

T H E F I S H E R K I N G

a screenplay by

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INT. DARKENED BEDROOM - DAWN

C.U. - A RADIO/ALARM CLOCK reads 5:59 a.m., the digital numbers flip to 6:00 and the radio goes on:

A TALK SHOW HOST speaks in a soft, soothing voice:

JACK (V.O.)

It's six AM...Ooooooo and that
bed never felt sooooo
gooood...Mmmm, you linger in a
gentle dream state...ever so
comfortable... ever so safe...

SOUND EFFECTS - LOUD BATTLE NOISE...

...BUT SUDDENLY YOU REALIZE IT'S
MONDAY!

A WOMAN SCREAMS...the D.J., JACK, speaks in a rapid fire pace...

A HAND from O.C. tries to shut the alarm off in the dark.

...your hand races to shut off
the alarm before your mind wakes
up...

SCREAMS...THE HAND knocks over a water glass and grabs the clock
but can't find the OFF switch.

...But it's too late! If you
don't get out of bed now, you'll
never have enough time to blow
dry your hair THAT SPECIAL WAY...
You'll never make that nine
o'clock meeting that your PARTNER
WILL BE EARLY FOR... YOU'LL BE
LATE AND EVERYONE WILL NOTICE!

The HAND bangs the clock violently...

...Rumors will fly about you
losing your edge and before you
know it, you're selling yourself
on street corners to lonely
middle-aged men from the
Midwest... Headlines flash across
your mind - SLEEPER GUNS D.J.
THEN SELF - CLAIMED "I only wanted
two more minutes!"

SCREAMS...SILENCE...The D.J. (Jack) speaks in a normal voice.

...Hey, it's Monday morning, and
I'm Jack Lucas.

THE HAND rips the clock off the night table.

OPENING CREDITS BEGIN.....

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING.

A MAN in a shower listening to the radio...

WOMAN (V.O.)
(upset)
...I don't have to talk to you.

JACK (V.O.)
Yes...Yes, you do because you see,
today, you're our -

PRE-RECORDED ECHOING V.O.
SPOTLIGHT CELEBRITY.

WOMAN (V.O.)
No, it's none of your business
- it's MY business - and I'm very
private about what is my business.

JACK (V.O.)
OH, PLEASE! You had sex with
the Prime Minister of Belize in
the parking lot of Sea World...
You're telling me you're a private
kind of person. No...You're our...

PRE-RECORDED ECHOING V.O.
SPOTLIGHT CELEBRITY....

WOMAN (V.O.)
Listen, I have been humiliated
enough already!

JACK (V.O.)
Perhaps not - We need those
details....

The Woman hangs up...

CREW (V.O.)
Oooooooooo....

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING.

A NAKED MAN shaves as he listens to the radio.

JACK (V.O.)
I'm peeved! I'm calling Belize!
(telephone sounds)
...I WANT TO SPEAK TO THE PRIME
MINISTER, PRONTO!

VOICE (V.O.)
Yes...Belize Central Office.

JACK (V.O.)
Yes...yes, hello...Hello, this
is Jack Lucas of the United States
and I want to speak to the Prime
Minister of Belize, PRONTO!...

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)
He's not in.

JACK (V.O.)
What you mean he's not in - you
mean nobody's running the country!
You mean I could just walk in
there right now and take you up
for a COUP before lunch.

VARIOUS CREW MEMBERS (V.O.)
SURE! LET'S DO IT! LET'S CALL
FRANCE!

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - 7:45 AM.

A WOMAN in a bathrobe fixes herself coffee as the radio plays.

JACK (V.O.)
Hi, this is Jack Lucas and we're
discussing PERSONAL PET PEEVES...
Go ahead, caller...

CALLER (V.O.)
O.K. Well, It's my husband. He
drives me crazy. I'll be talking
and he'll never let me finish a
sentence...He's always finishing
my...

JACK (V.O.)
(overlapping)
Finishing your thoughts...that's
awful.

CALLER (V.O.)
Oh, that "drives me...."

JACK (V.O.)
Drives you crazy, huh? The
scoundrel!

INT. KITCHEN - 9:15 AM.

A MAN reads the newspaper and sips coffee, as the radio plays.

CALLER (V.O.)
Hello Jack. It's Edwin.

JACK AND CREW (V.O.)
IT'S EDWIN!!!!

New Years Eve sound effects.

JACK (V.O.)
Edwin. We haven't heard from you
in a while. I've missed you.

EDWIN (V.O.)
(laughing
good-naturedly)
O.K....O.K...

JACK AND CREW (V.O.)
Awww.....!!!!

SOUND EFFECTS - "A SUMMER PLACE"...THE NEEDLE IS SCRATCHED OFF.

EDWIN laughs, perhaps a bit over zealously - HE is a
SIMPLE-MINDED SOUL...a lonely child in the body of a lonely man.

JACK (V.O.)
So, Edwin, baby, this is Sunrise
Confession time...what have you got
for us?

EDWIN (V.O.)
I...I...went to this bar..this
very, ya know, IN place...called
The Side Bar.

JACK (V.O.)
I know the place. It's one of
those YUPPIE gathering holes.
I told you to stay away from them,
Edwin. Yuppies are diseased
individuals who went to private
schools and took scouting
serious.

EDWIN (V.O.)

(simple-minded laughter)
Okay...I know but...I met this
beautiful girl...

SOUND EFFECT - "WEDDING BELLS" THEN A NEEDLE SCRATCHING IT OFF.

JACK (V.O.)
Now, Edwin, I'm going to have to
remind you of the time we made
you propose to that check-out girl
at Thrifty's that you liked so
much. Remember her reaction?

BLACK SEVENTIES GROUP (V.O.)
"MISTER BIG STUFF...HUH...TELL
ME ...WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE...
MISTER BIG STUFF...YOU'RE NEVER
GOING TO GET MY LOVE..."

EDWIN (V.O.)
(defensive)
I wasn't really serious about her,
Jack. That was just a joke for
you guys...She was just a girl.
This is a woman. She wears pearls.

JACK & CREW (V.O.)
Aahhh.

EDWIN (V.O.)
I think she likes me...she gave
me her number, but she must work
a lot 'cause when I call she's
never home...But I think we'll
go out this weekend...I've -

JACK (V.O.)
Yeah, Edwin, SURE...and PINNOCHIO
is a true story...EDWIN! WAKE
UP! This is ANOTHER fairy tale.

