

"MUMFORD"

Screenplay by

Lawrence Kasdan

SHOOTING DRAFT

EXT. MAIN STREET, SMALL TOWN - DAY

A freight truck of late 1950's vintage pulls to the side of the road in a small rural town. A handsome, well-built man gets out of the passenger side and thanks the Driver. THE NEWCOMER carries his coat over his shoulder and a beat-up suitcase; he's got a jut jaw and a modified pompadour, his shirtsleeves are rolled all the way up past his biceps. He wipes his brow against the sweltering heat and looks around. [Until noted below, this section of the movie is in BLACK & WHITE.]

FOLLETT (V.O.)

I get outta the truck in this two-bit town. I got no money and no prospects. What I need right now is a stiff drink, a cold shower, and a hot broad. I'll take 'em in any order they come...

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

Old three story gothic house in ill-repair beyond a peeling picket fence and a scruffy yard. The sign says – ROOMS TO RENT. The Newcomer goes in the gate.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

...Oh yeah, one other thing I need – an angle.

He squints through the dirty screen door but sees nothing, then knocks and turns away to survey the neighborhood.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

I was thinking – if it weren't for

bad luck, I wouldn't have any luck
at all...

LANDLADY (O.S.)
Can I help you?

The Newcomer turns toward the door. Standing there, holding the screen open, is the LANDLADY. She's a knockout in a cheap, small-town way: a cotton dress that buttons down the front and clings with sweat to her generous curves.

FOLLETT (V.O.)
Either my luck had just changed, or
Fate just bought me another round of
trouble.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

The Newcomer's POV of the Landlady as she leads him up the narrow, gloomy stairs from the second floor to the third story / attic. She has a Monroe-like sway to her walk. We can barely HEAR her DISTANT, ECHOEY DIALOGUE:

LANDLADY
...not very fancy... house needs
repairs... We haven't had a man around
here for so long...

FOLLETT (V.O.)
She kept yammerin' the whole time,
but her hips were doing all the
talking...

The Landlady reaches the tiny landing at the top of the stairs and opens a door to a squalid room with a bed, bureau and tiny window. The Newcomer has to squeeze by her voluptuous body to get inside and look around. It doesn't take long. His gaze returns to the Landlady who is leaning against the door, chest thrust forward. He focusses on her fingers, toying with the button at her sweat-shiny cleavage.

FOLLETT (V.O.)
It couldn't 'a been any clearer what
the set-up was. The next move was up
to me...

The Newcomer takes a step in the Landlady's direction –

MUMFORD (V.O.)
Don't tell me!

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - (PRESENT) DAY

CLOSE-UP of MUMFORD wincing.

MUMFORD
(softer)
– That's all the time we have.
Sorry...
(indicates his watch)
...next time.

We see Mumford's office: the office of a Psychologist, a therapist with a doctorate. It's modest, comfortable, neat, with a calm, relaxed ambience. [The movie is now in COLOR.] His patient, HENRY FOLLETT, looks nothing like The Newcomer in the soft-core fantasy he's been narrating. Instead, he's a mild-looking pharmacist with glasses and a receding hairline. Only the voice is the same; it's as studly as his fantasy alter-ego. Follett has been lying on a couch, but now has twisted with some irritation to look at Mumford.

FOLLETT
I have eighteen more minutes!

MUMFORD
I don't want to hear any more today.

FOLLETT
Why not?

MUMFORD
Mr. Follett, do you trust me or don't you?

FOLLETT
Well, I don't know... I only been seeing you –

MUMFORD

Without trust, there's no point to any of this. You might as well not come.

FOLLETT

Now hold on, I didn't say I didn't want to come –

MUMFORD

Good, then go.

INT. LILY'S CAFÉ - DAY

Lunch crowd. Mumford can be seen out the big front window, crossing from the two-story building that houses his office on the main drag of this small town which, oddly enough, is also called Mumford. He comes inside and goes to the counter to pick up some take-out. The Proprietor is a woman around forty named LILY, who talks to him as she works.

LILY

You're early... it's not ready. What happened?

MUMFORD

My patient had to leave early.

LILY

Who was that?

She comes over to the register with an order. Mumford is am[...] her, likes her a lot.

MUMFORD

Does the phrase "nosy" have any meaning to you, Lily?

LILY

I think it's like... inquisitive.

MUMFORD

It was Henry Follett.

LILY

(reacts)

Man, you see him a lot. And it's very wrong to reveal it. Next you'll be saying what his problem is.

MUMFORD

What do you want to know?

LILY

You're terrible. I'm never telling you anything.

A Patron passes on the way out.

PATRON

Hey, Doc... how's it going?

MUMFORD

Fine, Vincent... how's yourself?

LILY

How long you been in this town?

MUMFORD

Oh, I don't know...

LILY

Four months, two and a half weeks – that's how long.

(Mumford gives her a look)

And you've already got more patients than those other two shrinks combined.

MUMFORD

Lily, I don't think even you could know that –

Lily sees something out the window.

LILY

Look at that guy...

Mumford turns to look out the window. A young man of about 30, in jeans and a Hawaiian shirt, is skateboarding down the street at high speed, weaving in and out amongst the cars.

He zips past the front of the restaurant.

LILY

You know who that is, don't you?
(Mumford does not)
You really don't? That's Skip Skipperton, man. He gets himself hit by a truck, this whole town shuts down.

MUMFORD

Oh, so that's him? The Panda Man.

LILY hands over Mumford's bagged order, rings it up. Back on track:

LILY

So, what makes you so popular? What's your secret?

MUMFORD

(takes his bag to go)
You like me. How come?

LILY

Not sure. Let me think about it.

Mumford is smiling as he goes out. Another Patron, LIONEL DILLARD, a lawyer, brings his check to Lily, watching Mumford cross the street. Lily can't stand this guy.

LIONEL

That's the new psychiatrist?

LILY

Psychologist. He's not medical.

LIONEL

Probably thinks he's pretty smart.

Lily gives him a look as she takes his money.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

An overweight, teenage girl named NESSA WATKINS is on

Mumford's couch. She fidgets as she talks and can't decide whether to lie down (so she's looking away from him) or sit up and face him. She plays with an unlit cigarette and keeps taking out a lighter, then stuffing it back in her big, sloppy handbag.

NESSA

...so he already had the tattoo that said, "Naomi Forever"... and now they're broken up, see, and he has to have it removed. But while the scar is still healing, or whatever you call it when you have a tattoo removed, he meets Chandra. And it's serious, immediate love. So in no time, he's gone from the most gorgeous model in the world to the most gorgeous actress in North America.

MUMFORD

What do you mean, "in no time"?

NESSA

In maybe three or four issues.

MUMFORD

Weekly or monthly?

NESSA

Monthly! God, how shallow do you think Brad is? Why do I waste my time telling you this stuff?

MUMFORD

Why do you think you tell me, Nessa?

NESSA

Don't do that thing...
(Mumford: what?)
...that shrink thing.

MUMFORD

It's a big part of the show.

She jams the cigarette in her mouth and flames the lighter,

but is afraid to actually break his rules.

NESSA

You really need to let people smoke
in here, you know. It's perverse.
What are they paying you to see me?

Mumford indicates "nothing".

NESSA

The school board doesn't pay you?
What kind of deal is that?

MUMFORD

It's called pro bono.

NESSA

Pro boner?
(he waits her out)
Pro bono, huh? For whose good,
supposedly?

MUMFORD

It's my bit for the community.

NESSA

Fuck the community.
(he won't go for it)
There was this article my friends
and I read. It was "25 Signs He's
Great in Bed". It was very
fascinating.

MUMFORD

Where was this?

NESSA

Where?... The New York Times. The
first one was – "he handles produce
well." Which we already knew!
(an expression she
uses)
The point is, you have a lot of the
signs.

MUMFORD

You been spying on me in the
supermarket, Nessa?

NESSA

Have women found you attractive?

Mumford laughs.

NESSA

I knew you wouldn't answer. I've
been thinking about what you said
last time. How me trying to lose
weight – and constantly not – is
like a lot of people with addictions.
How maybe I can't lose the weight,
ever...

(quietly)

Which we already knew...

MUMFORD

That's not quite what I said –

NESSA

It's a really weird thing for a shrink
to say... and then you said maybe
people'd be happier if they'd accept
that some things don't change –
that it'd be some kind of a relief
or something...

Mumford waits.

NESSA

Well, I guess I'm just a dumb bitch,
but how depressing is that moment –
the moment when you give up?

EXT. HIKING TRAIL, MOUNTAIN FOREST - MAGIC

The last rays of sun are fighting their way through the trees
as Mumford comes up the trail he clearly knows very well.

EXT. BIG ROCK LOOKOUT POINT - MAGIC

Mumford climbs out on the Big Rock, settles himself on the edge and takes a long drink from a water bottle.

WHAT HE SEES: far below at the foot of these hills, lights just twinkling on, is the town of Mumford. He stares at it for several long moments. Then he takes a small headlamp from his pack and fits the straps over his head (it looks like a miner's light). He twists the light on to test it and turns his head to watch the beam move about.

WE CUT BACK WIDE. After a beat, Mumford settles back and turns off the light.

INT. SCATTERGOOD'S TAVERN - NIGHT

The place is quietly busy with the regulars. Mumford has a favorite spot at the far end of the bar. Right now he's sitting alone, reading the remnants of a newspaper.

SKIP SKIPPERTON, the man on the skateboard, comes in. Everyone in the bar is surprised to see Skip in here. Several patrons greet him as he makes his way deeper inside, looking around. He's uncomfortable. He seems relieved when he spots Mumford and heads back there. Mumford doesn't notice Skip waiting for his attention.

SKIP

Hi.

Mumford looks up, smiles. Skip offers his hand.

SKIP

You're Doc Mumford.

(Mumford nods)

Skip Skipperton.

MUMFORD

How are you?

SKIP

Fine. Okay. Pretty good. I've been hoping we'd meet. I've heard a lot about you.

Mumford waits, friendly. Skip runs out of gas, gets uneasy,

glances around.

SKIP

Do you think we could...? Can I buy you a drink?

CUT TO:

[...]

LATER. IN A BOOTH near the back. They've been at it a while, but nothing is clear to Mumford, yet. Skip keeps his voice down; he doesn't want anyone else in the bar to hear him.

SKIP

..."Find the need and fill it" my dad used to say – I guess a lot of dads say that – but I did and it just took off.

MUMFORD

No kidding... Panda. Where'd that come from?

SKIP

Panda? I've always liked giant pandas... I've been to China and seen them in the wild. That's the kind of thing I can do if I want... now. I can do pretty much anything I want to do these days.

Skip stares into his beer for a moment, as though the thought depresses him. He catches himself and snaps back –

SKIP

So now we make 23% of the modems in the market, which is pretty good.

Skip glances around, leans in, confidential.

SKIP

When I was growing up here, the town was about dead. The timber business was played out... Panda changed all

that. Now, just about everybody in town either works for the company or depends on it somehow. Which is kinda the problem...

Mumford waits, watches. Skip gets uncomfortable.

SKIP

Would you like another beer?

MUMFORD

Nah... scotch.

SKIP

(brightens, like a kid)

Far out. Single malt?

(gets up)

Can I pick it?

Skip heads off to the bar. Mumford looks around. Everybody is watching.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER. The bar crowd has thinned. Both Mumford and Skip have had a few. In fact, Mumford is now carefully pouring them each another drink from a bottle of Glensomething on the table.

MUMFORD

You want me... to be... your friend.

Skip beams. Mumford leans forward in the same confidential way Skip did before; he indicates that Skip should lean in too. Mumford is almost whispering –

MUMFORD

But that's not what's really going on...

(Skip is excited)

...What's really going on is... you have some problems and you want some therapy, but you feel it could be very bad for Panda Modem stock if

word got out that you were having head problems.

Skip confirms that's it.

MUMFORD

Can I ask you a personal question?

SKIP

Of course! That's exactly what I want.

MUMFORD

Have you thought about getting a wife?

Skip makes a face and gesture to indicate a large "YES!", but also total frustration and failure.

SKIP

When Panda started to happen, I was dating women from New York, San Francisco, L.A. They came out of the woodwork. Models, actresses, venture capitalists... These were not the kind of girls who were interested in me before I hit it... And you know what I discovered? I discovered these girls did not love me for myself. The majority of them didn't even like me. But a lot of them would've gladly become Mrs. Skipperton for a while. Can you imagine that – marrying someone just because they've got money?

Mumford considers that.

SKIP

I gotta pee.

(he gets up, a little wobbly)

Can I ask you something? This town is called Mumford... Been that way since... 18... 18-0... 18-0...

(finally remembers)
...thirteen! Right?
(Mumford: if you say
so)

Now here's the question – Your name
is Mumford, too.

MUMFORD
Is that the question?

SKIP
You moved here from back East and
your name is the same as this town.
Is that right?
(Mumford shrugs)
Far out.

Skip takes a few steps toward the men's room, then comes
back and leans down toward Mumford.

SKIP
I hope you don't think I want you to
do this for free. Just because we're
gonna play it like we're friends,
doesn't mean I won't pay you like a
doctor.

MUMFORD
I understand.

SKIP
I have a lot of money. Do you know
how much money I've got?

MUMFORD
Don't tell me, 'cause I'm not going
to tell you what I've got.

SKIP
I've got three big ones.

MUMFORD
I'm impressed. I couldn't make three
million dollars if I lived three
lifetimes.

SKIP

No, no... I have three billion dollars.

Skip stumbles off to take a leak. Mumford takes a moment to digest that. It's difficult.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Mumford is listening to Lionel, the arrogant lawyer who asked about him in the restaurant. Lionel is lying on the couch, talking with enormous energy; he has a serious superiority complex. Mumford can't stand him and the session seems to be lasting an eternity.

LIONEL

...so I'm watching Brokaw and they've got some astronomer, this little limey know-it-all, and he's telling how, with this Hubble telescope, they've discovered there are maybe 400 million more galaxies than they thought there were. And I guess that's supposed to make me feel small? I'm supposed to feel insignificant? Is that the point? Because I can tell you it didn't.

Mumford's eyes dart to look at –

THE CLOCK on the bookshelf: 2:23

MUMFORD

Lionel, since this is our first session together, maybe –

Lionel is twisting his neck around painfully to look back at Mumford.

MUMFORD

– you can sit up and look at me if you'd like –
(Lionel waves that off and looks away)

– maybe it would be helpful if you told me a little about what brought you here.

LIONEL

Kind of impatient for a big-time headshrinker, aren't you? How 'bout you let me explain it my own way...

As Lionel goes on, Mumford's eyes again dart toward – THE CLOCK: still 2:23! Hold on it. Finally, it moves. Mumford's eyes dart toward his desk –

A deadly-looking letter opener in the shape of Excalibur stands GLINTING LIGHT in a marble rendition of Arthur's stone.

LIONEL

...and in the dream, it's always the same, I wake up in my room from when I was I kid in Ohio, and I realize this is the day of the big exam at school...

Mumford's head rocks slowly back for a moment as if he's going to drift off. He snaps back to life and stares hard at the top of Lionel's head, where there is a bald spot starting to take hold. The sound of LIONEL'S VOICE begins to echo –

LIONEL

...which is no problem for me, because I remembered it was coming and I've attended every class, so I'm totally prepared. Then I see myself running down the hall at school...

MUMFORD'S GLANCE FLASHPANS from Lionel's bald spot to the gleaming letter opener.

Mumford closes his eyes. We CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

A boy, unmistakably the Young Lionel, runs down the deserted hallway toward a bright doorway. [LIONEL'S DREAM has a BLUE TINT.]

LIONEL (V.O.)

...but it's not really my school –
and this is very interesting – it's
the school from the next district –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

– Go on!

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Young Lionel comes breathlessly in the classroom door and stares alarmed.

LIONEL (V.O.)

And even though I arrive a little
bit early, everybody's already there.
But the surprising part is –

WHAT YOUNG LIONEL SEES: Everyone in the class, including the Teacher in the front, is naked. The Teacher holds out an exam toward Young Lionel.

LIONEL (V.O.)

– I'm the only one who's prepared!

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING ROOM, MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

ALTHEA BROCKETT, a woman in her forties, sits on the couch reading a mail order catalogue for home furnishings. There are several other catalogues sticking out of her jammed, woven carry-all.

The door to Mumford's inner office opens with some force. Mumford stands looking back across his office at Lionel, who is getting up from the couch in some confusion.

LIONEL

– you crazy? You can't do this!

MUMFORD

Sure I can, Lionel.

LIONEL

I'm a criminal lawyer – you think I like my clients? I can't stand most of them! But I don't kick them out...

MUMFORD

See that sign – We retain the right to refuse service to anyone. I'm not going to charge you for this session, but I don't want to see you back here.

Lionel looks around, but there is no such sign. He does spot Althea watching the show from the couch.

LIONEL

Don't you at least have a back door I can use?

MUMFORD

Come out this way. There's no shame in getting a little therapy... is there, Althea?

Althea stands up, smiling. She thinks Mumford is the bee's knees.

ALTHEA

Not at all. It takes guts, Lionel.

Lionel steams by them in a black mood.

LIONEL

Maybe some of us don't need this crap!

MUMFORD

And it's the Hubble Telescope, not the Himball Telescope.

Lionel bangs out the front door. Mumford motions Althea inside –

MUMFORD

Jeez... what an asshole.

Althea heads inside, giggling wildly. She can't get enough of this guy.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE -DAY

Althea is sobbing. Mumford hands her a new Kleenex from the box next to the couch. She wads it with her current one and tries to stop crying. Mumford settles back in his chair, patient.

ALTHEA

What do they want from me?

(more sobbing)

What have I done that's so wrong?

(pulling it together)

They act as though they don't have their own peculiar things... They do! Believe me. Everybody's got something...

(looks at Mumford)

Even you probably have things.

