENCE. DUSK.

Music on the cut and this is a crane shot high above the house.
A car tears up the drive with the Camera descending to meet it.
BERLIN out and into the house. And still the gale howls around.

173: INT. DOWNSTAIRS ROOMS. HOUSE. DUSK.

Darkness and silence. Where the hell is everyone? He quicks it
to the den, Cartoons on T.V. but no one watching. With escalat-
ing concern he hits the kitchen and now he's shouting upstairs.
"Margie. Margie." About to climb when BOBBY appears at the top.

BOBBY

There's no one here.

BERLIN
Where are they?

BOBBY
Mom took her back to the institute.

BERLIN freezes. He maybe says "What?" He definitely says "When?"

I dunno. How come they let you out?

BERLIN
Is Margie with her? Is she with her?

BOBBY
No, she came back and went out again .. gone to see Auntie Charles ..

BERLIN has already grabbed a telephone. Aware it's dead before BOBBY tells him "They're all out around here." He wanders downstairs in apparent oblivion to BERLIN's distress. BERLIN races back to the den and new problems. Desperate to get at the guns but all cabinets locked "Where's the keys, Bobby? I need a gun."

They're my Dad's guns.

BERLIN
Come on, Bobby, for God's sake. I wanna get the man that killed him.

BOBBY stares at BERLIN as though he's staring at that very man.

BOBBY
I hate you .. I really hate you ..

He turns away into the darkness. BERLIN looks frantic and without options. Smashes the cabinets with a chair. Grabs a 44 revolver plus a 12 gauge Remington and the slugs that go with it.

174: EXT. FREEWAY INTERSECTION. NIGHT.

Wide over an intersection. Berlin's Chevy crosses a bridge and descends into lights. Music travels with him but the Camera remains static. Watches tail lights dissolve into a river of red.

175: EXT. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

Tracking back with the car. As yet 100 yards away. Moving fast and getting closer. As it approaches a remote sound of a phone drifts in. And headlights so near now they wipe out everything.

176: INT. CHEVY SEDAN. FREEWAY. NIGHT.

Starting to sleet and windshield wipers on. The phone is still ringing like it's at the end of Berlin's brain. Like it's part of his thoughts mixed up with the nightmare he's hearing again.

BERLIN (V.O.)

Go take a look in his office. It's fulla rattan - that's the connection, that's the "link" - that's why they never got an I.D. - He kills blind girls - put their picture in the newspaper, and 99 percent of the people who know them are blind ..

Intercutting BERLIN's fearful eyes with his P.O.V. of the road.

St ANNE (V.O.)

Havta be a real dope to kill her now, wouldn't he? I mean, we're talking real, full-blown, insane?

BERLIN (V.O.)

He is insane. His fucken brain's upside down. But he's also very cunning. He's not going after her with a "Pearl Handled Colt," he'll just push her down the stairs ..

Just the sound of the phone and the road dissolving into black.

177: INT. CORRIDOR. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

A miserable corridor with the merest of lights. A phone rings somewhere at its end. HELENA is on her way up the corridor and the ringing is louder. Finds keys and walks into her apartment.

178: INT. APARTMENT. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Phone in close-up and the frame widens as HELENA heads towards it. Reaches out and is maybe a second away before it rings off.

179: INT/EXT. PHONE BOOTH. GAS STATION. NIGHT.

This is a little country stop some place on the peripheries of the snow-line. BERLIN slams the phone down and runs to his car. Screeches out onto the highway and the Camera begins to ascend.

The Camera climbs higher revealing somber mountains. Plus mile upon mile of road he has yet to travel. Still it ascends until the Chevrolet is reduced to an insignificance by the landscape.

180: EXT. SHASTA-TRINITY INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

A panoramic over the institute wide enough to include surrounding forest. Headlights approach down a wooded track and go out. Just possible to see a tiny Figure moving towards the building.

181: EXT. FIRE ESCAPE. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

High on the fire escape looking down. A flashlight arrives below. Eerie fragmentation of light as the Figure begins to climb.

182: EXT. CHEVY SEDAN/ROAD. SHASTA VALLEY. NIGHT.