EDWIN (V.O.)
No, Jack, no, it's not.

JACK (V.O.)
She gave you the brush off, kiddo.
How long ago did you meet?

EDWIN (V.O.)
Um...I think it's like two weeks
almost.

JACK (V.O.)
TWO WEEKS? And she's never home?

What, does she commute to Siagon every day? Edwin, please...

EDWIN (V.O.)

(hurt)

JACK! She LIKES me. She said for me to call.

MICHAEL MCDONALD (V.O.)

(sings)

"WHAT A FOOL BELIEVES...HE SEES.."

EDWIN (V.O.)

(over the song)

JACK!

JACK (V.O.)

I told you about those kind of people, Edwin. They only mate with their own kind. It's called YUPPIE IN-BREEDING - that's why so many of them are retarded and wear the same clothes. You are not their kind Edwin...They're not human. They're evil, Edwin.

SLIGHT PAUSE, as EDWIN considers this.

EDWIN (V.O.)

(serious)

O.K., Jack.

END CREDITS

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO STATION - 9:30 AM.

CAMERA PANS from a wall clock as JACK LUCAS winds up his broadcast:

JACK LUCAS (O.C.)

Well, I'm gone. I'm outta here. It's been a thrill, as always.

(false sincerity)

"Have a perfect day"...and remember, bosses are just cruel third graders who have grown up and only pretended to be mature so they could get jobs and be cruel for money.

WE PAN several studio technicians making ready for the end of the broadcast to the talk show host JACK LUCAS - handsome,

aggressive, intelligent - an underground media star.

JACK

Everyone here on the Jack Lucas
Morning Show says bye.

CREW

BYE!

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY plays.

JACK

This is Jack Lucas...So long...
arriverderch...I'll be sure to
send you a thought as you struggle
through yet another eternal
nine-to-fiver...Yes, I will - as
I drive home in my limo...lay out
on my sun deck...have sex with
the teenager of my choice...And
that thought will be: Thank God
I'm me!

JACK

(annoyed, to the room)

I want you all to know I'm getting
sick again and it's because
someone keeps forgetting to raise
the thermostat before I come in
here...My ass is freezing for the
first hour.

A TECHY makes mocking faces behind his back. Another TECHY
suppresses a laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON.

An expansive Tribeca loft. The modern, minimalist decor gives
it a sleek, cold feeling. A space full of angles and edges,
with no place to feel safe and sound.

CUT TO:

A BATHROOM MEDICINE CHEST -

The mirrored door closes revealing JACK'S reflection - his head
and body still wet from the shower. HE begins to towel himself
dry. HE take a good look at his handsome face in the mirror -
admiring every contour, every pore. HIS eyes light up with
satisfaction.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN AREA

JACK'S GIRLFRIEND, SONDRA - an artist with a beautifully sculptured face and body - sleek, cold, like JACK'S apartment, there is no place to feel safe and sound. SHE is eating a bowl of cereal, studying the cereal box. Beside her is a SKETCHPAD with an ink drawing of a stalk of wheat (similar to the cereal box) growing out of the belly button of a naked male-figure who's torso/pelvis is shaped like a map of America. JACK enters, toweling his hair.

SONDRA

I know it's predictable but I've decided to just go with it and make his penis Florida.

JACK

Can I ask that when you clean your hands you wipe the ink off the inside of the sink before it stains the porcelain.

SONDRA

You can ask.

JACK exits

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM AREA - SAME TIME

JACK'S hand picks up a television script entitled; "ON THE RADIO" HE slides onto the bed with the script in his lap and opens to the first page...HE closes the script and breathes a sigh - leaning back against the pillow, holding the script to his chest and closing his eyes as if he were making a wish.

SONDRA (O.C.)

Raoul called before. About dinner.

JACK quickly opens his eyes. SONDRA crosses to the wall of closets and begins to undress.

JACK

About dinner as a concept or about dinner with...

(over-enunciating)

R A O U L?

SONDRA

(deadpan)

You're so witty. I'm so jealous.

(BEAT)

I NEED to get out of here, Jack,
and do something other than sit
in this apartment and count how
many funny lines you have per
page.

JACK

You know, tomorrow's a very big
day for me...And it would be nice
if you acted like you understood.

SONDRA

Fine. I'll say no.

JACK

It IS my first day of taping,
Sondra.

SONDRA (O.C.)

Fine.

JACK

(looking at script;
sincere, vulnerable)
First time in my life I'll be a
voice with a body. Do you know
what that means? What this could
lead to?

SONDRA

(unsnapping her bra in
the front)
Jack, it's a sitcom - you're not
splitting the atom.

JACK

I'll remember that the next time
you get excited over drawing pubic
hairs on raisin bran.
(lighting joint and
inhaling)
Want some?

SONDRA

No, I have to work.

JACK

How un-sixties of you.

SONDRA

I was nine in the sixties.

JACK

I used to think my biography would

be JACK LUCAS - THE FACE BEHIND
THE VOICE, but now it can be JACK
LUCAS, THE FACE AND THE VOICE...or
maybe just JACK - EXCLAMATION
POINT...

SONDRA slips off her panties. JACK eyes her butt as she crossed into the bathroom. Feeling sexy, he rises and follows her.

SONDRA leans over and turns on the shower. The bathroom door slams behind her. SHE turns quickly. JACK is standing there, naked. Acting sexy, HE walks toward her as he flexes his chest muscles - right, left, right, left...HE grabs her in his arms, dips her over backwards and kisses her passionately. HE raises her up.

SONDRA
(unaffected)
Jack, I have work to do, too.
I just want to take a shower...

HE dips her again, kisses her, this time leaving her "dipped."

...Can't we do this later?...

JACK scoops her up in his arms.

...JACK!...What are you--

HE makes his way out of the bathroom, which is difficult - considering it's small and cluttered as SONDRA has long legs. When HE turns, SONDRA'S feet knock over their cosmetic shelf...

HE turns the other way, purposely smothering her head in the towels. SONDRA can't help but laugh...

JACK
(overly seductive)
I can't open the door, my darling.

SONDRA
Well, you better open the door
- 'cause I'm not getting it in
a bathroom.

JACK
Yes, my darling.

HE eases her down, keeping his arm around her, opens the door and guides her out as he kisses her neck.

SONDRA
You're a maniac.