MUMFORD

Me more than most.

ALTHEA

Why are they ganging up against me?

MUMFORD

I'm not sure. But I think they're worried about you.

ALTHEA

It's the kids, you know, not Jeremy. He had nothing to do with this – except pay, of course. He's always willing to pay. He's extremely generous.

(a long beat)

I'm so humiliated that my own children would threaten me.

MUMFORD

How did they threaten you?

ALTHEA

They said if I didn't get help, they
wouldn't deal with me any more.

(a beseeching look)

What do you think about that?

MUMFORD

Good kids.

Althea stares at him a long moment. She knows he's right.
Tears well up in her eyes and roll down her cheeks. She grabs
another Kleenex. In the midst of the torrent she tries to
talk, but it's undecipherable:

ALTHEA

Mmmmmfffstttubll abbittmm.

MUMFORD

Hmm?

Althea uses three new tissues to dry up her face.

ALTHEA

I said... you must come out to the
house for dinner on Thursday.

MUMFORD

Really? You think so?

ALTHEA

Yes. Jeremy will be home for the
weekend. And you can meet the kids.

Mumford considers, then nods his assent.

EXT. MUMFORD'S STREET - MAGIC

Mumford hurries up the sidewalk carrying two grocery bags.
He's late. The modest houses are close together on this pretty
street, which rises out of the main business district, seen
beyond Mumford.

EXT. THE DUPLEX HOUSE - MAGIC

Mumford comes to the house where he lives. He heads down the

driveway toward the stairs that lead up to his apartment.

The front yard is completely fenced. Lily, the owner of the restaurant, is almost visible in there working among the greenery of a lush garden. Her friendly dog, AINGE, sees Mumford, leaps easily over the fence and does a circle around Mumford, who has no free hand to pet him.

MUMFORD

How ya doin', Ainge? Evenin', Lily.

LILY

Doc.

(doesn't look up)

Ainge...

The dog leaps gracefully back into the yard. Mumford hurries up the stairs.

INT. MUMFORD'S APARTMENT - MAGIC

Mumford comes in and puts the bags down on the kitchen counter. He goes directly to the table by his main chair and picks up the TV remote. He switches it on and changes the channel. The opening segment of UNSOLVED MYSTERIES is just beginning. It previews the stories on that evening's episode – disappearances and unclosed cases – with Robert Stack hosting.

CLOSE ON MUMFORD'S FACE as he watches. Only when the whole show has been previewed does he seem to relax. He leaves the show on as he goes into the kitchen and begins unloading the bags.

INT. COOK'S HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Mumford is comparing different stepladders. MR. COOK, the sixty-ish proprietor, has been watching from a distance, but now –

COOK

Dr. Mumford.

MUMFORD

(doesn't really know

him)
Mr. Cook.

COOK
Could you come with me please?

Mystified, Mumford follows Cook through the door into the back.

BACK OF THE STORE. Cook motions for Mumford to take the seat of honor in the work area, but Mumford prefers to stand. Cook has a little trouble figuring how to start. Finally –

COOK
I know I shoulda come to your office.
I was gonna, actually, but then when
you walked in here today...

MUMFORD
Uh-huh.

COOK
It's my daughter Sofie... she's gotta
problem.

MUMFORD
What's that?

COOK
We're not sure. She's been to all
kinds of doctors in the city and
they've said different things. Some
of 'em are callin' it –
(wants to get this
right)
– Epstein-Barr virus, and the rest
are callin' it... Chronic Fatigue
Symptom...

MUMFORD
Syndrome... Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

COOK
That's it – syndrome. So you know
all about it?

MUMFORD

No... a little. There's a lot of debate about it.

COOK

Yeah, I got that. Some people think it's all in their heads.

(more intense)

It's been so bad she's had to move back here to Mumford and live with us. And I'm not sure that's the best thing, either...

MUMFORD

Why's that?

COOK

Oh... a lot of things. Several different factors. Will you see her, Doctor Mumford?

MUMFORD

Sure. Why don't you bring her up to my office at 3 tomorrow afternoon.

Cook nods, but looks worried.

COOK

I'm not sure she'll come. She's in a mood. Do you ever go to somebody's house?

MUMFORD

Generally that doesn't work out so well. It sends the wrong message to people who need to make a change.

Cook is quick to agree; he doesn't want to make waves. But he's worried.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Mumford is walking up the busy sidewalk carrying his new 5-foot stepladder hooked on his shoulder. Folks greet him.

Suddenly Lionel appears in front of Mumford, who stops.

MUMFORD

Hello, Lionel.

LIONEL

You've got to have the right ladder for the job. You don't know what you're doing, you can get yourself in trouble.

MUMFORD

You're right, as usual. See you.

Mumford continues up the street. We STAY WITH Lionel, who watches Mumford with a sour look, then turns to enter a small medical building.

INT. DR. DELBANCO'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. ERNEST DELBANCO, a middle-aged psychiatrist with longish, vanity hair, and PHYLLIS SHEELER, a psychologist in her thirties, sit on the doctor's comfortable furniture, listening. The remains of their take-out lunch is on the coffee table. They seem a little impatient with their as-yet-unseen visitor –

LIONEL (O.S.)

...completely inappropriate and highly unprofessional. Now I don't want to presume to tell you how to run your businesses –

SHEELER

– practices.

Lionel is sitting across the room, making an ardent case –

LIONEL

– Whatever. Six months ago, you two were the only games in town. The value of your...
(mocking)
..."practices" could be seriously undermined by this bozo. A town this

size has only so many headcases to go around.

DELBANCO

What exactly would you have us do, Lionel?

LIONEL

Protect your turf! Check this guy out. I smell a rat, I tell you.

Delbanco and Sheeler exchange a look; they find Lionel distasteful.

SHEELER

Mr. Dillard, I'm sure Dr. Delbanco shares my gratitude for your concern. But I also know he'd agree that you misunderstand the nature of our calling to mental health. We're not in some... widget business, trying to crush our competition.

LIONEL

What the hell's a widget?

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE DR. DELBANCO'S OFFICE - DAY

Lionel comes out of the office, miffed, and goes down the stairs. A moment later, the door opens slightly and Delbanco peeks out to make sure Lionel is gone. He closes the door on us.

INT. DR. DELBANCO'S OFFICE - DAY

Delbanco stands at the door looking across the room at Sheeler.

DELBANCO

What an asshole!

SHEELER

(agrees)

Ernest, what do you think?

DELBANCO
I think he's got a point.

So does she.

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

Idyllic. The beautifully manicured field is surrounded by lush woods. Standing about forty feet apart, Mumford and Skip are alone on the field throwing a baseball back and forth. For quite a while the only sounds are the birds, the wind, and the regular SLAP of ball into glove. Finally –

SKIP
This is great!

SLAP... SLAP.

SKIP
This is exactly what I wanted.

SLAP... SLAP.

MUMFORD
Skip, you must have lots of people
you can throw a ball with.

SKIP
You'd be surprised. Most guys have
kids or wives or girlfriends. They're
busy. It's not as easy as you think.

MUMFORD
Skip, you're the head of the whole
deal here. Are they busier than you?

SKIP
Well, you know... that's the thing.
Like I said, just about everybody in
town works for me. And it's just not
the same asking someone to throw a
ball when they work for you. It's
like an order or something... And no
one – no one – asks me.

Mumford considers. SLAP... SLAP... SLAP.

MUMFORD

So, would you say we're out here...
let me think how to put this... Is
your problem really that you're...
lonely?

SKIP

Don't you like this?

MUMFORD

Hell yes, I like it. What's better
than this? Most guys would kill just
to have someone do this with them
whenever they like.

SKIP

Okay then.
(SLAP... SLAP)
Have you got a lot of friends?

MUMFORD

("nope")
Lily and I talk a bit. You know Lily,
runs the coffee shop?

SKIP

No... I've seen her. Good-looking
woman.

MUMFORD

(agrees)
She's probably ten years older than
you.

SKIP

(SLAP... SLAP)
Good-looking woman.

MUMFORD

Lives downstairs from me. She's got
a great dog named for Danny Ainge.

SKIP

(sparks to that)
Really? I'm the only person I know
that likes Danny Ainge, outside of
Celtic fans. Maybe Phoenix.

MUMFORD
Well, there's Lily.

SKIP
Did you know that Danny Ainge was
drafted by the Blue Jays? Do you
know what kind of athlete you have
to be to play in the NBA and in the
biggs?

MUMFORD
Amazing.

SKIP
Unbelievable...
(SLAP... SLAP)
...And Lily named her dog after him?
Far out.

MUMFORD
What kind of person do you have to
be to do this?

Mumford gestures off in the one direction we have not yet
seen.

SKIP
What?

MUMFORD
This –

CUT TO:

REVERSE ANGLE: The baseball diamond is sitting in the vast,
lush grounds behind the PANDA MODEM WORLD HEADQUARTERS, a
brand new, distinctively original, high-tech office park.
Wherever there is an opportunity for tasteful signage, it is
in the motif of a Giant Panda – sweet white face, black
eyes and ears, round body.

Skip is suddenly self-conscious, embarrassed.

SKIP

I would've traded any of it to have made the Mumford High varsity.

Mumford takes that in. SLAP... SLAP.

SKIP

So I guess Henry Follett is a patient of yours. He's my pharmacist.

MUMFORD

Yeah.

(SLAP... SLAP)

Guy's got some serious sex fantasies.

Skip is a little surprised to hear this from Mumford, but he just throws the ball.

MUMFORD

Pretty good, too. Lots of detail. Nothing hard core. Old-fashioned ones, from back when people cared about atmosphere and character.

SKIP

Uh-huh.

MUMFORD

Problem is, his fantasy life's a lot better than his real one. Nothing can live up to it. His wife got sick of it and left him. Took his kids with her.

SKIP

I wondered what happened to her...

Skip is fascinated, but a little uncomfortable. Mumford seems oblivious, unusually talkative –

MUMFORD

Of course, it's not that simple.

There's something powerful going on there. We've got a lot of work to do.

(announcer voice)

It's hit to the warning track!

For the first time, Mumford throws the ball way high, like a long fly ball. Skip, delighted as a dog, takes off running and just barely catches it on the run. He pegs it back to Mumford.

MUMFORD

In these fantasies, Henry Follett is played by a handsome guy with biceps. Can you imagine that? Where your self-esteem has to be?

(throws him the ball)

Man, I'd just like to move the guy to the point where he gets to appear in his own fantasies.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Silence. Nessa sits staring at Mumford defiantly, an unlit cigarette in her mouth. Mumford looks at the clock – 3:00 – and stands up, session over. Nessa quickly lights her cigarette with the lighter concealed in her hand and stands up too. She exhales a huge cloud of smoke and walks quickly to the back door of the office, which Mumford has opened for her, and goes out.

Mumford waves half-heartedly at the cloud of smoke as he walks to the door to the waiting room and opens it.

MUMFORD'S POV: As the door swings open, the first figure we see is Mr. Cook; he twists around at the sound of the door. He acknowledges Mumford and then sighs as he steps aside to reveal, sitting exhausted in a chair, his daughter –

SOFIE – a young woman whose actual appearance is somewhat disguised at present by her wan, ashen visage. She regards Mumford with some resignation. Her father helps her out of the chair. Sofie keeps her eyes on Mumford.

CLOSE ON Mumford, watching her.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

LATER. Mr. Cook is gone. Sofie is sitting up on the couch, facing Mumford. She looks like she might pass out at any moment, but her voice is stronger than you'd expect.

MUMFORD

Feel free to lie down. Most people do.

SOFIE

I'd better not, I'll fall right to sleep. I think it's too soon for me to be sleeping with you.

A joke. Mumford smiles.

MUMFORD

What can you tell me about this?

SOFIE

Oh, lord. It's almost too exhausting to tell you...

(tiny smile, to herself)

...about my exhaustion. I didn't really want to come. I'm not hopeful right now. But I couldn't take the look on my dad's face. He's a truly kind person, which is pretty extraordinary if you knew the story. He's the opposite of me, I guess – all stamina and resolve.

It's taken all her energy to say this and she sinks down a bit into the couch.

MUMFORD

When did you start to feel this way?

SOFIE

About six months ago, I guess it is now. God, it seems like years. What a bore! I'm embarrassed by it. Before this happened – when I'd hear people

talk about this kind of thing – I
thought it was a bunch of bullshit.

She sees something in his face and suddenly laughs – it's a
weak but magical sound.

MUMFORD
What?

SOFIE
You think that now! You think it's a
bunch of hooley, don't you?

MUMFORD
(unconvincing)
No.

SOFIE
I saw it. I saw it in your eyes.

Mumford is knocked off balance – she's right. She saw him
clearly.

SOFIE
That's okay. Maybe it is. My mother
always says – "Everything that's
wrong with you is in your head." I
suppose that's true.

MUMFORD
Back when this started, was there
anything unusual happening in your
life? A change of job, of living
situation... a loss of some kind?

SOFIE
No... but it started one year to the
day after my divorce became final.
That's not too suspicious, is it?...
But it wasn't like I was feeling bad
about the divorce. Just the opposite.

MUMFORD
Hmm.

SOFIE

Hmm? Is that a professional opinion?

MUMFORD

Hmm, as in – that's interesting.
Sometimes, with enough clues, it's possible to figure these things out.

SOFIE

Even if you don't think it's real?

MUMFORD

I don't know what's real and what isn't. That's never been my strong suit. But if you're tired all the time and you've had to give up the life you were having and come back home when you didn't want to... that's worth trying to fix. Maybe I can help you do that.

SOFIE

What would you do?

MUMFORD

We... we would try several things.
But I need to see you a lot.

SOFIE

I don't know. I barely made it today.

MUMFORD

I'll come to you. We'll try a little walking.

Sofie suddenly looks defeated.

MUMFORD

We'll take it slow. You'll never feel you can't handle it.

SOFIE

I don't think I can afford it. I don't want my dad paying.

MUMFORD
We'll work it out.

Sofie gives him a long look.

SOFIE
You have the best answer for
everything.
(Mumford shrugs)
You seem so... hopeful. Are you always
this sunny?

MUMFORD
No one ever thought so. You must
bring it out.

SOFIE
Is it contagious? 'Cause everyone
agrees my immune system's way down.

MUMFORD
Maybe you'll catch it.

SOFIE
Can I ask you something?
(Mumford: of course)
Didn't you tell my dad you didn't
think it was a good idea to come to
the patient?
(he admits it)
So what changed?

Mumford just smiles. He doesn't want to tell her the truth –
everything.

EXT. BROCKETT HOUSE - MAGIC

A taxi drops Mumford in front of the Brockett's large and
beautiful house, which sits on an isolated lot on the
outskirts of town.

INT. HALLWAY TO BACK VERANDA, BROCKETT HOUSE - MAGIC

Althea leads Mumford toward the back of the lavishly appointed
house. The weird thing, what gets in the way of the decor,

is the cardboard boxes of all sizes which are stacked everywhere. Many are unopened, but the rest are spilling their styrofoam-nugget and bubble-wrap guts to reveal some hint of their contents: a huge variety of catalogue-ordered housewares, clothing, linens, gadgets, and knickknacks. If it can be ordered from an upscale catalogue (and everything can), it is here. Althea sounds very nervous, cheery.

ALTHEA

– sorry everything's in such an uproar. Lots of big occasions coming up, and of course Christmas is only eight months away –

(giggles uncontrollably)

– I don't know what's keeping Jeremy. You know he stays in the city three nights a week – I guess I explained that...

(Mumford nods)

...I know Katie's here, but I'm not so sure about Martin... I'm making dinner myself tonight, so I'll have to leave you, I'm afraid...

EXT. REAR VERANDA, BROCKETT HOUSE - MAGIC

They come out onto the wide porch, which commands a spectacular view of the surrounding countryside. There's an elaborate bar cart out here, which Althea points Mumford toward.

ALTHEA

I'm awful I know, but will you please help yourself. I just got a new copper sauciere from Williams-Sonoma and I'm afraid it'll be the death of us all if I don't get back in there...

She disappears inside with a bang of the screen door. Mumford gets a drink for himself, taking in the view. He sees something out there.

MUMFORD'S POV: Way in the distance, coming out of the woods and down toward the house is a teenage boy.

KATIE (O.S.)
You're the doctor, aren't you?

Mumford turns to see that Althea's thirteen year old daughter KATIE has silently appeared. Her jeans and little tee-shirt are meant to be sexy; it seems sad on her. Mumford nods.

MUMFORD
You must be Katie. People call me
Doc.

KATIE
(motioning urgently)
C'mere. Quick... c'mon!

Mumford follows as she disappears around the corner of the porch.

INT. SIDE HALL, BROCKETT HOUSE - MAGIC

Mumford follows Katie into a gloomy hall from a side entrance. Here too, the walls are lined with boxes. She tiptoes to one of two facing doors and waits for him.

When he has joined her, she motions him back a foot for safety, then carefully opens the door to a large walk-in closet. Katie's caution becomes understandable: the space is packed so fully and chaotically with catalogue item cartons that it might come tumbling out the door with one careless move. Katie closes the door, then pirouettes to the opposing door, which she swings open freely – REVEALING: what was once a study is now completely filled with hundreds of cartons, in an infinite variety of shapes and sizes.

Mumford is taken aback. Katie points at packages and speaks in a hypnotic WHISPER –

KATIE
Cuddledown... Linen & Lace... Scully
& Scully... Smith & Hawken... Plow &
Hearth... Museum of Modern Art...
Smithsonian Museum... J. Crew...
Wolferman's... Hold Everything...
Nieman Marcus... Coldwater Creek...
Garnett Hill... Norm Thompson...

Victoria's Secret... Sharper Image...
Hammacher Schlemmer...