The highway is winding and narrowed with snow. Couldn't find a lousier road on which to overtake. BERLIN is right up behind a forty ton truck and he's trying to overtake. Hits the horn and tries again. Halfway past the trailer when a bend suddenly releases headlights. An angry claxon and he's forced to pull back.

183: INT. BEDROOM. APARTMENT. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Although curtains are open the room is in darkness. Someone on the fire escape looking in. A flashlight snaps on and a circle of light explores the room. Creeps across the floor and pauses at the bed. Climbs slowly to illuminate HELENA's sleeping face.

144: EXT. FIRE ESCAPE. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

Close-up sound and close-up picture. A glass-cutter scores the window. A nasty noise but you'd have to be wide awake and listening to hear it. A gloved fist punches the section out. Falls to the floor and shatters. And a hand reaches in for the catch.

145: INT. BEDROOM/LIVING ROOM. APARTMENT. NIGHT.

HELENA is wide awake and listening. Hurrying into her dressing gown with a similar urgency to get out. She arrives in the living room as the FIGURE is clambering through the window. Panic as she blunders for the front door. Tears it open and vanishes into the corridor. He crosses the room and follows her outside.

186: INT. CORRIDOR/STAIRS. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

HELENA knows the building and moves faster than he may have expected. Green dressing gown and bare feet. White nightgown and blonde hair. The man in black hurries after her. She's already at the swing doors and he's virtually running to stay with her.

She bursts through the doors and rushes downstairs. He follows only seconds behind. The wind groans down as they descend. HELENA turns a corner of the stairwell and momentarily disappears.

For a moment he loses her! Which way did she go? Downstairs or along the corridor? His anxiety is immediately assuaged. Spots

what already looks like a ghost fleeing into shadows. He takes off along the corridor. Getting breathless. But getting closer. Near enough now to sense her fear. Near enough now to grab her.

TAYLOR

Say night, night, dead girl.

As he reaches for her she turns. MARGIE wears a green dressing gown and a blonde wig and has a very big fucking pistol in her hand. TAYLOR can't believe what he's looking at. And for an instant neither does MARGIE. Their surprise is mutually stunning.

How can it be him? How can it be her? TAYLOR's still trying to work out how they made the switch when the first bullet smacks into his chest. Gets another as he goes down. He crumples in a deadly heap and revenge is completed with two more in the back.

187: INT. LANDING/STAIRS. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

MARGIE barges through the doors. The MYOPIC Janitor is halfway up adjacent stairs peering down. No time for introductions and no time for explanations. "Call the Police. Do it. Now." Shouting up at him she's already descending. "Tell em the gymnasium."

188: INT. GYMNASIUM. INSTITUTE. NIGHT.

MARGIE patrols plate glass windows. Where are the fucking cops? She's shocked and looks strange indeed. Wig off but hair grips all over her head. An overcoat and shoes but still wearing the nightgown underneath. A couple of dreary lights in the ceiling. HELENA sits numb under one of them all but hidden in a blanket.

MARGIE can't stand waiting any longer. "I'm gonna call them myself." HELENA nods and sure she's O.K. to stay here. The doors settle and she is alone. Headlights cross the windows shifting the shadows of everything. Swooping the walls they move attention back to the door. TAYLOR stares in and then pushes through.

Worse for wear but very much alive. Discarded his leather jacket revealing the bullet proof vest. Blood all over his T-shirt. Looks like he caught one in the shoulder. A bad burn and blood runs from his left hand. In his right hand he clasps the knife.

He cracks it open like a whip. HELENA hears it and stands. Terror as the footsteps approach. "Margie. Margie." But Margie isn't around. He's less than 30 feet away. She tries to back off but is hindered by the blanket. Tries to scream but is stifled with fear. Maybe six seconds to live but this refers to Taylor.

"Taylor" He swings around but this time he doesn't get time to look surprised. BERLIN blows the fucker across the room. Solid load slugs weighing an ounce each crash into him. BERLIN keeps

pumping the Remington and doesn't stop firing until the magazine is over. No conjecture now. This bastard is very much dead.

BERLIN throws the 12 gauge aside. And maybe it means something. Maybe at last he accepts he's stopped living in that world and ready to give himself a chance in this. HELENA in his arms and this is his new world. Flashing lights and headlights flood into the darkness. Their embrace goes on. And this story is told.

THE END