JACK (O.C.)
(comically seductive)
You make me wet.

SONDRA (O.C.)
If we do this now, can I have
dinner with Raoul?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A MONTAGE OF JACK'S EVENING ALONE.

1 - JACK turns on his CD player and moves about the empty living room, singing along with FRANK SINATRA: "IN THE WEE SMALL HOURS OF THE MORNING." (THE SONG plays in BG to #4)

2 - JACK on the phone, struggling with a Chinese take-out order.

JACK
No...I want one order beef with
baby peas...and two egg roll..ONE
ORDER BEEF. Is there anyone who
speaks English there...I'm sorry
but you're bumming me out - I want
one order BEEF WITH BABY PEAS...
and TWO egg roll...O.K...You
understand now? Jack Lucas...
Lucas...L - U -...L! L! L!...Like
in...Lichee nut! Lichee! Leper!

3 - JACK UNPLUGS HIS PHONE and picks up a copy of his script.
HE faces a full length mirror. HE throws the script down, takes
a dramatic breath, then plays to his reflection.

JACK
"...I want my...

False start. JACK clears his throat, pauses, then tries
again...

...I want my orange cup with the
teddy bear."

4 - CAMERA PANS a bathroom floor - a brown paper bag, plate of
half-eaten Chinese food, a bottle of beer, into a bathtub where
JACK languishes in a bubble bath, browsing through a brochure
of FERRARIS - "oooooing" and "Aaahhing" orgasmically at each
picture. The STEREO now PLAYS - BOB MARLEY'S, "IS THIS LOVE."
JACK suddenly closes the magazine and recites...

JACK
"IwantMYorange cupWITHthetteddybear.

I want my ORANGE cup with the teddy bear.
I want my orange cup with the TEDDY bear."
(smiles)
You could burp these lines and
you'd be funny.
(sincere amazed
realization)
I have this. I have this.
(sinks into tub and
Whispers)
I really have this.

END OF MONTAGE

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ALARM CLOCK - it reads 11:15.

JACK tosses the script onto his night table and begins to rub his head. The television on, but the volume off. A half-eaten dessert sits beside him. HE suddenly notices an 8x10 glossy of himself broadcast on the TV. Confused, JACK picks up his remote and raises the volume.

TELEVISION - A NEWS BROADCAST: a REPORTER in mid-report.

REPORTER

...suggested that Mr. Malnick
return to the scene of his initial
meeting...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SIDE BAR - NIGHT

REPORTER (V.O.)

An after work hot spot, the Side
Bar...is popular with single young
professionals. Edwin Malnick
arrived at the peak hour of 7:15,
took a long look at the handsome
collection of the city's best and
brightest - then removed a shotgun
from his overcoat and opened fire.

JACK'S face turns white.

CUT TO:

INT. SIDE BAR - NIGHT

The bar's glass has been blasted. Tables are overturned.

Paramedics are running about.

REPORTER

Seven people were killed before
Mr. Malnick...

A PICTURE OF EDWIN MALNICK is shown as the REPORTER continues.

...turned the gun on himself and
shot a hole through his head...

EDWIN MALNICK looked sad and harmless. JACK quickly grabs the
PHONE and RE-PLUGS it. HE is about to make a call when he is
stopped by the REPORTER mentioning his name...

REPORTER (ON TV)

The last person Mr. Malnick spoke
to was Jack Lucas. Representatives
of Mr. Lucas expressed regret,
however, no formal comment has
been made. But a lonely man
reached out to a world he knows
only through his radio - looking
for friendship...finding only pain
...and tragedy. This is Mark
Shaffer...Channel Ten news.

JACK is frozen. His breathing grows heavy. HIS phone begins
to ring, but JACK is unable to move.

CUT TO:

EXT. VIDEO STOP - DAY

WE SUPER: A YEAR or so LATER.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STOP - DAY.

CAMERA PANS the CUSTOMERS at the counter of the video store.

PUDGY WOMAN

(to counter person)

I can't watch foreign movies when
I eat - they make me nauseous.

CAMERA PANS TO a variety of CUSTOMERS looking through the
shelves.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STOP OFFICE - SAME TIME

CLOSE UP - THE HEADLINE OF A SENSATIONALIST (NATIONAL ENQUIRER) T

WOMAN KILLS PLASTIC SURGEON, THEN SELF
TOLD FRIENDS; I CAN'T BLINK WITHOUT PAIN

The picture of a bug-eyed society woman is below the caption.

ANNE, the owner of the store, enters abruptly - closing the office door behind her, a cigarette dangling for her mouth. Her desk is organized litter - her walls are filled with porno tapes. SHE searches for one as she talks.

ANNE

These people are insane today.
They took insane pills...

A bit about ANNE as she searches for a video.

ANNE is in her mid-to-late thirties....and she is all woman. She has a raw, earthy, unmistakable sensuality. Her red lipstick matches her red nail polish like a hat and glove set. Inlaid on each nail is a rhinestone design of a little star. Her angora sweaters are tight and clinging, giving her breasts a decided lift and perkiness. Her tight slacks and backless pumps that slap the ground, encourage her buns to have a life of their own. A half-smoked cigarette hangs out of her mouth with great expertise - a skill ANNE obviously picked up in a high school bathroom. Her voice is thick with a delicious Brooklyn twang. SHE is pure street-wise in attitude, philosophy and emotions.

SHE turns and speaks to the man behind the tabloid.

ANNE

Hey! Mr. Happiness!

THE MAN LOWERS THE NEWSPAPER:

It is JACK LUCAS. No longer the aggressive radio star, but more a man who looks like he hasn't slept in months. Rings under the eyes, a sullen yet cynical expression across his face. An intolerant and self-pitying misanthrope..The outrageous articles fascinate him. HE stares back at her pitifully.

ANNE

Are we going to work a little
today or are ya gonna act like
your puppy's been run over by a
truck? Hmm?

JACK rises to stand before her. HE notices, with some annoyance, that her bra straps are showing out from her sweater. He fixes them.

JACK

Are you going for a specific look
with this?

SHE makes a face and exits. JACK raises his eyebrow and follows.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STOP - COUNTER

JACK'S POV - CAMERA moves "cautiously" out into the video store, taking in the crowd as they move about the hundreds of boxes of movies. Suddenly, the GIANT FACE OF A FRUMPY SECRETARY who looks like she rents movies in lieu of no dates - POPS INTO FRAME.