EXT. REAR VERANDA, BROCKETT HOUSE - MAGIC

Just as Mumford and Katie come back around the corner, MARTIN, Althea's sixteen year old son, crosses the yard and comes up onto the porch. He's wearing an old black leather jacket with a lot of zippers, dirty jeans and black Converse All-Stars that are coming apart. In his hand, casually but properly held, is a .22 caliber rifle. He looks Mumford over.

MARTIN

Is this him?

KATIE

(nods)

I showed him.

MARTIN

(to Mumford)

Do you get it now? This is no joke.

Mumford takes them both in and nods. He understands. Suddenly, their manner changes, for the worse. What they can see that Mumford cannot is JEREMY BROCKETT, Althea's husband, who has come to the back screen door, with the bustle of a late arrival.

JEREMY

Hey, kids. Oh, hi.

Seeing Mumford, Jeremy steps out onto the porch to shake his hand. Jeremy is quite handsome and a fantastic dresser; his Armani outfit cost \$4200 all in. His tone: hearty and strained –

JEREMY

You must be Dr. Mumford of Mumford.
Jeremy Brockett.

MUMFORD

Doc. Nice to meet you.

JEREMY

Sorry I'm late... traffic was a

motherfucker. Have another drink,
I'll be back in five.

Jeremy goes inside. Martin and Katie exchange a look with each other, then to Mumford. Martin goes inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REAR VERANDA, BROCKETT HOUSE - NIGHT

LATER. Dinner is over. Jeremy comes out onto the veranda carrying two Cuban cigars. His casual outfit is as stylish and pricey as his work outfit. He joins Mumford and Althea, who immediately gets up.

ALTHEA

I'll be back.

She goes inside. The men each have a snifter of cognac. Jeremy makes a ceremony of cutting the cigars –

JEREMY

I think you'll like this. Know much
about Cuban cigars?

MUMFORD

Nope.

Jeremy puts the cigars down, pulls a joint out of his cashmere pullover and fires it up. After exhaling a huge cloud of smoke, he offers the joint to Mumford, who declines.

JEREMY

Makes the whole thing that much
better.

Jeremy takes another hit on the joint and puts it down. He gives a cigar and his gold lighter to Mumford, who begins to light up –

JEREMY

Just hold the flame a little bit
below the end... that's it... now
just turn it slowly as you draw...

Mumford does as he's told. Jeremy lights his own cigar.

JEREMY

Are you a man who likes to treat himself right?

MUMFORD

I've had my moments.

JEREMY

I am. And I'm not ashamed of it. Nobody ever said on their death bed – "I treated myself too well."

MUMFORD

I thought it was – Nobody ever said, "I should have spent more time at the office."

JEREMY

Fill in the blank. I don't mind the office. The point is, you only go 'round once. Like the Zens say – Be here now.

MUMFORD

What do you do?

JEREMY

Althea hasn't told you?

MUMFORD

(no)

We've been talking about her, mostly.

JEREMY

Well, in '85 four of us left our firms and formed an investment banking venture. We've got twenty-three people working there now.

MUMFORD

You've done well.

The marijuana is kicking in now – Jeremy gets a self-

satisfied, condescending look on his face that no straight mind would dare. His response includes their lavish immediate surroundings—

JEREMY

We've done... very well. You know anything about addiction, Doc?

MUMFORD

A little.

JEREMY

Well, I'm addicted to winning. I say when you're in the red zone, you gotta score.

(watches Mumford smoke)

So what do you think?

MUMFORD

Tastes good.

JEREMY

No... I mean about Althea. About her...

(makes a face)

...behavior. Do you think you can fix her up?

MUMFORD

What do you think's wrong with her?

JEREMY

She's gone weird is what's wrong with her. Out of control. Probably from living out here in Mayberry.

Jeremy blows cigar smoke into his snifter, then takes a mouthful of cognac, savoring the sensations. Mumford watches, fascinated by this guy.

JEREMY

You're the doctor, what do you think?

MUMFORD

She seems very unhappy.

Jeremy gives him a look, as if to say "duh."

JEREMY

I think we all knew that, professor.
The question... the real –
(drawn out, stoned)
– quest-tio-nee... is... why?

Mumford looks at him a long time.

EXT. ROAD INTO MUMFORD - NIGHT

Jeremy Brockett's Mercedes 500 SL whips around a curve.

INT. BROCKETT'S MERCEDES - NIGHT

Martin is driving Mumford back to town.

MARTIN

But you know how to drive?

MUMFORD

Sure.

MARTIN

Got a license?
(yes)
But no car?

MUMFORD

Don't need it.

MARTIN

I just got my license two weeks ago.

MUMFORD

You're good.

MARTIN

I been drivin' since I was twelve.

MUMFORD

That would explain it.

MARTIN
Can you help Mom?

MUMFORD
I'm trying.

MARTIN
(intense)
Got to.

They drive in silence for a bit. Then –

MARTIN
Nessa Watkins... She comes to you,
doesn't she? You're treating her,
right?

Mumford gives him a surprised look, then acknowledges it.

MARTIN
What's wrong with her?

MUMFORD
Is she a friend of yours?

MARTIN
No... sort of. Man, she could be
cool, but all she does is get wrecked
and do all the guys. She's blowin'
them in the parking lot.

Mumford knew that.

MARTIN
A person's got to hate themselves to
act like that.

Mumford regards Martin with respect, then turns to look out
front. After a few moments –

MARTIN
Have you ever met a bigger shithhead
than my stepfather?

EXT. THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Lily is walking Ainge as the Mercedes pulls up and Mumford gets out. Ainge runs happily around the car and puts his paws up on the driver's door to greet Martin; we HEAR the clicking SCRATCH of his nails on the surface. Martin rubs the dog's head.

LILY
Ainge!

MARTIN
That's okay. Jeremy won't mind. Good dog.

LILY
Ainge!

The dog obediently leaves Martin and runs back to Lily. Mumford waves as Martin pulls away.

LILY
(to Ainge)
Do we run into the street? No, I didn't think so.
(looks after Martin)
Nice car. How's that place?

MUMFORD
It's a pretty piece of land.

They walk up the block with the dog.

LILY
And the Brocketts?

MUMFORD
Horror show. What'd you do tonight?

LILY
It was insane here, man. 'Hadda call in the National Guard.
(he nods)
Then I did my laundry... watched 20/20.

MUMFORD

...And?

LILY

Shocking. Did you know the government is wasteful?

(Mumford reacts)

You heard it here first. Oh, and being a supermodel... it's no walk in the park.

MUMFORD

Why do you watch?

LILY

No gentleman caller, Doc.

(they turn back)

Not that I care. I've had it with men. They're so fascinated by their own crap. Took me four years to get the last one out. Almost turned me into a dyke... These days my idea of a hot date is a long shower by myself before bed. Now that feels good. And you don't have to do all that... listening.

Mumford laughs.

LILY

Oops... sorry. I guess that's the story of your life.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

TIGHT ON COMPUTER SCREEN. A health information "library" website has been called up on Mumford's office computer. Right now it's beginning to spew information about "CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME" – Definitions, Signs and Symptoms, Diagnostic Measures, etc.

Mumford is hunched over the computer, reading avidly. His printer is churning out hard copies.

EXT. FRONT PORCH, COOK HOUSE - DAY

Mumford comes out the front door and holds it open for Sofie. He offers his arm and she takes it tentatively.

SOFIE

I'm not making any promises.

MUMFORD

We'll turn back anytime you want.

SOFIE

(seeing something)

Oh boy... this should be interesting.

Mumford looks out toward the street. A woman in her fifties is turning into the front walk. She stares at them, unsmiling, as the two parties converge. She is MRS. COOK.

SOFIE

Hello, Mother. I want you to meet Dr. Mumford.

MRS. COOK

Mumford... like the town?

MUMFORD

(offering his hand)

Yes. It's nice to meet you, Mrs. Cook.

She finally takes his hand, but it's not friendly.

MRS. COOK

What's happening here?

SOFIE

We're going for a walk.

MRS. COOK

Do you think that's a good idea?

SOFIE

Dr. Mumford does, yes. I've put myself completely in his hands. For today, anyway.

MRS. COOK
What kind of doctor are you?

MUMFORD
Ph.D., psychologist.

MRS. COOK
Oh... not a real doctor.

MUMFORD
That's right, the fake kind.

Mrs. Cook is not amused. Sofie pulls on Mumford.

SOFIE
We'd better go or I'm liable to bail
on the whole thing.

Mrs. Cook steps aside as they move up the walk.

EXT. SIDEWALK, NEAR THE COOK HOUSE - DAY

Mumford and Sofie, foreground, walk slowly up the block. In the background, Mrs. Cook watches for awhile before going inside.

SOFIE
Mom's such a cutie.

MUMFORD
People usually have to get to know
me before they hate me.

SOFIE
She's not in a bad mood. She's like
that all the time.
(a beat)
It doesn't bother me anymore. It's
my dad and my brother I worry about.

MUMFORD
Maybe... but you're the one whose
ass is dragging.

SOFIE

(laughs)

Is that the technical description of what I've got?

MUMFORD

Is she against you getting help?

SOFIE

We don't discuss it.

MUMFORD

Something's bothering her.

SOFIE

Oh, we've all disappointed her. Me, especially, but Dad, of course. She thinks my brother's all right, but she didn't expect much. It's what happens when you "marry beneath yourself"...

Sofie suddenly seems to be fading.

MUMFORD

Please... forgive me.

SOFIE

What?

MUMFORD

Negative thinking makes everything more difficult. If you're going to have enough strength to do this, we have to talk only about positive things. All right?

She looks at him, unsure if he's serious. It seems so corny. But she agrees.

MUMFORD

Okay then... Are you positive your mother's a bitch?

(she laughs, surprised)

Just kidding.

SOFIE
You've got a funny idea of funny.

MUMFORD
(seems worried)
I've offended you!

SOFIE
No.

MUMFORD
Really? What would it take?

She laughs again; surprised again. He's got her off balance makes a "rim shot" sound.

SOFIE
Is this the treatment?

MUMFORD
Sorry... I'm done.

SOFIE
'Cause I'll tell you, none of the
others have tried this approach.

They've come to the corner. He gestures to ask – "shall we cross?" She considers for quite a while, gauging her strength, then, still on his arm, steps off the curb –

SOFIE
(absurdly unconvincing)
Hey, 'Just do it!'

THEY CROSS OUT OF FRAME as we HEAR:

MUMFORD (O.S.)
I want you to tell me all your
symptoms.

EXT. PATH BY RIVER - DAY

ANOTHER DAY. They're dressed differently. Sofie seems more vigorous.

SOFIE

I'm embarrassed. The list is so long.

MUMFORD

Be specific.

SOFIE

Well... I'm tired all the time, obviously. I always feel like taking a nap. But when I try to sleep, I have trouble.

(Mumford nods)

My muscles ache. And my joints. I feel like an old person, or like I did back when I used to work out too hard... What else?...

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON COMPUTER SCREEN. Under the list of Signs and Symptoms: "Sore throat."

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Sore throat?

SOFIE (V.O.)

Uh-huh.

ON THE SCREEN: "Low grade fever... Painful lymph glands... Irritability..."

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Low grade fever?

EXT. PATH BY RIVER - DAY

Sofie nods.

MUMFORD

Painful lymph glands?

(yes)

Forgetfulness... irritability... depression?

SOFIE

Yes, yes, and definitely yes. Also...
I get confused.

MUMFORD

Yeah, most people have that. It's
confusing here.

SOFIE

Where?

MUMFORD

Life.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD - DAY

ANOTHER DAY. Mumford is leading Sofie through the lightest set of calisthenics ever devised. Now they're doing waist bends and arm waving. Even so, it's taking everything Sofie's got.

SOFIE

I don't know if I mentioned the
headaches.

MUMFORD

Did you get headaches before this?
(Sofie: yes)
But you get more now? Or more severe?

SOFIE

No, not really. They're about the
same. My marriage was one long
headache.

MUMFORD

So the headaches may not even be a
part of this?

She considers that, reluctantly agrees.

MUMFORD

I can give myself a headache
instantly.

SOFIE

Is that like a party trick?

MUMFORD

All I have to do is have two conflicting thoughts at the same time... Like I'll think – 'Taking these walks is going to help Sofie get better.' But then I'll also think – 'Mumford, you just enjoy taking these walks and you're kidding yourself about the benefits.'

Sofie's not sure how to take that. She looks away.

MUMFORD

There... I've given myself a real whopper.

SOFIE

You actually address yourself by name in your thoughts?

(Mumford laughs)

So you really think having two opposing ideas in your head does some kind of damage?

MUMFORD

Sometimes, yeah... pulling in two different directions at once. It makes tiny little tears in our fabric.

SOFIE

Well then, my life has been some kind of huge rip.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE (IN HENRY FOLLETT'S FANTASY) - DAY

The handsome Newcomer of Follett's fantasy comes down the steps from the attic wearing a sleeveless undershirt, towel thrown over his shoulder. He goes into the bathroom off the second floor hall and begins to wash up. [Again, Follett's fantasy world is in BLACK & WHITE.]

FOLLETT (V.O.)

The town was a rube's heaven, but I found work my first day out down at Old Man Sutter's gas station and diner. I knew his stacked young wife was going to be a problem, but, hey, life is full of problems. Back at the boarding house, I was washing up when I heard a load of yellin' and –

IN THE BATHROOM MIRROR, the Newcomer's POV: a nubile teenager, 17 going on 35, in a tight cheerleader's outfit, comes up the stairs and stops at the top to turn and yell back down at her mother. Her dialogue distant and echoey:

LANDLADY'S DAUGHTER
...get off my case! You don't like any of my friends...

FOLLETT (V.O.)
...I got my first look at the landlady's daughter.

The LANDLADY'S DAUGHTER looks up and sees the Newcomer watching her through the half-open bathroom door. She gives him a petulant, white-hot look, then turns on her heel and goes into her room at that end of the hall. She bangs her door behind her, but it bounces open again about a foot. The Newcomer, still watching in the bathroom mirror, now has a view of the bureau mirror in the Landlady's Daughter's room. In there, seemingly oblivious, the girl quickly strips off the top of her outfit, revealing a '50's-era white bra.

FOLLETT (V.O.)
Lucky for me, she was plenty upset but not too careful.

Suddenly, in mirror reflection of mirror, the Landlady's Daughter meets the Newcomer's smoldering stare and her lip begins to curl.

FOLLETT (V.O.)
Or maybe it wasn't an accident at all –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Mr. Follett.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

– 'cause in that instant I saw the beginning of a vixen's smile and I knew –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Henry!

Mysteriously, the door to the girl's bedroom slams shut, cutting off the Newcomer's view. He looks with surprise into his mirror – it suddenly shatters.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Follett sits up abruptly on the couch and twists toward Mumford, agitated.

FOLLETT

What?

MUMFORD

Stop now.

FOLLETT

Why? I'm paying for this.

MUMFORD

Not for this. Not me, you're not.

FOLLETT

(challenging)

You find it distasteful, don't you?

MUMFORD

It doesn't matter how I feel about it. It's how you feel about it that matters.

FOLLETT

I enjoy it. Does that make me some kind of pervert? Just because a man has a rich imaginative life –

MUMFORD

You didn't come to me because you
have a rich imagination.

FOLLETT

No?

MUMFORD

You came because it's taking over.
You're in its grip.

FOLLETT

I never said that.

Mumford's tone suddenly picks up a touch of steel.

MUMFORD

Where's your wife, Henry?

Follett flinches, settles back down onto the couch, sulking.

MUMFORD

Where's your wife, Henry?

FOLLETT

Go to hell.

MUMFORD

(softer)

I didn't hear you.

Follett mutters something to himself, then is silent until –

FOLLETT

We got divorced.

(petulant)

I had to get rid of her. She couldn't
satisfy me.

MUMFORD

(shouts, Follett jumps)

What?!

Follett seems to shrink in size. They've been here before
and he doesn't like it.

FOLLETT
(softly)
I was... never satisfied.

MUMFORD
(normal again)
Now we're back on track.

Again, Follett says something under his breath.

MUMFORD
What's that?

FOLLETT
(long beat)
You are so mean.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - MAGIC

Mumford strides up the trail on his late day excursion. He comes around a bend and is surprised to find Skip waiting for him, looking serious.

MUMFORD
Hey, Skip.

SKIP
Doc. I know we're not supposed to get together till Wednesday...

MUMFORD
That's all right. What's on your mind?

Mumford indicates that Skip should walk with him up the trail.

SKIP
How many sessions have we had now, Doc?
(Mumford tries to remember)
Six. And it's been good... like we were two buddies hanging out. Just shootin' the shit.

MUMFORD

Yep.

They walk in silence for a while.

SKIP

This is really hard. Everything I want to say is hard...

EXT. BIG ROCK LOOKOUT POINT - MAGIC

Mumford and Skip come out of the trees, climb onto the big rock, and settle down. The sun is falling over the town of Mumford.

SKIP

...We're like friends, almost... who trust each other.

He checks Mumford's reaction. Mumford nods, offers Skip water, who turns it down. Mumford takes a swig.

SKIP

I want to tell you something, Doc, but before I do, I need to ask you a question... Because, for me to tell you this thing – well, I haven't told anybody about this. It's the biggest secret I've got.

MUMFORD

Sometimes it's best to keep a few things just for ourselves.

SKIP

You're a shrink, Doc. Aren't I supposed to be able to tell you everything?

MUMFORD

It's just a thought.

Skip, even more unsure now, looks away, at the town below.

SKIP

That really relates to the thing I want to ask you... I've noticed that sometimes, not a lot, but sometimes, when we're hanging out, throwin' the ball... or that time we went bowling... sometimes you'll like –
(gets it out fast –)
– tell me things about your other patients.

Mumford lets that hang a few moments, then acknowledges it silently. Now Skip is even more nervous.

SKIP

Hey, maybe that's all right! I don't know all that much about psychology or therapy or... ethics, so maybe there's something I missed... or something...