WOMAN

(to JACK)

Can you help me? I don't know
what I'm in the mood for. Uh...I
sort of want a Katherine Hepburny
kinda Cary Granty kinda thing -
something sorta nutty and
screwballly, ya know? Nothing
heavy...I couldn't take heavy.
Ya have something like that?

JACK

(very low key)

Uhh....

WOMAN

(acting helpless)

I don't know...Uh...

JACK seems frightened by the stupidity of this woman.

WOMAN

Maybe something more modern. Like
a Goldie Hawny - Chevy Chasey
kinda thing, huh?

JACK is growing angry. HE stares at the woman menacingly.

WOMAN

Or maybe a musical -
(leans into close-up)
Ya got SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER?

JACK just stares at her in silent rage from behind the counter.

JACK

Well...what will it be?

WOMAN

Well, like I said - maybe a musical.

(laughs then flirts)

I'm not sure. What are you in the mood for?

JACK stares at the woman manically then turns to look at the shelves of returned movies behind the desk. HE selects one and hands it to the woman.

WOMAN

Great...

(reading box aloud)

"ORDINARY PEEPHOLES"

THE WOMAN'S eyes go wide. JACK just stares at her deadpan.

JACK

It's kind of a - Big Titty - Spread Cheeky kinda thing...I cried all the way through it...

ANNE has been listening to this entire exchange. SHE hastily crosses up beside JACK.

ANNE

(to WOMAN)

...I'm sorry. I need to borrow him for a moment.

As ANNE tugs at his sleeve, JACK eyes the WOMAN like a maniac being lead away from his prey. HE follows ANNE back into her office. Once inside, SHE stands before JACK who leans against her office door, closing it behind him.

ANNE

Not for nuthin - but there's this thing we have in business...it might help you a little. It's called "customa relations."

JACK

(deadpan intensity)

I'm sorry. You know I hate people who ask for screwball comedies.

ANNE moves in closer and caresses his face tenderly.

ANNE

Sweetie, honey...You hate people.

(sympathetic)

What is it? Is this one of those days when you tell me you're in...

whadda call it...an emotional
abyss?

(HE doesn't answer)

Why don't you take the day off.

I'll cook tonight. O.K?

SHE kisses him, then exits. JACK is not comforted in the least
by this show of affection.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - TWILIGHT

As JACK takes a walk down a city street, he comes upon a
luxurious hotel. HE stops to watch the goings-on at the
entrance.

CUT TO:

A LIMOUSINE - parked and awaiting it's occupants. A handsome
MAN in his forties exits the hotel and walks toward the limo.
HE is holding the hand of his FIVE-YEAR-OLD SON, who is carrying
a two foot high plastic, smiling PINNOCHIO DOLL. Both father
and son are dressed in ties and jackets.

JACK watches in envy. HIS own clothes a shabby reflection of
the MAN'S. HE eyes the limo with longing. Another limo pulls
up beside it and a gang of YOUNG RICH KIDS laugh their way out
of the back seat.

JACK is so mesmerized, he doesn't notice the FIVE-YEAR-OLD BOY.

BOY (O.C.)

Mr. Bum.

JACK looks down. The BOY has walked directly to him. JACK sort
of smiles. The BOY extends his arms and offers the PINNOCHIO
doll to JACK. JACK is confused but the boy simply deposits the
doll into his arms and walks back to the limo. By that time,
the FATHER has returned and the two drive off.

CUT TO:

WIDE ANGLE

JACK holding the doll. HE is surrounded by STREET PEOPLE asleep
or drunk on the sidewalk near the hotel. HE angrily realizes
there's not much difference between him and them.

JACK

Anybody here named Jimminey?

A drunk groans. JACK snaps the doll under his arm and walks OC.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - EARLY EVENING.

On the bar sit seven empty martini glasses. Beside them sits a smiling PINNOCHIO - his nose in one of the martini glasses. JACK stares out in a drunken haze. THE EX-HEAVYWEIGHT BARTENDER approaches from behind the bar. JACK downs the glass and holds it out to the BARTENDER. The BARTENDER begins to fix another.

BARTENDER

Mr. Lucas, why don't you make
this the last one, then go home. Huh?

JACK

I don't have a home Joe. I'm all
alone ...
(looks to PINNOCHIO & smiles)
Except for my little Italian friend here.
(kisses PINNOCHIO'S little head)

BARTENDER

(hands him drink)
I never seen you like this. Did somebody
not know who you were again?

JACK

I never was, Joe...
You ever read any Nietzsche?...

THE BARTENDER clearly has not.

....Nietzsche says that there are two
kinds of people in this world.
... People who are destined for greatness...
and then us. He calls us the
Bungled and Botched. We get teased
with greatness but we never have it.
We're the expendable masses. We
get pushed in front of trains ...
take poison aspirins...
.. get gunned down in Dairy Queens...
Don't you ever want to know the reason Joe?

BARTENDER

My name is Phil.

JACK

Phil.

BARTENDER

No, I don't.

JACK

Do you ever get the feeling you're
being punished for your sins Joe?

BARTENDER (OC)

Phil...
(JACK nods)
No.

PHIL exits. JACK nods agreeably, then turns to PINNOCHIO.

JACK

You wanna hear my new title for my biography.
"IT WAS NO PICNIC" - THE JACK LUCAS STORY"
(no response from PINNOCHIO)
Just nod yes or no...
(tries it in pig-Italian)
"IL NOUVA ESTA PINICKO" -

THE VOLUME on the TV above the bar is raised, pulling JACK'S attention.

NEWS REPORTER

...Another homeless man was found burned
to death in the Lower East Side. It
is the second such incident in two weeks...
That story when we return-

JACK winces at the thought, then raises his hand to PHIL.
A COMMERCIAL is broadcast on the TV.

ANNOUNCER (OC)

... New this fall...

CANNED LAUGH TRACK LAUGHS. JACK looks back up to the TV.

...From the creators of TWO IN A BUSH
comes ON THE RADIO - starring BEN STARR.

A SEGMENT FROM THE SITCOM IS SHOWN: An unshaven BEN STARR sits
at a breakfast nook with his wife.

WIFE

Honey. Have some breakfast then go
down to the station and demand your job back.

BEN STARR

I can't...

WIFE

Yes you can. Just go straight to
Bill's office and-

BEN STARR

No, I mean I can't eat breakfast.
(whiny)
I WANT MY ORANGE CUP WITH THE TEDDY BEAR.

UPROARIOUS LAUGH TRACKS. JACK's eyebrow rises past his skull.

ANNOUNCER

For the funniest D.J. on T.V. -
ON THE RADIO - this fall on channel ten ...

JACK stares menacingly at the TV then looks away. HE sees his reflection in the mirror of the bar - the hard expression, the pallor, the possibilities gone...It's the last straw.

CUT TO:

EXT. - EAST RIVER, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT.

C.U. OF TWO FEET stand beneath the railing overlooking the East river. Taped to one ankle is a brick. Taped to the other is a brick around a SMILING PINNOCHIO DOLL. An empty bottle of liquor drops to the ground and shatters.

CUT TO:

JACK - prepared to surrender his fate and make the final leap. HE stares at the river, almost smiling. HE has made his decision. HE tries to raise his foot over the railing.

VOICE (OC)

What's going on?

Surprised, JACK turns around.

TWO WHITE JUVENILE DELINQUENTS - one wearing a leather jacket, the other a high school football windbreaker - stand behind JACK. Each are carrying a gallon of gasoline.

JACK is drunk but he is immediately aware of the danger when he spots the gasoline cans.

LEATHER

I said what's going on?

(walks up to JACK)

What are you doing here?

JACK shakes his head and before he knows it, LEATHER shoves a fist into his gut, sinking him to his knees. WINDBREAKER places the gasoline cans on the bench and begins to unscrew them.

LEATHER

You shouldn't hang around this neighborhood.

JACK

O.K...

LEATHER

People like my Dad pay alot of money for this neighborhood. They don't like looking out their window for 2500 a month and seein your ass asleep on the benches - you understand?

JACK

Yes..Yes..I do...I won't come back.

LEATHER

Good.

(to WINDBREAKER)

You believe this drunk?

WINDBREAKER shakes his head.

.....Me neither.

JACK

(crying)

NO...NO PLEASE..

WINDBREAKER hands LEATHER the can, who raises it above JACK'S head. AS THE GASOLINE SLOWLY LEAKS ONTO A PETRIFIED JACK SEES A FIGURE MOVING OUT FROM THE DARKNESS OF THE TREES.

FIGURE

LEAVE HIM ALONE!

Startled, THE YOUTHS TURN.

THE SHADOWY FIGURE stands defiantly.

WINDBREAKER

Shit. Let's go. We blew it.

LEATHER

No.

THE FIGURE steps out of the darkened, grassy area and into the light of a promenade street lamp.

LEATHER

(disgusted)

Jesus...They're all over the place.

The figure turns out to be A BUM. Grimy face, tattered layers of clothing beneath a long over coat, a pork pie hat with a twig sticking out of it like a plume in a helmet of yore. Although clearly downtrodden, behind his beaten appearance, there radiates a calm intelligence and strength. There is something distinctly attractive and confident about him, as he stands there smiling at these two juvenile would-be terrorists. We learn later

his name is PARRY; a combination of Don Quixote and Harpo Marx.

LEATHER calls to him threateningly, with the gasoline can.

LEATHER

You know, there's enough in here
for the two of you.

PARRY

I advise you to let us go.

LEATHER

You advise us!

PARRY

You're out numbered.

PARRY glances over LEATHER's shoulder. LEATHER TURNS to see:
A BUM pushing a shopping cart comes out of the darkness. HE
is mumbling to himself incoherently.

Another BUM, wearing mountains of clothing, appears from
the dark several yards behind WINDBREAKER - who is growing
unnerved by these newcomers.

PARRY looks to the trees and a third BUM - tall, black and
wearing a garbage bag - steps out of the dark, menacingly.

Taken by themselves, the BUMS would look harmless and pathetic.
But in the context of their uncharacteristic organization -
THEY appear frightening.

WINDBREAKER

(Releasing his grip on PARRY)
Shit. It's like fucking Night of the
Living Dead.

JACK is frozen, in total confusion and fear.

LEATHER tries to remain confident. HE laughs.

LEATHER

Am I supposed to be scared? Come on!
They're nuts. They can't do anything.
(yells at them)
GET OUTTA HERE!

But the BUMS stand motionless.

PARRY

They only listen to me.

LEATHER

Yeah right...They don't even understand

what the fuck THEY'RE saying -
they're going to understand you?

LEATHER and WINDBREAKER watch apprehensively as PARRY raises his hand to signal. Each bum reaches into his "possessions", as if to pull out a weapon. Instead, each bum pulls out a flashlight and shines them on the two youths, blinding them from seeing PARRY.

WINDBREAKER
(shielding his eyes)
Shit.

LEATHER
You're gonna need more than your
zombie pals when I get through with you.

HE brandishes his knife towards the dark spot where he assumes PARRY is standing.

PARRY
Son...There comes a time in
every man's life...and you will
learn this, if and when you become men...

From his overcoat, PARRY pulls out a long tube sock tied at the end and filled with a softball at the bottom...

....That there are only two things in
this world ya need...

HE begins to swing the sock over his head - centrifugally gaining force.

...Respect for all kinds of life,
because that's what's right - and
the love of one other person who
you can trust and pork on a regular basis.

PARRY releases the "weapon".

CUT TO:

LEATHER and WINDBREAKER - As the sock flies out of the darkness and, with amazing accuracy - beans LEATHER on the forehead between his eyes. HE drops his knife to rub his head.

LEATHER
(sinking out of camera)
Ow...Ow....OW!

WINDBREAKER grows worried as PARRY reaches in to the lining of his coat, pulls out another "sock weapon" and starts swinging.

PARRY

However, the ability to bean
a shithead can be a fabulous advantage.

WINDBREAKER runs away. The BUM with the shopping cart YELLS at him
as he bolts by. PARRY crosses to a speechless JACK.

PARRY
(picking up LEATHER'S knife)
Are you all right?

LEATHER
(kneeling, rubbing his head)
OWW...MAN...

JACK
(disoriented)
Uh...should we call the police?

PARRY
Nah. This is our fight. I think it would
be nice if we tied him up though...If I had
time I'd give him a bad haircut..

HE kneels down, pulls out some rope from his coat and proceeds
to tie LEATHER to a bench as he converses matter-of-factly...

PARRY
(hands JACK the LEATHER'S knife)
Here, would you take care of this.