MUMFORD

You're concerned that maybe I can't be trusted with a secret.

SKIP

I trust you. Definitely. No question. But, yeah, I'm a little concerned. I mean, you're not supposed to tell anyone about your patients' problems... are you?

Mumford looks at Skip for a long moment.

MUMFORD

That is correct, Skip. I'm going to have to take a long look at that.

The conversation seems to end there. Skip's not sure where to go next. Finally –

SKIP

Yeah, well... what I was gonna tell you –

MUMFORD

– Skip. Knowing what you do about me –

SKIP

Doc, I trust you! You've listened to me better than anybody... maybe ever.

(leans in, intense)

And this secret I've got, I can't stand it anymore. I don't know if I'm some kind of –

Skip looks around at the darkening woods, though clearly there's no one around.

SKIP

– I don't know if I'm a pervert or what. It's taken me this long to get where I can come out and say it... I can't back away now. I can't spend another day not knowing if I'm nuts.

Skip closes his eyes for a second and gathers himself.

SKIP

All right, I'm just gonna tell you, as simple and direct as I can.

(one last spasm of doubt)

And you understand that this is a big secret? Just between us?

(Mumford does)

Okay. You know I've got this gift for certain kinds of... machines.

MUMFORD

You are Panda, monarch of modems.

SKIP

That's right. And you also know that even though I make 23% of the modems in the world... I cannot make one simple connection with any woman who could truly love me.

MUMFORD

Okay... let's say that, for now.

SKIP

It's true, believe me. So... do you know what I've been doing, all alone, in my workshop, for almost two years?... Mr. Find-the-Need-and-Fill-It. How I spend my every solitary hour?

Mumford shakes his head, "no."

SKIP

Guess.

(Mumford demurs)

Go ahead, guess!

MUMFORD

(if he must)

Jerking off?

SKIP

No!... Although that's a good guess. No, what I've been working on, what the world really needs and no one has been able to create –
(leans in, whispering)
– a virtually life-like, humanoid, gender-specific, anatomically functional... sexual surrogate slash companion.

Mumford tries to put that all together. Finally –

MUMFORD

Slash what?

SKIP

Sexual surrogate... slash... companion.

MUMFORD

A doll?

SKIP

No, Doc, not a doll. I am Panda. I'm talking about much, much more than a doll. The world has never seen what I'm talking about... except maybe in the movies.

Mumford considers that a long time, watching as the sun finally sinks below the horizon. He looks back at Skip.

MUMFORD

How's it coming?

SKIP

You don't think I'm insane?

MUMFORD

("no")

And that's your secret?

(Skip: "yes")

You meant – like a trade secret?

SKIP

No, Doc, a private secret! It's perverted, it's pitiful. What am I – Dr. Frankenstein? Aren't you repulsed?

MUMFORD

Sounds like kind of a good idea.

SKIP

(nonplussed)

Really?

MUMFORD

Definitely.

It's getting dark fast now. Mumford reaches into his bag and takes out the headlamp we saw earlier. He fits the straps carefully over his head.

MUMFORD

Skip, that's not much of a secret.

SKIP

(hurt)
It's not?

MUMFORD

Oh, it's okay. It's just not something to be ashamed of. Maybe you don't want people knowing – and believe me, it's safe with me – but on the scale of dirty little secrets, I'd give it, say... a two.

Mumford twists the headlamp and the light shines out in the dusk. Mumford turns the beam directly at Skip.

MUMFORD

You want to know a secret? I'll tell you a secret. Since it's just between us and all...

Skip, hanging on every word now, agrees emphatically.

MUMFORD

The secret, Skip, is this – I am not now, nor have I ever been... a psychologist.

At first, Skip thinks he's misunderstood Mumford. But in the huge silence that ensues, he replays it and knows he's heard right. Mumford looks around, adjusts his headlamp, and gets up.

MUMFORD

We'd better get going. Just follow my light. And, Skip, watch your step.

EXT. MUMFORD'S PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

This porch is directly above Lily's porch. Mumford and Skip sit nursing beers. There's a cooler on the floor. Mumford's legs are propped up on the porch railing

SKIP

Who else knows?

MUMFORD

Just you.

SKIP

It's time you did some talkin', Dr.
Mum – Wait a minute. That is your
name, isn't it?

Mumford takes a drink of beer.

SKIP

Damn! What is your name?

MUMFORD

Doesn't matter. You can call me Doc.

SKIP

It matters to me.

Mumford gestures: "sorry, no can do."

SKIP

I've told you a lot of private stuff.

MUMFORD

I can tell you anything else.

SKIP

What about everything? How did this
happen?

Mumford looks at Skip, considering. He takes a long pull
from his beer, then looks at the frosty bottle.

MUMFORD

Did you know that every species of
mammal has found some way to drug,
inebriate, or anesthetize itself?
Even if it's just banging its head
against a rock. Seems to be some
natural urge... to get away for a
while.

(one more look at
Skip)

I've had it for as long as I can
remember. The first place I wanted

out of was home...

AS MUMFORD TALKS we SEE IMAGES FROM HIS PAST, all FROM MUMFORD'S POV. We do not see him in the scenes. Instead, everyone else in the scene RELATES TO THE CAMERA AS MUMFORD, even if they're just ignoring him.

EXT. MUMFORD'S CHILDHOOD HOME, BALD KNOB, WEST VIRGINIA -
MAGIC

MOVING FAST (MUMFORD'S CHILDHOOD POV) toward the back door of a rundown, little house in a poor mining community. We reach the back door and bang inside –

INT. MUMFORD'S CHILDHOOD HOME - MAGIC

The cramped interior is grimy and depressing. MUMFORD'S MOTHER worse for wear, has just put a glass of liquor on the sink and returned her attention to the smoking stovetop. She glances briefly at Mumford and greets him pleasantly, clearly drunk. Suddenly, her attention shifts and we – PAN TO THE FRONT DOOR which is opened roughly by MUMFORD'S FATHER, a coal miner whose face still shows the grime of his work. But it's his scary scowl that impresses. His eyes take in his wife (and her drink) but he says nothing. He barely gives Mumford a glance as he drops his lunch pail on the table and disappears into another room.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I thought I had the best parents in
Bald Knob, West Virginia... till I
was seven years old and got a look
at some others. They weren't bad
folks...

AT THE DINNER TABLE. Across the table, MUMFORD'S OLDER SISTER eats with her head down. On the right, Mumford's Mother is picking at her food. Mumford's POV shifts to his Father, who is yelling something at his wife.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

...but they were real unhappy about
being who they were...

Now, his Father looks suddenly at Mumford; his hand shoots out to slap Mumford's face, and the IMAGE GOES BLACK, then immediately FADES UP AGAIN on –

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM, WEST VIRGINIA - DAY

TIGHT ON A TEST PAPER being laid on an old-fashioned student desk. Scrawled in red pencil at the top: "A – Outstanding!"

TILT UP to the old classroom, full of kids getting their tests back. ACROSS THE AISLE, looking at camera with disgust, is a sixteen year old boy, MUMFORD'S CLASSMATE.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

It made no sense that school came easy for me... I didn't do much work, and there was a proud tradition in my family of being really dumb. My friends didn't like it much. It made them distrust me...

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - NIGHT

FROM INSIDE A HELMET: the brutal chaos of crashing bodies in a Friday night high school football game. Mumford is violently hit. Our view is smashed so deep into the muddy turf that again the IMAGE GOES BLACK, then quickly FADES UP AGAIN on –

INT/EXT. LOVER'S LANE, WOODS - NIGHT

TIGHT ON A CAN OF "IRON CITY" BEER in MUMFORD'S POV as he puts it on the roof of a green Nash Rambler and ducks into the back seat. In the shadows is a teen-age girl, MUMFORD'S DATE. As Mumford moves toward her, she flames a Bic lighter and gleefully lights a fat joint; her blouse is unbuttoned and gaping.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

On the other hand, it made some of my classmates like me better... I don't know what it was in me, maybe some genes from my mom, maybe some discomfort with myself, but early on I was drawn to any substance that made me numb...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Graduation Ceremonies. MUMFORD'S POV moving across a platform toward the diploma being proffered by the PRINCIPAL. PAN TO Mumford's Parents, dressed up and proud, in the audience.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

When I got a scholarship to go out of state to college, I was the first one in my extended family who'd gone beyond high school. At graduation, my folks looked like a normal, happy couple, which I guess they were about 10% of the time... out in public.

INT. UNIVERSITY DORMITORY HALLWAY - DAY

TIGHT ON A DORM ROOM DOOR as it is pushed open. MUMFORD'S NEW ROOMMATE, a crazed, middle-class doper, has his stuff spread around and is settled in the midst of the chaos. He looks up at the arriving Mumford with a maniacal, stoned smile.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

My roommate was from a planet I had never heard of called Scarsdale, where everything was the opposite of West Virginia...

INT. COLLEGE APARTMENT - NIGHT

TIGHT ON A BONG filling with white smoke. We FOLLOW IT UP THE TUBE to a PRETTY COED, who inhales deeply, then blows a seductive cloud directly at Mumford. The room is full of partying students.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

All the other kids, in fact, seemed to know things I didn't. They were friendly enough, but in four years, I never got over feeling that I had sneaked in... and was about to be exposed as the hillbilly and imposter I actually was.

INT. BEDROOM, STUDENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Funky decor, red scarf over the lamp creating a sexy glow. MUMFORD'S POV moves toward an undulating shape hidden by a sheet on the bed. He reaches out and lifts the edge to REVEAL the Pretty Coed, now naked, giggling, her extended hand offering a tab of acid right up to camera.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

The thing that always made those feelings go away was... fun. Fun was drugs, fun was sex, fun was aggressively doing nothing. The only problem I had with degenerate, self-destructive behavior was... I couldn't get enough of it.

INT. UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - DAY

A PROFESSOR approaches camera and lays a fresh examination on the desk in front of Mumford. The problem is – Mumford is so doped up the classroom is swimming and the examination paper keeps changing shape.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

All that fun eventually had an impact on the work I was doing. I figured, what the hell, it was only college, after all. I'd straighten up when I went out in the real world...

INT. OFFICE BUILDING CORRIDOR - NIGHT

TIGHT ON SEVERAL AMPHETAMINE CAPSULES being dumped into Mumford's palm over a water fountain. They disappear toward camera as we dip down toward the stream of water.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I didn't want to jump into my career right out of college. And since I had no career, that turned out to be not much of a problem...

MUMFORD'S POV lifts from the fountain and turns to the

endless, deserted corridor of the huge building. We begin TRACKING DOWN the hall, checking out the various doorways. A Cleaning Crew appears far up ahead.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I had a series of challenging jobs over the next few years...

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

We PAN from the back of a garbage truck to a mess of garbage containers, and MOVE TOWARD THEM.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

TIGHT ON TWO LINES of cocaine. We DIP TOWARD THEM, then UP AGAIN and they're gone. PAN to REVEAL we're in a closet off the brightly-lit office of an all-night gas station. A PATRON is waiting impatiently out by the pumps.

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

BACK TO PRESENT. Skip watches Mumford intently.

MUMFORD

...pizza delivery, pipe fitting, pest control... lots of jobs that started with the letter "p". For some reason, I kept losing these jobs.

(takes a swig of beer)

The only mind-altering substance I never had a problem with was alcohol. I never got drunk. I didn't like the feeling. But really, when you're as fucked up as I was... big deal.

Mumford stands up and stretches, then sits on the railing facing Skip.

MUMFORD

Eventually, doing all these different jobs, I noticed something. For some reason, probably because I was too stoned to talk, everywhere I went –

INT/EXT. SERIES OF SHOTS– TALKING HEADS

We see various CO-WORKERS from Mumford's jobs. The environments are radically different, but the activity is always the same – the Co-Worker in question is pouring his heart out to camera.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

– people would talk to me, tell me everything... their stories, their problems, their innermost thoughts. Sometimes they'd pretend they needed advice, but mostly people just wanted someone to listen.

INT. CRAWLSPACE UNDER HOUSE - DAY

MUMFORD'S MOVING POV as he crawls into the darkness, an insecticide sprayer ahead of him. He pushes at a cinderblock –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Anyway, one day I was spraying for termites when I had a vision –

The cinderblock tips over and a swarm of scary-looking spiders comes rushing out toward camera.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

– it was time to put my college degree to work and get a job with a desk.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICES - DAY

FROM BEHIND A DESK in the middle of a huge sea of desks.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I took the civil service exam and found myself working at the Internal Revenue Service, District 14, Central Administrative Office. I started off as a general records clerk...

SERIES OF SHOTS: computer records scrolling rapidly, paper files being pulled, documents being routed.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I guess the standards weren't too high there, because my superiors got excited and pushed me to take the advancement tests...

INT. YMCA GYM - NIGHT

An intense basketball game. The ball zips from behind camera (Mumford) to an older guy, MUMFORD'S SUPERVISOR, under the basket; he lays it in easily, then comes over to high-five.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

One guy in particular thought I should be a Revenue Officer. There was more money to be made as your classification went up. Which had a lot of appeal to me...

INT. KITCHEN TABLE, MUMFORD'S CITY APARTMENT (PAST) - NIGHT

A COCAINE MILL is loaded with white chunks and screwed shut in MUMFORD'S POV; the steady grinding begins. Spread across the messy kitchen table is the regular user's paraphernalia.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

...since, even though I was certain I could stop anytime I wanted, I had developed a real affection for cocaine. It was my favorite hobby I had ever had.

INT. INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE OFFICES - DAY

MUMFORD'S POV SHIFTS around the office. First, he's looking at an irate TAXPAYER yelling across a desk at a REVENUE OFFICER, who remains unruffled –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

But I sure didn't want to be a Revenue Officer, where you were face to face

abusing – and getting abused – all day long...

His POV PANS with a couple of intense COLLECTION AGENTS who pass behind the first scene on their way out of the offices.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

...And being a Collection Agent was definitely not in my genetic make-up...

His POV STOPS, letting the Collection Agents go, on another fellow, with the disreputable, cocksure demeanor of a private dick, who is lolling near the water cooler, watching the altercation with amusement. He is GREGORY, an IRS INVESTIGATOR.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

But there was one job that looked like it might be fun – Investigator.

SKIP (V.O.)

Are you telling me your last job before becoming a psychologist was –

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

BACK TO PRESENT. Skip is leaning intensely toward Mumford.

SKIP

– an investigator for the Internal Revenue Service?

MUMFORD

Everybody has a story, Skip.

SKIP

Sounds like you have several.

MUMFORD

What it felt like was... a series of separate, unconnected lives – hillbilly kid, wrecked college boy, garbage man, civil service guy...
(Yul Brynner accent)

...et cetera... et cetera. Every time I'd leave a life, it felt good. Whatever problems I was having were suddenly gone. I had no friends and I didn't talk to my family. The only constant, stabilizing force in my life was... drugs.

SKIP

An IRS investigator with a drug problem?

MUMFORD

It wasn't the best situation.

SKIP

Did you carry a gun?

MUMFORD

Didn't need one. We didn't even need a warrant for most of the shit we did. Man, the IRS... we could go in your bank account, your credit cards... hell, we used to go into doctors' files and get all the juicy details. Nobody wants to argue with the IRS.

EXT. ALLEY, REAR OF DRY CLEANING FACILITY - MAGIC

MOVING POV as Mumford follows GREGORY down the gloomy alley to a corner where they can spy at the scene beyond.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

I got teamed with one of the top guys, a fanatic named Gregory. He always got his man, whether they deserved it or not. He was a "closer" and everybody admired that...

WHAT THEY SEE: The DRY CLEANING BOSS, a Middle-Eastern fellow, is standing at the back door of his place paying his Asian employees in cash as they leave.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

He'd make the case and the Collection
guys would come in and clean up. Our
specialty was... sleazy skulking...

Gregory turns to look at camera (Mumford) with a devilish
grin.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

We were a good team. I was a dope
addict and Gregory was insane.

INT. GREGORY'S HOUSE, CITY STREET - NIGHT

MUMFORD'S POV as he supports a drunken Gregory as they stagger
down the sidewalk to a row house. Holding Gregory up on the
other side, is CANDY, Gregory's pretty wife. They wrangle
Gregory up the front steps. Gregory stumbles inside and
Mumford retreats down the steps, his eyes still on the front
door. Candy appears there and stares down at Mumford, who
stops where he is.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Of course, him being insane didn't
make it all right that I fell in
love with his wife.

SKIP (V.O.)

Holy shit!

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Mumford settles back in his chair as Skip shakes his head,
astounded.

MUMFORD

(announcer-like)

"Get to know your therapist."

SKIP

You were messed up, man.

MUMFORD

(dry)

But look at me now...

SKIP

Hey, you've done good. Look at yourself... you've cleaned up, you've got a career –

Skip stops, remembers the truth, realizes. Mumford smiles.

SKIP

At least you pulled yourself out...

MUMFORD

Things got a lot worse.

SKIP

You and Candy...?

INT. BEDROOM, MUMFORD'S CITY APARTMENT - DAY

MUMFORD'S POV from his bed. Candy finishes dressing across the room. She looks at camera, her face full of the pain of leaving.

EXT. FIRESCAPE/ROOF, BUILDING IN CITY - DAY

MOVING POV as Mumford follows Gregory up the ladder and onto the roof of this old building in a rundown industrial neighborhood.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

The way the District Managers got ahead and won their bonuses was by generating maximum payments. That meant the revenue officers had to use all their "collection tools" – seizures, liens, levies – even if a more reasonable compromise could have been worked out. The best way to reduce resistance from the taxpayers was to build a convincing case – whether there'd actually been a violation or not...

Mumford follows Gregory, crawling, to the edge of the roof and looks down on a building one block over. It is a small furniture factory. Employees are eating their lunches on the

loading dock.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

That's where we came in. Our DM was a particular sonuvabitch, and he knew just how to get Gregory crazy.