JACK, sickened by the sight of it, throws it in the river.

JACK
I need a drink.

Pulls his pockets out to find no money.

PARRY
I know a great place.
(puts his arm on his shoulder)
Drinks are on me!

O.C. THE BUMS cheer.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF ANNE'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT.

ANNE walks down the hall to a neighbor's apartment and knocks.
AN ETHNIC MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN in a bathrobe opens the door.

WOMAN
Yeah darling.

ANNE

(hesitant to ask)

I'm sorry to bother you but...
uh...

(decides to go for it)

I heard from somewhere your
husband drank?

WOMAN

(calmly, openly)

Oh, yeah. He was a big drunk.

ANNE

Well...the thing is, see -

(vulnerable and worried)

My fella's not home...things
haven't been going his way lately
...Ya know how it is...and I was
wondering -when he drank, your
husband, was there anyplace in
particular he went...a cheap bar
in the neighborhood...

WOMAN

Who knew. When he left this
apartment it was no longer my
problem. When he came back, it
was my problem.

ANNE sighs. THE WOMAN understands ANNE'S problem all too
clearly.

WOMAN

...Let me tell you something, my
darling. And I'm telling you
cause when you started talking,
I got a feeling right here...

(presses her sternum)

...before your heart breaks like
mine...get rid of this man.

ANNE smiles. SHE obviously can't.

ANNE

Thank you.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREAT JONES ALLEY - NIGHT.

JACK and PARRY sit on the sidewalk facing the three bums from
the previous scene - A BLACK, A MIDDLE-AGED IRISHMAN and AN
EX-HIPPIE. The trio sit against the alley wall, discussing the
issues of the day as they pass a bottle of THUNDERBIRD.

BLACK
Death penalty's just another
violation of my constitutional
right to satisfaction.

IRISHMAN
I hate that.

HIPPIE
So, you mean if somebody like,
killed your mother, you wouldn't
want him dead?

BLACK
Sure I would. But I should get
to kill him.

IRISHMAN
(explaining further)
He gets to kill him. That's
democracy, see.

A LULL takes over as they all consider this.

CUT TO:

C.U.: JACK sitting the furthest apart from the group - holding
the bottle, HE mumbles to himself.

JACK
This is it. I'm in hell. I've
been damned to an eternity of
idiotic conversation.

HE puts the bottle to his lips and:

FROM JACK'S POV, WE FADE OUT OF THE SCENE ON THE NEXT LINES - AS
EYES AND SLIPS INTO A DRUNKEN SLUMBER.

HIPPIE
You were great tonight, Parry.
(affirmations from the
other two)
Superbum, man! Fucking Marvel
Comics...

THE BUMS CHEER....FADE OUT.

FADE-UP ON:

INT. PARRY'S BASEMENT HIDEAWAY - MORNING.

JACK is asleep on a mattress beside a boiler. HE slowly awakens

- the first dull pangs of a mean hangover making itself known.
HE opens his eyes, confused - not knowing exactly what happened.

CUT TO:

THE GIANT FACE OF PARRY, sitting upright beside him.

PARRY

How are you feeling?

JACK nods, suspiciously. HE notice the basement surroundings -

JACK

Have I died?

PARRY

(friendly)

Hahahahaaa..Nononono...

JACK

(his head throbbing)

If you're going to murder me,
that's fine...just don't laugh.

HE tries to focus his eyes and looks around the room.

There is an extremely organized "living area" - a make-shift kitchen w/hot plate, a nail in a wall w/clothes on hangers...

There is also a DUMPSTER SITTING BENEATH A GARBAGE CHUTE -
The dumpster has planets and stars painted on it's side.

JACK looks to the far wall and sees a hand-painted mural,
depicting a medieval-style setting; grassy landscape, knights
and maidens on horses and a CASTLE-LIKE BUILDING...all rather
amateurish but with a definite committment to the period.

In the foreground of this mural, stands a striking figure -
a five foot high KNIGHT CLOAKED IN A RED CAPE sitting atop a
fiery steed. The figure is imposing and villainous.

JACK looks to the other wall and finds PARRY'S ARSENOL -
homemade "weapons" that also look Medieval like lances made
from mop sticks, nets made of knotted rope, slingshots and
a shield made from a garbage can cover with a rose painted on it.

JACK doesn't know what to make of all this. HE is frightened.

PARRY

It's all right. Don't be embarassed.
Yes, I live in a boiler room.
My name's Parry. We met last night.

HE holds out his hand. JACK takes it cautiously.

JACK
Jack Lucas...

PARRY
(reciting it back)
"Jack Lucas".

PAUSE. PARRY suddenly JUMPS UP AS IF BEING CALLED. (NOTE: PARRY has a tendency to move suddenly - flying and darting about the room)

PARRY
(to the air)
WHAT!

JACK
HUH?

PARRY
WHAT?

JACK
WHAT?

PARRY
(to JACK)
Ssshhhhh.

PARRY looks as if he is listening to someone.
JACK doesn't understand. HE starts to creep away, toward the door.

PARRY
(understanding)
Oohhhhh.
(to JACK)
HEY JACK LUCAS!

HE flies next to JACK. JACK freezes.

....Can you keep a secret?

JACK
No...

PARRY
Do you know what THE LITTLE PEOPLE just told me?

JACK
(getting nervous)
The Little People?

PARRY gets closer to JACK.

PARRY
THEY said you're the one.

JACK
They're mistaken. I am definitely not
anyone...

HE continues to edge toward the door. PARRY stands abruptly
and yells once again at thin air.

PARRY
(to the LITTLE PEOPLE)
Well, I've gotta say something!
I mean you're tying my hands here!!

JACK crawls quickly but is stopped by PARRY, who plops down in
front of him.

PARRY
They say you're not ready to know.

JACK
I'm not.

PARRY
I know all this sounds strange but...
(sincerely)
I really do hear them.

JACK nods, trying to hold it together.

...Do you know who I am?
(JACK SHAKES HIS HEAD)
...Go on. Take a guess.
(shouts to the air)
LET HIM GUESS!! Tch.

Frightened, JACK decides to humor him.

JACK
Uh...well...some kind of...vigilante.

PARRY
(boyish)
Noooo...I mean that sort of happens
along the way but noooo I'm on a
what you call a "quest" See...
(leans in and whispers)
I'm the janitor of God.