INT. ETHNIC RESTAURANT - NIGHT

MUMFORD'S POV takes in his ATTRACTIVE DATE next to him, then PANS TO Candy and Gregory across the table. Everybody's laughing. Candy flashes Mumford a momentary special look. MUMFORD'S POV guiltily PANS TO Gregory. Did he see it?

MUMFORD (V.O.)

So several things were working on Gregory when we started building a case against a furniture maker named Edmond Worrell...

EXT. PARKING LOT, FURNITURE FACTORY - MAGIC

BINOCULAR VIEW of EDMOND WORRELL and MRS. WORRELL as they get in a Cadillac at the end of a workday.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

...and his family.

INT. BUSINESS OFFICE, WORRELL FURNITURE FACTORY - NIGHT

Lit by powerful flashlights, Gregory and Mumford attack the files of the company, both in cabinets and on computer.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Gregory was acting more and more irrational. We started doing things that were over the line even for the IRS. When I look back on it now, I'm sure Gregory must have known about Candy and me. On our team, I had become...

INT. MEN'S ROOM, WORRELL FURNITURE FACTORY - NIGHT

EXTREME CLOSE-UP A LINE OF COCAINE on the top of a toilet

tank as it is sucked out of sight.

MUMFORD (V.O.)
...the responsible one.

INT. BEDROOM, MUMFORD'S CITY APARTMENT - DAY

MUMFORD'S POV IS A BLURRY SHAPE until Candy moves up and away, her face sweaty and aroused, torso naked. She's on top of Mumford.

INT. GOVERNMENT CAR - DAY

Mumford's POV slides into the passenger seat. Gregory is already sitting in the driver's seat. He stares at Mumford a long time.

INT. CORRIDOR, SHABBY OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Mumford is following Gregory and REVENUE OFFICER MCLURE down the hall. They reach a door with the painted sign: "SAMUEL GORBECK, C.P.A."

MUMFORD (V.O.)
Sometimes when a case didn't work out right, Gregory and this Revenue Officer named McLure would put the squeeze on the subject's accountant...

As they start to enter, SOFT CUT TO:

INT. GORBECK'S INNER OFFICE - DAY

GORBECK listens, intimidated by McLure, who sits on the accountant's desk, and Gregory, who is moving around the office – snooping.

MUMFORD (V.O.)
There aren't many accountants who don't have something to worry about with the Service...

INT. IRS OFFICES - DAY

Edmond Worrell, his wife, his adult SON and DAUGHTER,

WORRELL'S LAWYER, and, finally, the accountant Gorbeck are ushered toward a conference room by McLure, Gregory and some other IRS types. Gorbeck sneaks a nervous look at Mumford. Gregory, who now appears slightly mad, motions for Mumford to join them.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

The parties met repeatedly over a period of months. The IRS offered to settle for a sizable but, they said, fair amount. Worrell said he'd done nothing wrong and threatened to fight it all the way to Washington. He seemed pretty strong. I was secretly pulling for him. McLure and the District Manager stepped up the pressure.

EXT. PARKING LOT, WORRELL FURNITURE FACTORY - DAY

MOVING POV OUT THE WINDSHIELD of Gregory's government car as it comes speeding into the parking lot. There are two flashing Squad Cars and an Ambulance at the entrance. As Gregory's car hits a speedbump, the IMAGE BEGINS TO SLOW DOWN –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

What none of us down at the Service knew was that Edmond Worrell had a story too... Worrell's was that he'd been fighting chronic depression for thirty years. Under the heat of the investigation, he fell off his medication. One Tuesday morning, he went down to the factory early, wrote his family a letter, then used the 9mm automatic they kept there to kill himself... The DM dropped the case that day and started proceedings to get rid of Gregory...

The IMAGE HAS SLOWED TO A STILL. It now DISSOLVES TO:

EXT. GREGORY'S HOUSE, CITY STREET - NIGHT

Mumford's POV as he comes up the steps. The front door opens

before he gets there. Candy, her face bruised, her eyes red, comes into view, she has a suitcase in hand.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Gregory went home drunk, beat up Candy and went out to drink some more. Candy told me she didn't want to see me again. She hated us both and she was leaving us both... It made perfect sense to me. I felt the same way...

INT. BEDROOM, MUMFORD'S CITY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mumford is frantically, futilely looking for an imagined drug stash. He's ransacked the place and is now throwing the clothes out of a drawer.

INT. BATHROOM, MUMFORD'S CITY APARTMENT - NIGHT

Mumford looks desperately through the pill bottles and detritus in his squalid medicine cabinet.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

...In fact, I was jealous of Candy. I wanted to leave too, just like her... get as far away from –

Giving up, Mumford slams the medicine cabinet shut and FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HIS STORY BEGAN, WE SEE MUMFORD in his previous incarnation. And this is probably as bad as he ever looked. He stares at his image in the mirror.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

– me... as possible.

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Skip is staring at Mumford. Empty beer bottles are lined up on the porch railing.

SKIP

And so you did...

Mumford nods.

SKIP

And the drugs?

MUMFORD

Harder than I thought. Took me three tries. But I was highly motivated – figured there was no point in leaving me and taking that along. After two bomb-outs, I found a place in the desert...

INT. DESERT DRUG REHAB CENTER - SUNRISE

A venetian blind is raised, revealing sunrise over a desert landscape.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

The joint wasn't fancy – it was run by an order of monks – but it worked. When I got out of there, I was just about broke...

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Mumford gets up from his chair and moves toward his door.

MUMFORD

...which seemed perfect for starting something new. Be back.

Mumford goes inside. Skip sits listening to the night. From downstairs, in Lily's apartment, he HEARS A SHOWER GO ON. Mumford comes back out.

SKIP

Somebody's taking a shower down there.

MUMFORD

That'd be Lily.

SKIP

I wish I could live in the shower. I'd take five a day if I had the time. I went to this spa in Germany,

a sanitarium practically, up on this mountain. And the great thing – they just kept you wet all day.

MUMFORD

Who'd you go with?

(Skip: "alone")

That's not good.

SKIP

How'd you do it?

(Mumford is confused)

The new you.

MUMFORD

You know how easy it is. A kid can manage it if he wants a fake I.D. You can do practically the whole deal at your local Kinko's. The only variable is how much pride you take in the product.

SKIP

I know it starts with a birth certificate...

MUMFORD

All new people start with that...

INT. ANONYMOUS WORK ROOM - DAY

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN an elaborate graphics program is creating the filigreed border of a birth certificate that already bears the official-looking designs of "Green County, State of West Virginia".

MUMFORD (V.O.)

With desktop publishing, you don't have to deal with printers, supply houses, or pesky government agencies. Eventually you do have to get your hands on a typewriter. Ever seen one of those, Skip?

As the border is completed, we PUSH IN and DISSOLVE THROUGH

TO:

SURFACE OF A DESK, with an electric Smith-Corona typewriter (late '50's vintage). EXTREME CLOSE-UP of the keys hammering out individual letters and numbers: date, hospital, attending physician.

SKIP (V.O.)
(playing along)
Is that like a mimeograph?... What about the name?

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Mumford looks at Skip.

MUMFORD
What about it?

SKIP
"Mumford"... I mean, why pick the name of the town you were going to?

MUMFORD
Oh. You got it backwards. I already had the name when I started looking for somewhere to settle. When I saw this town on a map, I thought maybe it was a sign. See...

INT. ANONYMOUS WORK ROOM - DAY

The typewriter is just pounding out: MICHAEL OLIVER MUM-F-O-R-D.

MUMFORD (V.O.)
...Mickey Mumford was in Miss Rice's kindergarten class with me. He was killed with his parents in a wreck on their way back from a Steelers game. He was only six years old, which is a real plus, so there's a birth certificate if anyone checks – but not much else. They died in Pennsylvania, so there's no death

certificate in West Virginia... that's also good.

ON A KITCHEN TABLE, the new birth certificate, now filled out for Michael Mumford, is carefully lifted from a shallow bowl of light tea (the tea bags are nearby). The paper has taken on an aged, sepia look. CUT TO:

A STACK OF BOOKS. The ones on top are lifted away. The bottom book is opened to reveal the birth certificate. It has been folded in an official way. Now Mumford unfolds it, then refolds it differently – with its smudges and creases, it's starting to look old.

SKIP (V.O.)

And a birth certificate is enough?

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Everything flows from that, and what doesn't... can be easily purchased.

SERIES OF SHOTS of Mumford's DOCUMENTATION PILING UP. A post office box is emptied, official-looking correspondence is opened, the bounty is laid out for perusal: Social Security card, driver's license, college and graduate school diplomas, license and accreditation to operate as a therapist.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

Of course, my IRS training made it easier. Once you've done that, there's not much data you can't access and use any way you want.

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

MUMFORD

In a free society, you are who you say you are.

(smiling)

People should remember that before they go around knocking this country.

(he gets up)

Skip, all this beer's got me sleepy.

Skip looks upset.

SKIP

But you studied psychology, right?
You did the training and just never
got the degree?

MUMFORD

No... no training.

SKIP

(hopeful)
Psych major?

MUMFORD

English Lit.

SKIP

Jeez, man. But you're good at it!

MUMFORD

I understand what it's like to want
to leave a problem behind. That's
all most people are looking to do.
(shrugs)
Mainly, I listen.

He heads inside.

SKIP

Where ya going? I've got a million
questions.

MUMFORD

See you Thursday... regular time.

Mumford goes inside. Skip nods, head spinning.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - SUNRISE

Mumford and Sofie are delivering newspapers in lovely first light. Mumford has a canvas sack full of newspapers around his neck. At each house, he consults the list in his hand, then hands Sofie a rolled-up paper, which she throws – with varying success – toward the front doors. The activity is tiring for her, but she's committed.

SOFIE

...so we get on this incredible steam engine train that runs up into the mountains...

(she tosses a paper, grunting)

...and this trip is everything it's cracked up to be... an open car, great views, the mountain air blowing through. We're sitting there, married for six years, and he says how he likes it better when I put my hair back...

Mumford hands her another paper, which she heaves with all her limited strength, missing the front porch badly. Mumford, who can't get enough of watching her, doesn't notice at first.

SOFIE

That wasn't so good.

Mumford snaps out of it. He goes up on the lawn and flips the paper deftly onto the porch. As they continue –

MUMFORD

You're doing great.

SOFIE

I don't know if I'm going to make it the whole way.

MUMFORD

It doesn't matter. Go on.

SOFIE

Oh... this makes me sound irrational, which is probably right, but there was something about him saying this – it was maybe the millionth time he'd told me about some preference of his. Well, I was so... tired of it.

(memories)

Seems like my whole life someone's been telling me... I'm just not

getting it right. Can we rest for a second?

She leans against the iron handrail on some front steps, breathing hard.

SOFIE

You're purposely making me talk while we do this...

(Mumford nods)

...because you think this is good for me...

(nods again)

...and you're a sadistic bastard...

MUMFORD

Yes.

SOFIE

...who thinks there's nothing really wrong with me.

MUMFORD

Oh, there's something wrong with you, all right. Especially after hearing that dream of yours, about the Roto-Rooter.

She laughs. They're playing with each other.

SOFIE

That was really bad, wasn't it?

MUMFORD

Disgusting.

SOFIE

And I'll bet you can interpret the whole thing

MUMFORD

It's pretty obvious to a trained professional.

Sofie starts walking again, taking another newspaper from

his sack. He points to the next house.

SOFIE

I hate those dreams where everything means something.

Sofie heaves the paper squarely onto the porch. She turns to him with pride, but when she sees the way he looks at her, she glances away, uncomfortable.

MUMFORD

Is that when you split up?

SOFIE

No, that'd be a good story, but that was just the beginning of the end. We went on for another year or so.

Mumford hands her another paper and indicates the next house.

SOFIE

So whose route is this?

MUMFORD

Brady Peck's. Fourteen years old. Lives next door.

SOFIE

And he's where?

MUMFORD

In the capitol for Boy's Nation. Five days. Why?

SOFIE

(heaves another paper)
I'm thinking a gal could make a good living doing this. How hard could it be squeezing out some fourteen year old?

MUMFORD

You like it?

SOFIE

It's all right.

MUMFORD

Then you can expect me at 5:30 tomorrow morning.

SOFIE

And this is legitimate therapy?

MUMFORD

Therapy? Hell no, I just don't want to do it alone.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

TIGHT ON RAPID SERIES OF IMAGES on slick, glossy magazine pages: each change of image is punctuated by the AMPLIFIED SNAP of the page being turned, like a gunshot. We're SO CLOSE to the images we can't tell when the magazines change – from Glamour to Vogue to Us to Mademoiselle to W to Vanity Fair. And it doesn't matter. Whether the images are ads or fashion spreads or celebrity candid, the look is the same – jaded, hip, disinterested, apathetic, either impossibly buff or anorexic, but always severely beautiful. The PAGE TURNING starts at a fevered pitch and becomes even more intense. Finally –

MUMFORD (V.O.)

What is it, Nessa?

The IMAGES CONTINUE.

NESSA (V.O.)

Isn't she amazing? That is such a wicked look.

MUMFORD (V.O.)

What do you want me to see?

NESSA (V.O.)

Just chill for a second. Look at this guy, it appears he's actually dead... but gorgeous.

Mumford is sitting next to Nessa on the couch. At their feet

is a mess of magazines. Nessa discards one and immediately starts flipping through a new one beneath it. She is very agitated. Mumford stands up, walks over and sits in his chair.

NESSA

What are you doing? We're not done.
I just need to find the thing...

MUMFORD

If you don't want to have a session today, it's okay.

NESSA

I want to have the session. I thought it would be cool if I could show you some of the things that interest me. But I guess you're not into it... which we already knew.

MUMFORD

What happened today?

NESSA

What are you talking about?

MUMFORD

Was it something that happened at school?

NESSA

(petulant)

These appointments were not my idea, remember.

MUMFORD

True. Should we stop them?

A look of panic crosses Nessa's face, but she instantly hides it, busily taking out cigarette and lighter, which she doesn't use. Instead, she lies down on the couch, balancing the closed magazine on her chest.

NESSA

I don't think you know what you're talking about.

MUMFORD

Uh-huh.

NESSA

This shrink school you went to...
did you hear about it on an
infomercial?

Mumford waits. Nessa refers to the magazine beneath her chin.

NESSA

I want to live in the world these
people are in. No one ever says
anything in there, have you noticed?
So they're very cool. Like they're
all really deep. It's when people
start talking that everything goes
to shit.

Nessa suddenly seems on the edge of tears, but beats it back.

NESSA

There's this kid at school... Martin
Brockett. He has some gigantic idea
of himself that no one else shares.
You wouldn't believe the crap he
lays on me... Who appointed him my
spiritual leader? If he has everything
so figured out how come his best
friend is a .22 rifle? And why's he
spend all his time chasing after me?
Probably thinks I'm gonna give him a
hummer...

MUMFORD

Do you think that's what he wants?

NESSA

(after a beat)

No. I don't know what he wants. But
I know I don't like being watched.
Nobody's ever paid any attention to
what I did, and I liked it just fine.
Where does he get off telling me I

disrespect myself?
(a beat)
Fuck him. Look in a mirror, bozo.

EXT. LILY'S CAFÉ, MAIN STREET - DAY

Mumford crosses the street from his office. A huge bus with "APPLEJACK TOURS" on the sides, is disgorging its passengers, a large group of elderly JAPANESE WOMEN, all of whom file neatly into Lily's Café. Lily stands on the sidewalk outside greeting them merrily.

MUMFORD
What's the deal?

Lily continues her welcomes, but points out a hand-lettered sign in her front window – "Closed for Lunch. See you tomorrow."

LILY
They come through a few times each year.
(greeting one cheerily)
Hello, Mrs. Saito, good to see you again!
(back to Mumford)
It's a tour.

MUMFORD
Where am I supposed to eat?

LILY
You're on your own today, honey.

Mumford's attention is suddenly drawn to something across the street. He glances thoughtfully at Lily for a moment, then back out there.

WHAT HE SEES: Skip is once again zipping down the street on his skateboard in the midst of traffic. He has not noticed Mumford.

MUMFORD (O.S.)
Hey, Skip!

Skip looks over, then immediately changes course toward them, barely checking the surrounding traffic. He is extraordinarily skillful. When he gets to the curb, he pulls a snazzy board-flipping maneuver to dismount and come up on the sidewalk. Some of the Japanese matrons react with delight.

SKIP

Doc.

Skip notices the tour members filing by, but is immediately distracted by the presence of Lily, who's a little excited to meet the local celebrity.

MUMFORD

Lily, I want you to meet Skip. Skip,
Lily.

LILY

It's a pleasure to meet you.

SKIP

(flustered)

Yeah... me you, too... I was at your
house...

LILY

Oh?

SKIP

Upstairs, with Doc... Yeah, it's
very nice... I heard your shower.

Skip can't believe what he just said. Neither can the other two, actually. Mumford can't stop himself from laughing, but he cuts it off fast. Lily blushes, but Skip's agitation has charmed her. Something's happening here.

LILY

I've seen you going by on your board,
but I didn't realize – you're so
young... to be so...

SKIP

What?

MUMFORD

...so rich?

LILY

(gives him a look)

...so accomplished.

SKIP

I may be young, but Doc can tell you, I'm very immature.

He's making a joke and it represents quite a recovery. They're all relieved. Then there's an awkward silence. Skip watches the last of the tour enter the restaurant.

SKIP

So, is this like a Japanese restaurant?

LILY

I'd better get in there.

SKIP

That's a lot of people all at once.

LILY

It's okay. They pre-order. There's a choice of three entrees.

SKIP

What are they?

Lily gives him a careful look: Is he really interested? There's something about him...