JACK'S eyes widen.

PARRY JUMPS UP, hops in the DUMPSTER, standing 'neath the CHUTE.

PARRY

I was standing in here one evening...

JACK

(can't help but ask)
Why?

PARRY

I don't remember. Listen, you do strange things when you live alone. Are you married?
(JACK shakes his head)
Funny, you look married.

JACK is more frightened by this remark than anything else. HE starts to inch his way casually toward the exit...

PARRY

Anyway, I was standing here and all of a sudden - I hear these voices - And the more I listen, the louder they get.

PARRY leans on the edge of the dumpster, staring at JACK.

....And then I saw them Jack. Hundreds of them. Flying around this room. The tiniest - cutest little - FAT people you ever saw...Well - I had to blink! But they were still there. And they told me that I had been chosen for this special quest... You know what they want me do, Jack?

JACK freezes - afraid to hear.

CAMERA CUTS TO A C.U. of PARRY, who smiles...

THEY want me to find the Holy Grail for them.

JACK's jaw drops slightly.

...My reaction exactly. I mean, you start getting requests from little floating fat people who tell you you're special, and you wind up a mini-series - Am I right? But then, at that very moment, there was this tremendous RUMBLING sound...

JACK shakes at PARRY'S description.

..And they sent this message, FLYING
(indicating the GARBAGE CHUTE)...

RIGHT out of here and into my hands...

HE hops out of the dumpster. JACK butts up against the boiler, banging his head on the metal - causing his hangover to escalate.

PARRY squats down next to JACK - cornering him against the boiler. HE hands him an ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST.The cover picture is a A HANDSOME MIDDLE-AGED MAN standing in front of a NEW YORK TOWNHOUSE - which looks very much like the CASTLE-LIKE BUILDING on PARRY'S MURAL. The caption reads -

BILLIONAIRE LANGSTON CARMICHAEL
ADDS A NEW CASTLE TO HIS KINGDOM

PARRY quickly opens the magazine to the pictorial layout of the lavish interiors of CARMICHAEL'S TOWNHOUSE. The final page shows CARMICHAEL, a dashing bachelor in his fifties, standing in his private LIBRARY beside a GLASS COMODE. PARRY excitedly points to inside the COMODE, where a GOLDEN CHALICE sits in the BG.

PARRY

Right there.

JACK

(not getting it and not wanting to)
Yeah?

PARRY

He's got it...He's got the Grail.

JACK

Langston Carmichael? Really?

PARRY

(smiles and nods)
I know! You can't imagine how surprised I was. I mean who would think you could find anything divine on the Upper East Side.

JACK

(LOSING HIS PATIENCE)
Wait a minute! You're telling me the psychic dumpster told you Langston Carmichael has The Holy Grail sitting in a comode next to his humidore?

PARRY

Yeah. It's in his library on the-

JACK

Listen, and I really don't mean to be flippant or to enrage you or anything, but I think you'd

be spending you time a lot more
wisely looking for your brain.
(hidden anger; forceful)
I have to go now.

JACK turns to crawl, but PARRY moves in front of him again.

PARRY
Jack, please...I need your help.

JACK decides to try and gain his footing, so he begins to inch his way up the boiler against his back.

PARRY
See...there's this one other
thing. The Red Knight...

JACK stops and reluctantly indicates the KNIGHT in the mural.

PARRY
Well, I just drew that from my
imagination. I haven't actually
met the guy...yet...
(little people)
THEY tell me he's out there
waiting for me, waiting till I
get close and then he'll show
himself. See, it's either him
or me. He's been playing with
me lately. Those kids last night
- they work for him. He's got
people like that all over the
city. Haven't you noticed all the
crime lately.

JACK
Crime? In New York? Really?

PARRY
It's because I'm getting close,
Jack. That's why I need help.
Somebody like you, somebody true.
I'm getting close but...
(frightened)
...I don't think I could face him
alone.
(smiles)
So what do you say?

JACK rises to his feet and the room spins. HE slides down again.

JACK
(rubbing his head)

Listen. You're a very nice...very nice psychotic man. I really appreciate what you did for me - you're a...it was a very brave and noble thing...

PARRY

Oh, please...You're embarrassing me.

JACK

But I can't help you...

PARRY is about to speak when JACK jumps in first.

JACK

....so, once again....Thank you...
(extends his hand, forgetting his name)
Uh....?

PARRY

Parry.

JACK

Parry...I'm Jack.

PARRY

(smiling broadly)
I know.

JACK

You're a good person. Really. Thanks again.

JACK quickly exits. PARRY smiles to himself.

PARRY

Anytime.

CUT TO:

INT. BROWNSTONE HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER.

JACK steps out of what must be the entrance to the basement. HE walks down the hallway toward the front exit when suddenly an apartment door swings open. FRANK, a burly superintendent, steps into the hall.

FRANK

Where you coming from!?

JACK

Uh...basement I think...

FRANK

(yells so PARRY can hear)
I TELL HIM NO VISITORS!

JACK'S head sets off another explosion.

JACK
Sorry..I..he brought me here last
night. I had no idea...

WIFE (OC)
FFFFFRRRRRAAANNNNNKKK! WHO IS AT THE DOOR?!

FRANK
I'M TALKIN TO SOMEBODY! YA GOTTA
YELL LIKE A BANSHEE!

WIFE (OC)
It's just my manner!

FRANK
(hard of hearing)
WHAT!?

WIFE (OC)
I SAID IT'S JUST MY MANNER!

JACK'S head is now nearly split down the middle.

FRANK
You a friend of Parry's?

JACK
No...Is he supposed to live there?

FRANK
Yeah well...I let him stay. I didn't
know what else to do - ya know, after
what happened?

JACK
What happened?

FRANK
(dying to tell)
Oh, such a tragedy. His wife was
at some bar with some friends, ya
know, after work - and some nut
came in with a shot-gun and blew
the place apart. You must have heard
about...the guy who listened to the radio.

JACK goes numb. HE can't believe what he's hearing.

...Anyway, his real name is Henry Sawyer

Used to be a teacher at Columbia.
Such a tragedy. People stink, I
swear to Christ.

HE spits. JACK almost loses his stomach.