LILY

Meat loaf, turkey quesadillas, or salad nicoise.

SKIP

Salad nicoise? I love salad nicoise.

LILY

(giggling)

You do?

SKIP

Yeah.

LILY

Well, come on in.

She motions him in and starts to follow. Mumford makes a "what about me?" sound. Lily, grinning, just points to the sign and leaves Mumford standing on the sidewalk.

DELBANCO (O.S.)

Dr. Mumford.

Mumford turns to find Dr. Delbanco and Phyllis Sheeler, the shrinks Lionel had conferred with, standing nearby. It takes a moment for Mumford to remember Delbanco. Finally, shaking hands –

MUMFORD

Dr. Delbanco. It's nice to see you again.

DELBANCO

I don't think you know Dr. Sheeler. She's the other therapist here in town.

MUMFORD

(shaking her hand)

Of course... I've heard great things about you.

SHEELER

Thank you.

DELBANCO

You never got back to me.

(Mumford doesn't understand)

...I called to say we'd like to take you out for a meal? ... Kind of a professional welcome.

Mumford makes a show of remembering.

MUMFORD

Forgive me, please. What a gracious thought. We must do that.

SHEELER

When?

MUMFORD

Why don't I call you when I've got my calendar in front of me?

DELBANCO

What are you doing for lunch?

MUMFORD

Right now?

The other two nod in unison. Mumford considers, trapped.

INT. THE LANTERN AND THE LAMB RESTAURANT - DAY

The town's upscale dining spot. Mumford, Delbanco and Sheeler are in a red leather booth. Sheeler listens with rapt, admiring attention as Delbanco speaks –

DELBANCO

...annihilation anxieties engendered by bad experiences with a depriving mother... but no one can escape the fear of death. It is, as Henry James put it, "the worm at the core." Try as we may to forget or ignore our mortality, James said –

(theatrically)

– "the skull will grin in at the banquet."

Mumford nods appreciatively. (He really is an extraordinary listener.) Delbanco catches his own vanity in Sheeler's adoring gaze and becomes self-conscious –

DELBANCO

I've run on. Forgive me. We're here to talk about you.

MUMFORD

Are we?

SHEELER

(covering)

What Ernest means, I think, is we're very interested in other methodology... different kinds of training. We're great believers in learning from each other. I've learned so much from Ern – Dr. Delbanco...

DELBANCO

...And I from Phyllis.

SHEELER

(back to a previous thread)

So... the University of Kentucky. Who runs the program down there?

MUMFORD

My mentor was an amazing teacher named Benton Mandlebaum. Died quite tragically in the collapse of a gazebo.

DELBANCO

I think I've heard of him... a disciple of Rothberg, wasn't he?

Mumford's response, and all that follow, is calm and pleasant.

MUMFORD

It's possible. I don't know about that.

SHEELER

I suppose your extended training was at an institution in that area?

MUMFORD

Lots of institutions. My graduate advisor believed we should experience

as many environments as possible –
prisons, clinics, half-way houses.
For a while I was chief therapist in
a shopping mall. Had a little spot
next to the yogurt place.

DELBANCO

Interesting approach. What was his
name?

MUMFORD

Dorothy Fowler. Fantastic woman. She
passed last year in a train wreck.
Damned Amtrak.

Delbanco and Sheeler exchange a look. Sheeler adopts a
"casual" tone –

SHEELER

I trained in the east, myself –
Cornell – and I don't care what
anyone says, there really are regional
differences. I found the state
certification exams out here quite
harrowing... Did you?

MUMFORD

Oh, yeah, very tough. But I guess
that's good... to keep out the quacks.

SHEELER

Which examiner did you have? I
probably know him.

MUMFORD

Wallace Franklin... from Greensburg.

A dark look comes over Sheeler's face for a moment.

SHEELER

That was a terrible thing.

MUMFORD

(agrees)
I don't even know why hang-gliding

is considered a legitimate sport.

DELBANCO

(back on track)

We're interested in any new therapies.
How would you characterize your
approach?

MUMFORD

My approach?

SHEELER

Yes... your particular approach.

MUMFORD

I don't have one really. Most of the
time I'm faking it. See, I think
there's not much that can be done
about most problems... they're too
complicated, too deep-rooted by the
time I hear about them. The most I
can do, usually, is look and listen
real closely, try to catch some
glimpse of the secret life everybody's
got. If I can get a sense of that,
well then, maybe... just maybe, I
can help them out a little.

Mumford sits back, considering the couple across the table.
His gaze is so crystalline that, after a moment, they become
uncomfortable and steal a glance at each other. Finally –

DELBANCO

I see.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON Althea Brockett.

ALTHEA

– The argument had nothing to do
with it.

MUMFORD (O.S.)

I understand. I just want to know

what the argument was about.

ALTHEA

(hates to say)

I had ordered some books. "The 100 Greatest Books Ever Written."

MUMFORD (O.S.)

Uh-huh. What are they?

ALTHEA

Oh, all the great writers – Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Moby Dick... those people. Each is bound in genuine premium leather with 22 carat gold accents. It's a magnificent set – and only \$33.50 per volume. Right away you get Great Expectations for just \$6.99.

MUMFORD (O.S.)

One hundred books?

ALTHEA

It's irrelevant. It had nothing to do with what happened.

MUMFORD (O.S.)

What happened?

Althea is sitting on the couch facing Mumford. She has a bulky knit cardigan sweater hugged tightly around her – the only sign that she's not completely calm.

ALTHEA

We argued on Sunday. He went to work on Monday and stayed in the city during the week, like always. But on Thursday, when he normally comes home, he didn't. Didn't call either. Not till Saturday afternoon.

MUMFORD

You must have been concerned.

ALTHEA

It's happened before.

(a beat)

I'm shocked by how little I'm feeling.

I can't understand it.

(a real question –)

I'll probably have a complete
depressoid collapse soon, won't I?

MUMFORD

Doubtful. What did he say?

ALTHEA

He said he wasn't coming back. He
said it wasn't working for him any
more. That it hadn't "worked for
him" for quite a while... You know
what I regret the most? I'm sorry I
let him make the kids take his name.

He was an acquirer.

(off Mumford's look)

He liked to acquire things.

Mumford looks away. Althea realizes what he's thinking.

ALTHEA

You think that has something to do
with my problem? Ordering all those
things?...

It hadn't occurred to Mumford, but it's an interesting
thought.

ALTHEA

...Like I was on some kind of campaign
to out-acquire him...

(excited now, playing
it out)

...If I was just an acquisition to
him, and he lost interest once he
had me –

She stops, shakes her head.

ALTHEA

That can't be it. It's too simple.
And besides, I still like it. This
morning I ordered a marble turtle
cheese board from The Horchow
Collection.

(an odd look)

Can I tell you something just awful?
You know how people who are just
assholes will sometimes look at a
woman who's got problems and say,
"What she needs is a good shtupping!"?

Mumford nods.

ALTHEA

Well, there may be something to that.
Jeremy didn't keep up his end – Oh,
what difference does it make?

(suddenly)

Why do I feel elated? Am I in denial?
You know what it feels like?...

She glances at her watch, then starts talking fast –

ALTHEA

I know my time's up, but I've got to
get this out while I've got hold of
it –

MUMFORD

Take your time.

ALTHEA

(no slowing down)

– When I was in high school, the
thing I wanted most, when I was stuck
in class, the thing I was always
desperately in pursuit of – was a
hall pass. That's all I wanted. I
loved moving freely around the school
while everybody else was trapped in
there... And that's how I feel right
now... Like I have some giant, all-
day hall pass.

She is beaming, but suddenly becomes self-conscious. She stands up abruptly, flushed.

ALTHEA

My god, did it just get hot in here
or what?

She takes off the bulky sweater and bends to pick up her purse. She is wearing a simple cotton dress that buttons up the front and hugs her body. WE SEE for the first time what all her other outfits have hidden: Althea has a terrific, voluptuous figure.

ALTHEA

See you next time. I'll probably be
a basket case by then.

She heads toward the door to the waiting room. Mumford indicates the back door.

MUMFORD

You can go out there if you like...

ALTHEA

(quoting Mumford)

"There's no shame in getting a little
therapy", right, Doc?

She opens the door to the waiting room, startling Henry Follett, who jumps up from a chair out there, magazine still in hand.

INT. WAITING ROOM, MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Follett is embarrassed to be discovered here. But that's secondary to the impact Althea's current appearance – sexy body framed in the doorway – is having on him. She's been a customer in his store, but he's seeing her now as if for the first time. All his libidinous buttons are being pushed. Althea breezes by, oblivious to his reaction.

ALTHEA

Hello, Mr. Follett. Have a good
session. Bye, Doc.

She goes out.

MUMFORD

Henry...

But Follett continues to stare in the direction Althea has gone.

DAY INT. LOBBY ATRIUM, PANDA MODEM WORLD HEADQUARTERS -

Mumford is being escorted across the spectacular atrium by a PANDA SECURITY AIDE. Her informal uniform, and all the other details in the building, carry out the Panda design motif. As they head down the main corridor –

SKIP (O.S.)

Hey, Doc!

Mumford looks that way. In the distance, Skip is descending from an upper level on his skateboard via a unique system of ramps designed for that purpose alone. None of the hustling Panda Employees in the area take any particular notice of the sight.

Skip meets Mumford and his escort at the bottom of the ramp with a spectacular stop.

SKIP

Thanks, Jennifer, I'll take him from here.

The Security Aide retreats as Skip (riding slowly alongside) leads Mumford into a side corridor.

DAY INT. BOWELS OF THE BUILDING, PANDA MODEM HEADQUARTERS -

SERIES OF SHOTS. Skip and Mumford move through a maze of hallways with progressively less foot traffic.

SKIP

I've never brought anyone down here before.

MUMFORD

I'm honored.

SKIP

Doc, there's something about what you told me the other night I can't get out of my head. It's driving me batty –

(Mumford nods, waits)

Why me? How did you know you could trust me?

MUMFORD

You're completely reliable.

Skip is pleased. They approach a heavy steel door, the entrance to Skip's Workshop. A VERY OLD SECURITY AIDE sits at the end of the intersecting hallway, watching this area. Skip shouts down there –

SKIP

It's just me, Dino!

The old man nods, barely awake.

MUMFORD

Skip, I've got a problem and I need some advice.

SKIP

You want my advice? Far out!

Skip puts his hand in a scanning device in the wall. Some lights blink and the heavy metal door pops open a few inches. Skip has to put all his weight into opening the door. He hesitates, suddenly concerned –

SKIP

I hope nothing you're about to see will shake your faith in me.

Mumford reassures him with a look. Skip pushes the door open far enough for them to enter, then pulls it closed behind them.

INT. SKIP'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Mumford and Skip enter the large, windowless workspace. What at first appears chaotic is, in fact, carefully organized. Many different disciplines interface here:

THE BODY SECTION: The first thing one notices – some incredibly life-like, anatomically correct, sculpture/mannequins – both male and female. You half expect them to breathe. From there, a full wall of forms descends from store mannequins and skeletons all the way down to a huge variety of inflatable sex dolls.

THE CYBER SECTION: A dizzying array of computers and screens, some showing wire-form outlines of body parts in repeated motion. Above them, on a huge corkboard, hundreds of computer generated renderings of skin, eyes, limbs, sexual organs.

THE BODY PARTS SECTION: Medical models of teeth, eyes, lips, limbs. Hundreds of porn store samples: plastic dildos, rubber vaginas, sucking machines and sundry genitalia.

THE FORM-CASTING SHOP: All the machinery you need to make rubber and acrylic forms of anything that can be computer designed.

All these weird objects are set upon shiny, spotless, high-tech work surfaces. Skip watches Mumford move about in awe, picking up the odd item.

SKIP

Pretty creepy, huh? Are you totally disgusted?

MUMFORD

("no")

Skip, you're a visionary. That can be a burden.

SKIP

This doesn't seem a little...
perverse?

MUMFORD

There are a lot of lonely people in

the world. Somebody's gonna figure this out someday.

SKIP

It's not going to be me. I'm giving it up.

MUMFORD

Really?

SKIP

It's all your fault. In the last 48 hours, I've completely lost interest.

MUMFORD

What'd I do?

Skip looks at Mumford, a wide grin on his face.

SKIP

Lily.

MUMFORD

Lily...

(gets it)

...Skip, that's great! You and Lily.

SKIP

Oh, she doesn't know about it yet. Right now, of the two of us, I'm the only one in love. But I'm very stoked.

Skip settles in front of the Body Parts section, framed by an array of limbs and sex toys. There's an assembled pelvic section with upper legs lying in the clutter behind him.

SKIP

Doc, how I can be of help to you?

Skip leans back against the table and accidentally hits a button. The pelvic section begins to hump, slowly and sensually, in place. It's amazingly life-like, but it makes a mechanical WHIRRING SOUND. Skip fumbles to turn it off.

SKIP

Sorry...

MUMFORD

Wow.

Skip gets the pelvis switched off and turns back to Mumford.

SKIP

I'm here for you, Doc.

MUMFORD

Skip, you know that it's improper – completely unethical – for a licensed psychologist to carry on a romantic relationship with one of his patients?

SKIP

I guess that makes sense.

MUMFORD

Yes, yes it does...

Mumford sinks into silence. He begins to wander the room.

SKIP

You've fallen in love with one of your patients?

Mumford nods. Skip is desperate to say something useful. Suddenly, he has an alarming thought.

SKIP

Doc!... It's not me, is it?

MUMFORD

What?

Mumford understands and can't stop a laugh.

MUMFORD

No, Skip, it's not you. But I like you a lot.

Skip is relieved. He has another thought and brightens.

SKIP

Doc, what about this? You're not really a licensed psychologist!

Mumford turns to meet Skip's gaze. Skip realizes the ramifications of what he's just said.

SKIP

Hmm. I guess that doesn't help... I see where you're going here. It's a mess.

MUMFORD

Yep.

INT. DR. DELBANCO'S OFFICE - DAY

Lionel is here with Delbanco and Sheeler. This time, Delbanco is behind his desk, Sheeler across the room on the sofa.

LIONEL

Don't you find it incredibly convenient that everyone who could possibly corroborate his story has recently died some exotic death?

DELBANCO

They're neither all recent nor exotic.

SHEELER

But they're certainly dead. And yes, personally, I find it a bit odd.

DELBANCO

It could happen. What about his state certification exams? The records seem to be in order.

Lionel's derisive snort is so obnoxious, it's hard to bear.

LIONEL

What's easier than hacking your way into a state computer and inserting some numbers? For all you know he never even took the exams!

SHEELER

That's true.

DELBANCO

I don't know that it's all that
easy...

LIONEL

Doctor, correct me if I'm wrong, but
it sounds to me like you've gone for
this guy's story hook, line and bull-
twaddle.

SHEELER

You do seem much more disposed toward
him than I understand, Ernest. Did I
miss something?

DELBANCO

(sharply)

Oh, for god's sake, Phyllis – we
have no reason to doubt the man! Are
we listening to Lionel now?

Sheeler jumps, so shocked is she by his outburst, and so
humiliated for Lionel to witness it. Fighting tears and trying
to maintain her dignity, she gathers up her things and walks
to the door. Delbanco, immediately contrite, stands up.

DELBANCO

Phyllis, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to
shout...

SHEELER

No, Dr. Delbanco, it is I who am
sorry. Sorry to have wasted your
time with such...

She breaks into tears and rushes out of the office. Delbanco
is left facing Lionel, who gives him exactly the look the
doctor least wants to see.

INT. LILY'S CAFÉ - DAY

Mumford is eating his lunch at the counter. He watches Lily busily working the midday rush. She sees him grinning at her, but doesn't say anything for a while. Finally, blushing –

LILY

Stop it! He's a kid. I'm old enough to be his... older sister.

Mumford smiles, eats.

INT. ENTRY HALL, COOK HOUSE - NIGHT

Mr. Cook opens the front door to Mumford.

COOK

Dr. Mumford. Please, come in.

Mumford comes in, reluctantly.

MUMFORD

Hello, Mr. Cook. I was wondering if Sofie was around?

COOK

Were you supposed to have a session?

MUMFORD

No. It's sort of spur of the moment.

INT. LIVING ROOM, COOK HOUSE - NIGHT

Mumford follows Mr. Cook into the room. Mrs. Cook and Sofie's thirtyish brother, BEN, are in there, watching television. Mrs. Cook keeps knitting; Ben stands to shake Mumford's hand, muting the TV with a remote.

COOK

Look who's here. Have you met Sofie's moth–

MRS. COOK

– We've met.

COOK

And our son, Ben...

BEN

(vigorously shakes
hands)

This is a real honor, Doctor. Have a
seat, will ya?

Mumford continues to stand.

MUMFORD

Well, actually, I can't really... Do
you think I could see Sofie?

BEN

I insist! I've been wanting to meet
you.

Mumford sits.

MRS. COOK

(icy)

Sofie's not here.

Mumford's surprised. Mr. Cook speaks with some pleasure.

COOK

Her friend from the city came and
took her out to dinner. First time
in a long time she's been willing.

MUMFORD

A friend?

BEN

We owe that to you. She's perked up
a lot since you started treating
her.

Mrs. Cook gives Ben a condescending look and keeps knitting.

MRS. COOK

What'd you want?

MUMFORD

There's something I think we need to

talk about.

MRS. COOK
What?

MR. COOK
Elizabeth...

MRS. COOK
I think we have a right.

BEN
We certainly do not.

MRS. COOK
Keep it zipped, Ben.

Ben gives Mumford an exasperated look, but doesn't argue.

MR. COOK
Is there something we need to know,
Dr. Mumford?

Mumford is conflicted, not sure what to share with them.

MUMFORD
Well... yes, I guess I should tell
you. I don't think I'm going to be
able to treat Sofie anymore.

Mr. Cook and Ben exchange an alarmed glance. Mrs. Cook
actually cheers up.

MRS. COOK
Finally, some common sense...

MUMFORD
What do you mean?

MRS. COOK
I think you know what I mean.

MUMFORD
No, I really don't.

MRS. COOK
I think you do.

MUMFORD
Why don't you tell me?

MRS. COOK
(very calm)
Why don't you go to hell? It's all a
bunch of nonsense and you know it.

MR. COOK
Elizabeth, I'm tellin' you, stop
this...

MRS. COOK
(dismissive)
You're telling me? That's rich...

MUMFORD
(standing up)
I'd better go.

BEN
Why can't you see Sofie? I know the
treatment's working.

Mumford looks from Ben to Mr. Cook, who nods his agreement.

MUMFORD
Well... you see, the problem is –

MRS. COOK
– the problem is you're a big fake.
You haven't got a clue what's wrong
with that girl.

Mumford looks at Mrs. Cook and can't stifle a laugh.

MUMFORD
Wow. You're something.

MRS. COOK
Take a hike, Dr. Quack!

MR. COOK
(ignoring her now)
What is the problem, Doctor?

Mumford can't take his eyes off Mrs. Cook, even as he speaks to Mr. Cook.

MUMFORD
Problem? I guess there is no problem... Uh, this friend of Sofie's, where'd he take her?

BEN
It's she – Roxy. Used to work with her. I think they went over to The Lantern.

MUMFORD
(delighted)
Oh, Roxy! Excellent. Roxy.

Mrs. Cook looks at him sharply. She's heard what the other two have not.

EXT. SIDE STREET/ALLEY - DAY

Mumford carries a large Fed-Ex box down a side street and into an alley. As he passes a secluded space created by two adjacent buildings, something catches his eye.

MUMFORD'S MOVING POV: A young couple is embracing and talking intimately. As they separate, we can see that it is Nessa and Martin Brockett. Martin sees Mumford, but makes no sign. Nessa twists to see what Martin's looking at just as the view is interrupted by a wall.

Mumford walks on, mulling what he's seen.

EXT. BACK DOOR, FOLLETT'S PHARMACY - DAY

There is a locked security screen at the alley entrance to the back room of the pharmacy, but the door inside is open. When a YOUNG PHARMACIST appears in there, Mumford raps on the metal screen.

INT. HENRY FOLLETT'S OFFICE - DAY

Follett's private space is above and at the back of his drugstore. When you sit at his desk and in front of it, as Follett and Mumford are doing now, you can see down into the store through a floor-to-ceiling, one-way mirror.

The Fed-Ex box sits on the desk between the two men, unopened.

FOLLETT

What is it?

MUMFORD

It's a thought I had.

FOLLETT

Should I open it now?

Mumford seems hesitant, but nods. Follett takes out an Exacto knife and makes the first incision, but as he's about to go on, Mumford suddenly reaches out and stops him.

MUMFORD

Let me just say something here... I have no idea if this is going to help.

FOLLETT

What exactly is it supposed to do?

MUMFORD

You remember when I asked you about pornography –

FOLLETT

– I find it degrading. Maximum gynecology and minimum turn-on –

MUMFORD

– and you told me that. Still, there's some kind of imagery that's haunting you and, I think, getting in your way –

FOLLETT

– Which I don't necessarily agree.

MUMFORD

But you did come to me.

Follett reacts. It's true, even if he keeps forgetting.

MUMFORD

My guess is these images were burned into your brain when you were young. Maybe if we could nail down the exact fantasies that are haunting you – maybe you could get past them... Anyway, I thought we could try an experiment.

FOLLETT

(indicating the box)

And the experiment is in here?

Mumford nods, but suddenly looks depressed, distracted.

MUMFORD

You know what? I think this was a dumb idea...

He starts to take hold of the box.

MUMFORD

...I just heard myself talking and I realize I'm completely unqualified to be doing this. Let's forget the whole thing.

Follett grabs the box back.

FOLLETT

Whoa, whoa, what are you doing? I want to know what's in here.

MUMFORD

(pulling on the box)

There's absolutely no reason to think this is going to have any impact on you. I'm embarrassed to have –

Follett stands up and grabs the box, taking sole possession.
Loud –

FOLLETT

Hey! I agree with you that you don't know what you're talking about. That's what I've been saying all along. And I can guarantee you that looking at the Lost Ark or whatever you got in here is not going to mean diddly to me...

(quieting down)

...but if you think I'm going to let you walk out of here without seeing what's in this box, you don't know much about Henry A. Follett.

Mumford gives up. Follett gestures to ask whether it's safe to put the box on the desk; Mumford reassures him. Now, with much more anticipation and ceremony than before, Follett carefully cuts open the package.

THE CONTENTS OF THE BOX is revealed as Follett opens the flaps. There is an inner, brown paper wrapping upon which has been set a low-rent catalogue: "METROPOLITAN COLLECTIBLES – Periodicals, Erotica, Adult Nostalgia." Follett lifts away the wrapping –

There are perhaps a dozen men's magazines of the late fifties and early sixties: Nugget, Adam, The Adam Reader, Swank, Dude. Plus several cartoon collections: Sex to Sixty, Stag Humor. Plus trashy adult novels of the era, with provocative illustrations on the covers: Night Call Nurse, The Neighbors Have No Curtains, Secretarial Sluts, etc. Finally, two video tapes, both of Russ Meyer films: MUDHONEY and COMMON-LAW CABIN.

We stay CLOSE ON the contents of the box as Follett's hands shuffle through it, rapidly flipping through the pages. Very soft-core by today's standards, the common thread is clear: voluptuous, heavy-breathing sirens in tight clothes (and out of them) tempting muscular, he-man drifters or libidinous businessmen. A world of lusty secretaries, siren babysitters, and frustrated, neglected wives. In other words, exactly the

erotic ambience of Follett's fantasies.

SLOW TILT UP TO FOLLETT'S FACE. He is transported, mesmerized, galvanized. In fact, at this moment, as the MUSIC SWELLS, a tear is rolling down his cheek. He dare not take his eyes from this Holy Grail to look up at Mumford. The only thing that could wreck his mood now, is –

YOUNG PHARMACIST (O.S.)

Mr. Follett –

Follett jumps, startled from his reverie. As the Young Pharmacist steps tentatively into the office, Follett jams everything back into the box as best he can and tries to cover it.

FOLLETT

What?! What the hell is so important
I can't have five minutes –?

The Young Pharmacist is cowed and doesn't advance into the room.

YOUNG PHARMACIST

It's her, sir. You told me to get
you when she came to pick up her
prescription.

It takes Follett a moment to understand, but when he does, his whole manner changes. He dismisses the Young Pharmacist with a nod, then gives a quick, self-conscious glance to Mumford.

FOLLETT

Uh, sorry, I'm going to have to...
(indicates box)
...I really appreciate what you're
trying to... uh, I can't thank you
enough for...

MUMFORD

My pleasure.

Follett heads for the door, pausing briefly at a mirror to check his appearance, pushing at his hair with his palm.

FOLLETT

I'll see you on... whatever...

He hurries out. Mumford stands up to leave, but first looks down through the one-way mirror.

WHAT HE SEES: Follett hurries up behind the prescription counter, where Althea Brockett is waiting; once again she looks quite sexy. Follett brings her prescription up and begins playfully flirting. Althea is responsive. Follett motions Althea down the aisle, where it's more private. He comes out from behind the counter, ostensibly to show Althea something on the prescription bottle. Althea leans back against some shelves in the same posture as the Landlady in Follett's first fantasy.

Mumford reacts, bemused.

EXT. HIKING TRAIL - DAY

Mumford and Sofie make their way slowly up the trail. Despite her labored breathing, it's clear Sofie has made enormous progress since we first saw her.

SOFIE

When I was in high school we used to come up here and make out. I liked to sit on the rock and watch the sun go down.

MUMFORD

That's what I like.

SOFIE

Which thing?

MUMFORD

Either one.

SOFIE

Why'd you come to the house the other night?

MUMFORD

I thought I had something to tell you. But it turned out I didn't.

SOFIE

My brother said you were about to fire me.

MUMFORD

That's one way to put it.

SOFIE

I bet I know what changed your mind...
(Mumford looks at her)
...My mother. She was so horrible,
you decided you couldn't desert me.

MUMFORD

I thought only action movies had
villains like that.

Sofie gestures ahead.

SOFIE

That's the cut-off, isn't it?
(Mumford nods)
I know why you were going to quit
seeing me.

Mumford slows at this. Sofie heads off the trail into the woods.

EXT. BIG ROCK LOOKOUT POINT - DAY

Sofie appears first, but she waits for Mumford before she steps tentatively onto the rock. Mumford takes firm hold of her and leads her to a spot where she can securely settle herself.

SOFIE

You feel like a fake, an imposter...

Mumford looks up, sharply.

SOFIE

..as if maybe you don't know what

you're doing.

She puts a hand on his arm.

SOFIE

Everybody feels that way sometimes...
like we're not who we're supposed to
be. But I have to tell you, Dr.
Mumford –

He winces at her formality.

SOFIE

– you've been a tremendous help to
me.

MUMFORD

Yeah?

SOFIE

I can't tell you how much I admire
you. You have a wonderful way with
people. And you're very insightful.
I feel like you've seen me clearly...
I never used to admit what a horrible
person my mother was. You've made
that possible for me.

MUMFORD

That's... good?

SOFIE

Yes! And my ex-husband – he never
accepted me for who I was, just like
Mother. The things you've said have
helped me understand what a dick he
is.

MUMFORD

I don't know if –

SOFIE

You're shockingly honest, that's
what makes you great. I've never had
a man treat me this way. With you, I

feel really... listened to.

(gives him a look)

Can I tell you something? It's a little embarrassing, but I feel very unguarded with you.

MUMFORD

Of course.

SOFIE

Thanks to this therapy, I now know what I'm looking for. I need to find a man like you.

(laughs)

Not one who's treating me, of course.

(full of resolve)

And I'm going to do it, dammit! You've given me the confidence.

Mumford is in agony.

MUMFORD

Sofie... that makes me very happy.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

Nessa's on the couch, playing with her usual unlit cigarette. There's an uncharacteristic lightness to her.

NESSA

...I mean, Doc, the dude is seriously deluded. I said that to him, I said, "If you think I'm gonna do all that shit for you, man, you are seriously deluded."

MUMFORD

What'd he say?

NESSA

(can't hide her pleasure)

He said – "Which we already knew!"

Mumford laughs, delighted.

MUMFORD

What did he want you to do?

NESSA

First off, he tells me to stop smoking cigarettes. I told him abso-fuckin'-lutely no. As you can see –

She holds up the cigarette as though it were her middle finger, flipping the bird.

NESSA

Then he says stop smoking dope. No again. So then he says he doesn't want me getting together with any other guys...

Mumford doesn't have to see her face to know how much pleasure this gives her, despite her hard-ass cover.

NESSA

...What balls on this guy? What're we...
(too geeky for her)
...going steady? Jesus.

MUMFORD

No again?

NESSA

(long pause)
I said I'd consider it. Nobody owns me. And the last thing was insane. I don't know what's wrong with him...
No magazines.

MUMFORD

Really?

NESSA

I don't know if I can quit. We're gonna try it together, like, you know, AA or something. And I made him give up his .22. No more sneaking

around the hills with his fucking
nut gun like some loony tune.

MUMFORD

He agreed?

NESSA

(yes)

He's pitiful, Doc, a goddam puppy. I
don't know how much longer I can put
up with it. I already got two arms
and legs, I don't need another
appendage.

She takes a look at her watch and immediately lights her
cigarette as she stands up –

NESSA

Oops... gotta go!

She heads toward the waiting room. Mumford gestures to
indicate the back door. She waves him off. He shakes his
head – no one wants to use the back anymore.

Nessa opens the door to the waiting room. Martin Brockett is
sitting there. He makes a gesture to Nessa to underline the
fact that he is not reading any of the many magazines lying
around, then stands up. She goes into his arms like maybe
she's the puppy. He beams and looks at Mumford.

MARTIN

Hiya, Doc.

MUMFORD

Martin.

MARTIN

(pulling Nessa tighter)

Did you straighten her out?

Nessa give him an affectionate punch in the side, then blows
smoke in his face.

MUMFORD

How are you?

MARTIN

Insane! Didn't ja hear? My family
got five hundred times better.

(turning Nessa)

Let's go, Vanessa.

Nessa gives Mumford an embarrassed, "ain't he corny?" look,
but as they go out the door, she's never looked happier.

GILROY (O.S.)

Doctor Mumford?

Mumford is startled to find a man in a suit, GILROY, rising
from the chair behind the door. He's got a briefcase and a
document in his hand.

MUMFORD

I didn't see you there. Can I help
you?

GILROY

My name's Gilroy. I'm from the State
Certification Board.

He proffers the document in his hand, but Mumford doesn't
take it.

GILROY

It's all right, it won't bite you.
Under civil code 1294.67b you are
entitled to be notified that your
status and certification are being
reviewed. This is the notice.

MUMFORD

(takes the paper)

Do you want to come in?

GILROY

(already leaving)

No thanks. Plenty of time for that
when we're a little further along.

MUMFORD

Mr. Gilroy –

Gilroy stops, outside door already open.

MUMFORD

What brought this on?

GILROY

I'm not at liberty to say. Sometimes it's just routine, sometimes there's been a complaint. We'll be in touch.

He goes out. Mumford considers the paper in his hands, thoughts elsewhere.

INT. MUMFORD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A PACKING CARTON half full of books. PULLING BACK and FLOATING OVER other boxes, half-packed with Mumford's personal belongings – he doesn't have a lot. On the bed, an open suitcase with a few clothes thrown in. We're STILL MOVING across the room and out onto the porch, to REVEAL Mumford in his chair, nursing a beer, looking up at the starry sky.

Mumford HEARS THE SHOWER GO ON downstairs at Lily's. Then the MURMUR AND GIGGLE of a wet couple.

SKIP (O.S.)

Far out!

Mumford smiles. He gets up and goes inside, closing the door behind him so as not to violate their privacy. He goes to the suitcase, takes out some clothes and begins putting them back in the dresser. Right now, he's not going anywhere.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

EXTREME CLOSE-UP of Ernest Delbanco. We can't tell where he is at first. As he speaks, we PULL BACK to REVEAL him lying on Mumford's couch – a patient.

DELBANCO

...and when you said at lunch about everybody having "a secret life", something just snapped inside me. I

knew I could no longer continue my relationship with Dr. Sheeler. It was tearing me up inside. And I know Phyllis wasn't getting what she needed from it. What had started as a genuine respect, I think, for each other's professional abilities, and became, over time, a personal attraction had somehow... migrated into a rather torrid sexual relationship...

Across the room, Mumford sits, chin in hand, displaying no reaction.

DELBANCO

...I won't go into that today. Though, if we should continue these sessions, as I certainly hope we will, there are some aspects of that I would like to look at. God knows, I've listened to enough people giving me the juicy –

(catches himself)

...At any rate, I just wanted to acknowledge the catalyzing effect your comment had on me. I just hope that it doesn't come roiling back upon you like some dreadful undertow.

MUMFORD

How do you mean?

This next is painful for Delbanco.

DELBANCO

Well... you see, when I broke it off with Phyllis, she was naturally upset and she became more determined than ever to pursue certain – how to put it – doubts she's been harboring...

MUMFORD

What kind of doubts?

DELBANCO

About you... your background and your qualifications. I'm afraid Phyllis somehow got you mixed up in her fury with me, and actually took the whole issue to the state board.

Mumford digests this.

MUMFORD

I see.

DELBANCO

And please, for whatever small way I may have encouraged this, accept my apologies.

(brightens)

There is good news, though.

MUMFORD

What's that?

DELBANCO

Phyllis has decided to leave town and pursue her practice in the city. Which leaves you the only psychologist in town.

MUMFORD

Dr. Sheeler is leaving Mumford? I'm sorry to hear that.

DELBANCO

As you can imagine, my own feelings about this are mixed... Unlike, I must say, those of my wife.

Mumford's head snaps up. He had no idea Delbanco was married.

EXT. GAS STATION, SMALL TOWN (IN HENRY FOLLETT'S FANTASY) - DAY

We (CAMERA) are being pummelled by three SMALL TOWN TOUGHS behind Old Man Sutter's gas station/diner in the Follett's fantasy town. [In BLACK & WHITE.] Beyond them, Old Man Sutter's stacked YOUNG WIFE watches in horror from the

backdoor of the building. We DO NOT SEE The Newcomer yet.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

Old Man Sutter's young bride had got me in hot water all right, and now I was bein' dealt the beating of my life. If there'd just been two of those bastards it would have been a little closer...

One of the Toughs winds up and delivers the coup de grace.
CUT TO BLACK, then FADE UP ON:

INT. ATTIC ROOM, BOARDING HOUSE - DAY

STILL IN SUBJECTIVE CAMERA as the concerned Landlady, cleavage foremost, stands away from us, having patted the unseen Newcomer's face with a washcloth. Beyond her, near the half-open door, stands her Cheerleader Daughter, worriedly chewing on her thumb.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

The Landlady was good at quite a few things, but doctoring wasn't one of them...

CUT TO REVERSE and see the hero, who this time is actually played by Henry Follett, appearing in his own fantasy for the first time. He's lying in bed, his face bruised in the manner of a fifties movie.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

...Lucky for me, one of the other boarders, the broad who lived downstairs in the front room...

BACK AT THE DOOR, the Cheerleader hears someone coming and steps aside to make way for – Althea Brockett, dressed now in a nurse's uniform so tight the buttons are straining.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

...was a nurse...

As the Landlady and the Cheerleader retreat out the door, Althea the Nurse sways forward toward the bed bearing bandages

and a bowl of steaming water, a lascivious look of concern on her face.

FOLLETT (V.O.)

...and she had ways to make you feel better they didn't teach in nursing school.

Althea the Nurse places a bandage over Follett's eyes,
BLACKING OUT THE SCENE.

INT. MUMFORD'S OFFICE - (PRESENT) DAY

Mumford sits beaming at Henry Follett on the couch. Mumford's glance takes in the clock and he stands up, signalling the end of the session. Follett snaps out of his reverie and gets up.

MUMFORD

I'm very happy for you, Henry.

Mumford, surprisingly, takes Follett's hand and shakes it vigorously.

MUMFORD

I feel like we're making real progress here.

FOLLETT

Me too, Doc. And I can't tell you what that package meant to me –

Mumford stops him with a "don't mention it" gesture. Follett accepts and goes out the back door. Mumford is pleased someone still wants to use that door.

Mumford returns to his desk and begins reading some papers when he HEARS the entry door to the waiting room. Not expecting anyone, he checks the clock, then goes to his office door and opens it.

Sofie is standing there, very agitated, just about to knock. She peers past him to see if he's alone.

SOFIE

I need to talk to you... Doctor. Can I come in?

MUMFORD

Of course.

Sofie sits on the couch. Mumford sits in his chair, facing her. Her voice is as strained as her manner.

SOFIE

We haven't met in this office since that first time. This is how a real professional and his client are supposed to see each other.

Mumford waits.

SOFIE

It might've been more appropriate if we had followed a traditional approach to the doctor-patient relationship.

MUMFORD

Is something wrong, Sofie?

SOFIE

Yes, something's very wrong, Dr. Mumford.

MUMFORD

You're upset.

SOFIE

How intuitive! That must take years of training right there. Maybe you can guess what has upset me.

Mumford considers a long moment, several scenarios racing through his mind. Finally, carefully –

MUMFORD

Is it something you've heard about me?

SOFIE

No, it is not something I've heard about you! It is someth—
(stops suddenly)
Why? Is there something I should have heard about you?

MUMFORD

Why don't you tell me what's on your mind?

Sofie suddenly finds it difficult to look into his eyes, she looks around frenetically for a moment. Then, indicating the couch –

SOFIE

May I?

Mumford gestures "of course." Sofie swings her legs up and lies on the couch so they can no longer see each other's face. (It's the most vigorous movement she's yet shown us.) This seems to help Sofie a bit.

SOFIE

All right... I'm going to come right out and say this, because that's what your shrink is for, right, so you can tell him what's bothering you?

MUMFORD

Um-huh.

SOFIE

(tone still rough)

First of all, I have been feeling much better lately. I don't know if the syndrome is over – if it's just run its course or something – but I feel a hundred per cent better than when I first came to you.

MUMFORD

I'm glad.

SOFIE

Given that, I'm obviously not going to be judging things in the most realistic way.

MUMFORD

I don't follow you.

SOFIE

(sharply)

I'm saying that since I'm doing so much better – which I attribute to you – I'm liable to misinterpret some of my feelings.

MUMFORD

(tentative)

Okay...

SOFIE

The point is this – I am not a blank page. I did not just fall off the turnip truck. Do you know what I mean?

MUMFORD

I think so.

SOFIE

I know a little about psychology. I took three different courses in college. It's true, none of them were above the two hundred level, but I took them... And there was one concept I remember very well.

MUMFORD

What was that?

SOFIE

Transference!

MUMFORD

Transference.

SOFIE

Yes, and that is what I have got right now. I have taken my feelings of gratitude... and relief... and transferred them onto... you. I have taken all those warm, grateful emotions and confused them with feelings for you... So that now I am under the delusion...
(a deep breath)
...that I am in love with you.

Mumford appears frozen in his chair. There is a heavy silence in the room. Sofie does not look back there.

SOFIE

Hello?

MUMFORD

Hello.

SOFIE

I think you can understand why I have some serious questions about your methods. I mean, obviously it becomes much more likely that I'm going to have confusion about this when your idea of treatment is to go walking in the woods and up to make-outs-ville and do all these highly romantic activities –

Suddenly, Sofie's voice cracks. She is starting to cry, but refuses to acknowledge it.

SOFIE

– We had a paper route together, for godssake! Do you understand how I might be a little resentful? Knowing that this so-called "love" I'm feeling is totally bogus, and just a pathetic case of... transference?

Mumford doesn't know what to say. He's on the rack. Finally –

MUMFORD

Yes.

Silence. Then Sofie gets up, wiping at tears with the back of her bare hand. Mumford jumps up to offer her a tissue, but she ignores it. She will not meet his gaze.

SOFIE

Maybe you ought to think about how you're going to fix this. And when you do...

(suddenly losing her will)

...please get back to me.

Sofie turns to go out through the waiting room, but after a step, she stops, pirouettes and goes out the back.

EXT. THE DUPLEX HOUSE - MAGIC

Mumford comes up the street, lost in thought, and turns into the driveway toward his stairs. Ainge leaps over the front yard fence. Mumford pets the dog distractedly, still moving.

MUMFORD

Hey, Ainge.

Lily rises up suddenly from where she's been working in the garden.

LILY

Doc...

MUMFORD

(keeps walking)

Lily.

LILY

Doc.

Mumford reluctantly stops. Lily comes up to the fence.

LILY

I don't want you to be mad at Skip...

MUMFORD

He told you.

LILY

(yes)

Skip and I wouldn't have got together if it weren't for you. That's a big deal.

MUMFORD

(dismisses it)

You would have met in some shower eventually...

LILY

I want to give you something. Will you let me?

MUMFORD

Thanks, Lily, I don't need anything.

LILY

Yes, you do, you damn well do.

MUMFORD

(can't fight)

Okay.

LILY

Here it is, some advice – do the hard thing.

MUMFORD

That's it? That's what you're giving me?

LILY

Clean up the mess. No matter what it takes.

Mumford leans down to pet Ainge.

MUMFORD

What it might take is... doing time.

LILY

Too bad. That's tough, I mean it.
I'm not unsympathetic. But Skip says
you're in love.

Mumford straightens, looks at Lily and acknowledges it.

LILY

Then it's worth it.

Mumford looks at Lily a long moment, then leans over the
fence and kisses her on the forehead. Ainge jumps back over
to her side.

MUMFORD

I'll tell her tonight.

Mumford turns and continues toward his stairs.

INT. MUMFORD'S APARTMENT - MAGIC

Mumford comes in, drops his coat, gets a carton of orange
juice out of the fridge and drinks directly from it.
Distracted, he picks up the remote from the kitchen counter
and switches on the TV, then opens his freezer and stares
inside.

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES comes on. The opening segment previews a
story about a couple who claim to have had a visitation from
Gianni Versace, then one about a yacht that went down near
Venezuela. ROBERT STACK, in his characteristic fragmented
delivery, intones the preview for the last story, accompanied
by appropriate footage:

ROBERT STACK

...A drug rehabilitation center in
the lonely southwestern desert...
run by reclusive monks... becomes
the point of departure in a mysterious
vanishing...

A CLOSE-UP of an IRS identification card featuring a picture
of a younger Mumford, badly photographed in suit and tie.
His name is not visible.

ROBERT STACK

...as an intrepid government investigator disappears – without a trace.

In the kitchen, Mumford spins to look. DISSOLVE TO:

LATER IN THE PROGRAM. Documentary shots of IRS Headquarters, etc., are INTERCUT with hokey-looking re-enactments from Mumford's life – with a YOUNG ACTOR who looks vaguely like Mumford playing him.

IN MUMFORD'S APARTMENT the telephone is RINGING. Clearly, it's not the first time. Mumford, watching the show intently, lifts the headset an inch from the cradle and then hangs up. When it immediately RINGS AGAIN, Mumford takes it off the hook, cuts off the call, and buries the headset under a sofa cushion.

ON THE SHOW: scenes of tax investigation – in the show's version the IRS guys have drawn guns and are storming houses – are interspersed with scenes of sordid drug-taking.

ROBERT STACK

...despite brilliant promise as a fearless investigator... found himself on a downward spiral of drug abuse and dissolution...

MUMFORD'S SISTER, the real thing, a plain, middle-aged West Virginia woman, appears in a "dramatic", badly-lit interview. (As with all the interviewees, she is identified by a supered title.)

MUMFORD'S SISTER

...we didn't talk much after our folks died, but I know he felt his life had taken a wrong turn...

A snapshot of some IRS-era party, happy revelers posing for a flash. Camera PUSHES IN on Mumford, smiling and high, his neck encircled by Gregory's arm. Candy is on the other side of Gregory.

A shot of the Pennsylvania Turnpike as a State Police Cruiser zips by.

ROBERT STACK

His former undercover partner at the IRS... is now a trooper with the Pennsylvania State Police...

GREGORY, in State Police uniform, with a sadistic glint in his eye, is interviewed by the roadside, cars whipping by.

GREGORY

The guy was obsessed... didn't always know where to draw the line... but I would have trusted him with my wife – er, my life –
(looks off camera, laughing)
– What'd I say? Both, actually...
(gets serious again)
...I can't say I was surprised, though, when he disappeared.

Ragged telephoto shots of the Drug Rehab Center in the desert, low, innocuous adobe buildings.

ROBERT STACK

Who was this enigma... a courageous public servant or a debauched addict?... Either way, his last known stop was here... isolated in the Arizona desert... taken in by an order of devoted monks...

IN AN ARIZONA TOWN, a monk with a clerical collar, BROTHER TIMOTHY, is loading groceries into the back of a pick-up. He's being ambush interviewed. He's polite, but not cooperative.

BROTHER TIMOTHY

We don't talk about the people who've been our guests... but I can tell you this about our order – we believe everybody has the right to start over... everybody deserves a second chance.

Shots of wind-swept desert, cactus, and dust-blown highway.

ROBERT STACK

And perhaps... that is exactly the
chance the now-sober pilgrim took...
on a blustery November day... walking
away from the rehab center... never
to be heard from again...

MUMFORD'S SISTER AGAIN:

MUMFORD'S SISTER

I'd like to know if he's alive. If
he is, I just hope he's happy and
his new life is...

(not sure how to put
it)

...well, I hope he's found what he
was looking for...

Mumford, in his apartment, watches with real emotion.

His sister's face DISSOLVES into a new snapshot of Mumford,
dressed in an Orkin Exterminator uniform, as the MUSIC on
the show comes up. A 1-800 telephone number appears across
the bottom of the frame.

ROBERT STACK

If you have any information about
this man or know anything about his
whereabouts, contact the Sheriff's
Department in Cochise County, Arizona,
or call this number...

EXT. SECOND FLOOR PORCH, THE DUPLEX HOUSE - NIGHT

Mumford comes out to the rail and looks off over the town of
Mumford.

WHAT HE SEES (or imagines he sees): all across the nightscape,
one window in every house is glowing blue with flickering TV
light.

EXT. COOK HOUSE - NIGHT

MOVING IN on the porch steps. Mumford runs into the shot. In fact, he's run the whole way from his place and he's out of breath. He takes the porch steps three at a time, rings the doorbell, and waits.

Mrs. Cook peeks out, then opens the front door, an especially sour look on her face. She speaks through the screen door.

MRS. COOK

Well, look who's here...

MUMFORD

Good evening, Mrs. Cook.

MRS. COOK

Just who is here, can you tell me?

MUMFORD

Could I see Sofie, please?

MRS. COOK

No, you can not. I wouldn't know who to say is calling.

SOFIE (O.S.)

Mother...

Mrs. Cook glances inside at the as-yet-unseen Sofie, then hisses at Mumford –

MRS. COOK

I could see right through you from the start, you imposter. I know what you're after. I knew it then and I know it now!

Sofie appears behind her mother.

SOFIE

Mother...

MUMFORD

What do you think I'm after, Mrs. Cook?

MRS. COOK

Sofie. It's so obvious... you're after my daughter.

MUMFORD

Well, I gotta say, Mrs. Cook, you're right about that.

Both Sofie and Mrs. Cook are set back for a moment. Mrs. Cook recovers fastest –

MRS. COOK

It'll never happen! You're in big trouble, mister.

SOFIE

(scary strong)
Mother... go away!

Mr. Cook suddenly appears, takes Mrs. Cook by the arm and makes her vanish. Sofie and Mumford are left alone. She looks at him through the screen.

MUMFORD

I guess you saw the show...?

SOFIE

Which show was that?

MUMFORD

Sofie...

SOFIE

Part of it. We were watching "ER" until someone called.

MUMFORD

You probably got the idea.

Sofie comes outside. She doesn't get too close or look at him as she walks to the other end of the porch.

SOFIE

Do you know what a betrayal this is?...

Mumford knows.

SOFIE
...How violated I feel?

MUMFORD
You're not the only one...

Sofie turns sharply to look at him, ready to blow up.

SOFIE
You feel violated?

MUMFORD
Not me... all my other my patients.
I smelled tar and feathers on the
way over here.

SOFIE
You deserve it.

Mumford agrees. He watches her closely.

SOFIE
I should be irate.

Mumford immediately perks up. Sofie tries to correct –

SOFIE
I am irate!

MUMFORD
(grabbing at the thread)
But...

SOFIE
But nothing... I'm mad as hell. This
is a terrible thing you've done.

MUMFORD
I know it! Please believe me, I know
that...

Mumford steps closer to her.

MUMFORD

But, there is one... mitigating factor
I want you to consider before you
write me off.

SOFIE

What?

MUMFORD

Will you think about it?

SOFIE

I don't know. Depends. I'm in a bad
mood.

MUMFORD

I love you. More than I've ever loved
anyone or anything in my life.

She looks into his eyes.

SOFIE

Oh.

MUMFORD

I want to spend the rest of my life
with you... but I'm not sure you
feel the same way.

She regards him for several moments, her mind racing.

SOFIE

I sort of do...

Mumford feels joy. Now, finally, he takes her in his arms.

SOFIE

...but first, you have to tell me
something...

MUMFORD

Anything... just ask.

SOFIE

What is your name?

As Mumford breaks into a huge grin, CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM, MUMFORD COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Mumford is at the defense table. Lionel is his lawyer. Sofie, Mr. Cook and Ben sit right behind the rail.

JUDGE OTTO (O.S.)

The defendant will rise.

Mumford and Lionel stand up.

JUDGE OTTO (O.S.)

Sit down, Lionel.

Lionel sits down, squelched again. We see JUDGE OTTO for the first time, a tough guy in his sixties.

JUDGE OTTO

Clarence Norman White, do you understand how serious are the crimes with which you have been charged?

MUMFORD

I do.

JUDGE OTTO

Do you realize how insidious it is to invade the most private thoughts and secret lives of unsuspecting people?...

WE SEE there's a pretty big turnout for this hearing. Prominent among the onlookers: Lily and Skip, sitting together; Nessa and Martin, holding hands; Dr. Delbanco and MRS. DELBANCO. Gilroy, from the State Certification Board, sits with the PROSECUTOR.

JUDGE OTTO

...People who have come to you with the faith that you know what you're doing... and that you are who you say you are?

MUMFORD

Yes, your honor.

JUDGE OTTO

It means absolutely nothing to me that so many of your patients have come forward with praise for you and your therapeutic skills. You understand that?

MUMFORD

Yes.

Follett is sitting in one of the back rows, apparently alone. But now he looks down the row. Althea is sitting down at the end in a stylish suit, completely appropriate, but a size too small.

She gives Follett a sidelong glance, then crosses her legs provocatively. Whatever fantasy they're currently enacting is working really well for both of them.

JUDGE OTTO

Mr. White, I am frustrated that the criminal code in this state allows a maximum sentence of only six months and a maximum fine of only \$2000.

MUMFORD

I'm sorry, your honor.

JUDGE OTTO

What?

MUMFORD

I'm sorry you're frustrated.

JUDGE OTTO

Are you disrespecting this court, Mr. White?

MUMFORD

No, sir. I was empathizing. Sorry.

JUDGE OTTO

Maybe you can empathize with this –
Maximum fine. Three months in jail,
three months house arrest. Sentence
to begin immediately at the Orchard
Valley Correctional Facility. Case
closed. This court is adjourned.

The judge slams down his gavel, stands up and stalks out. A
DEPUTY moves in to take custody of Mumford. Lionel stands up
and leans in –

LIONEL

It's a country club. Don't worry
about it.

MUMFORD

Thanks for your help, Lionel.

Mumford turns to face the Cooks. Mr. Cook and Ben shake his
hand like he's just won something. Lionel addresses them all
with his usual self-satisfaction –

LIONEL

I'll have him out in half the time.

WE PUSH IN on Mumford and Sofie, who embrace.

SOFIE

You got off easy.

MUMFORD

Will you wait for me?

SOFIE

We're only talking about six weeks.

MUMFORD

Will you be here?

SOFIE

Of course... I haven't got the energy
to get out of town that fast.

They kiss. The Deputy takes Mumford's arm, and we –

CUT TO:

INT. STATE CORRECTIONAL SEDAN - DAY

Mumford is alone in the backseat, handcuffed to a metal restraint. A lone COUNTY CORRECTIONAL OFFICER is up front, driving. There's a heavy security screen divider between front and back.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

Better make yourself comfortable. We got a three hour drive here.

MUMFORD

I'm fine.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

You're the shrink, aren't you?

MUMFORD

No, not really.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

But you do therapy?

MUMFORD

Not any more.

They ride along in silence. At peace, Mumford watches the town go by. Finally –

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER

I'll tell you, Doc, the wife and I,
we got a little bit of a problem.
Would you mind if I just ran it by
you?

The Correctional Officer watches Mumford in the rear view mirror, waiting hopefully. Mumford ponders the question a long time, then gives a "what the hell" shrug.

MUMFORD

Go ahead.

EXT. MAIN STREET, EDGE OF TOWN - DAY

The State Correctional Sedan heads out of the business district toward the highway, leaving the town of Mumford behind.

FADE OUT.

THE END