FRANK

(talks a mile a minute)
...He went nuts. I mean, who wouldn't.
She was a beautiful girl. They kept
him at this place for the mentally
upset in Staten Island. He didn't
speak-not a word. Then, all of a
sudden, he starts talkin - only
now, he's this Parry guy. He used to live here
with his wife, so when he got released
they sent him here. I felt bad.
He couldn't work. So I let him stay
downstairs. He helps out, I give
him a couple of dollars. People
throw things away, he keeps them.
(suddenly, toward basement)
BUT HE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAVE VISITORS!

JACK

(leans against wall)
My God.

FRANK

You all right?..
(JACK nods)
Listen, don't mention any of this
to him though. He doesn't remember
about being married and all, and
if you talk about it, he gets
kinda confused.

JACK

Sure...
(sits on step)
Can I just sit here a minute?

FRANK

Sure. You look kinda lime colored.

WIFE (OC)

FRRRAAANK!

FRANK turns and yells back at his wife as he enters the apartment-

FRANK

YOU'RE GONNA MAKE ME COMMIT MURDER,
I SWEAR TO CHRIST!

HE slams the door. JACK sits alone, trying to put all this information in perspective.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S OFFICE - DAY.

ANNE sits at a desk surrounded by shelves of porno tapes. Upon the desk, piles of various films, orders, receipts, etc...
JACK sits before her.

ANNE

Listen. I understand open relationships. Please. I was a teenager in the sixties, after all. But when you care about somebody, you need more than an open relationship. Ya need a phone call...Ya need to pick up the phone and tell me you're not dead...that you haven't been attacked or raped or who knows...I sat upstairs all night worried sick. Look at you!

JACK

I'm sorry.

ANNE

I can't tell you how distraught I was. What happened? Where were you?

JACK

I was attacked.

ANNE is about to respond when the buzzer on her phone rings.

ANNE

WHAT?

EMPLOYEE (OC)

Guy here wants to check out the pornos.

ANNE

SO, send him back!

A moment later, a meek fifty-ish BUSINESS MAN enters, smiling sheepishly. ANNE indicates the walls. HE nods and proceeds to make a selection, trying not to feel awkward or in the spotlight. ANNE turns back to JACK. SHE sniffs the air.

ANNE

I smell gas! What do you mean you were attacked last night?

JACK

These..kids tried to...set me on fire.

ANNE

OH MY GOD!...What did they do? Are you O.K.?

SHE crosses to JACK and puts her arms around him. The BUSINESSMAN, having overheard, pauses to watch. Embarrassed, JACK indicates to ANNE that he feels awkward being hugged in front of this man. ANNE confronts the BUSINESSMAN abruptly, with as little tact as possible.

ANNE

Are you almost done, or what?

MAN

(flustered)

Well...

ANNE

I mean, whatta looking for - a story!?

(makes a selection)

Here...CREAMER VERSUS CREAMER..It won an award.

JACK hides his face so as not to laugh.

BUSINESSMAN

(mortified)

Thank you..that'll be fine...

THE BUSINESSMAN exits. ANNE sits on her desk in front of JACK.

ANNE

Uch...These people....

So, you were attacked. My God.

But you're all right...

(now to more important matters)

So where did you sleep last night?

JACK

I...I stayed at a friends. Listen, I-

ANNE

(puts up her hand)

Please...before you go on...

let me tawk...o.k...We've had a

wonderful time together...

even though there's a

year age difference, the wrong way..

When we first met, you said

this wasn't serious and I shouldn't

get serious and then you moved in

and we haven't been serious. And

I just wanna say that I

have no regrets. None. And don't

wanna have any now so I want

ya to be up front with me..
I want the truth. If your seein
somebody else, let me know...
You don't have to pour gasoline
on yourself and light a match
just to stop seeing me.
I'll say God bless and we'll
part ways...just tell me the truth.

JACK looks to her - somewhat admiring the bravery and integrity
underneath the Brooklynese.

JACK
I'm not seeing anyone else.
I really was attacked.

ANNE
O.K.

HE nods. SHE struts to her desk without a second thought. That's
all she wanted to know so she immediately changes the conversation.

ANNE
...I love you....
(JACK smiles weakly)
...You don't have to say it back...
although it wouldn't kill you.
I'll cook tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT ABOVE THE STORE - NIGHT.

If ever an apartment reflected it's inhabitant, surely this
is one. ANNE seems to have successfully transplanted 1960's
middle-class Italian to 1980's Manhattan - red and gold adorn
the sofa and curtains.

ANNE and JACK sit around a formica kitchen table in silence
after eating dinner. ANNE smokes a cigarette.

ANNE
You sure you don't want to call
the police?

JACK
No...I don't think I could explain.
You know what the Holy Grail is?

ANNE takes a long drag then puts it out in her leftover food.
JACK is repelled by the habit.

ANNE
The Holy Grail? Yeah...I know that.

It was like - Jesus' juice glass.
(JACK just stares at her)
Oh, I used to be such a Catholic.

JACK
You still believe in God?

ANNE
Oh sure..Gotta believe in God.
(trying to be intellectual)
But I don't think God made man
in his own image. No. Cause most of
... the bullshit that happens,
is because of men. No, I think
man was made out of the
devil's image and women were created
out of God - because women
can have babies which is sorta
like creating, and which also
explains why women are attracted
to men, because, lets face it,
the devil is a helluva lot more
interesting - I slept with a few
saints and let me tell you...
BOOOORRING!!! ...And so the whole
point of life, I think, is for men and
women to get married so the
devil and God can live together
and, ya know - work it out.....

ANNE moves to him and leans in for a kiss.

.....Not that we have to get married.

JACK notices a brown spot on her chin and pulls away.

JACK
... You have a little...uh...
something on your face...

ANNE
Oh, I got a pimple..This stuff is supposed
to blend with my skin color...
Like it really works, ya know...

JACK moves to the bar to fix a drink. ANNE follows him and
takes the drink out of his hand. JACK knows what this means.

JACK
I don't think I'm up to it tonight..
(ANNE massages his shoulders)
I slept in a boiler room...I...

ANNE nods but keeps massaging. As long as he wasn't with a woman,

he could have knocked over a jewelery store and she would have the same reaction. HER massaging gets more intense - moving up his head and contorting his face as he speaks.

JACK

I think I'm getting sick...
(trying to be forceful)
I'm...just not in the mood!..O.K!

ANNE grabs his face with both hands and pulls him into a kiss. SHE proceeds to climb onto his body as she utilizes a skill she picked up in high school make-out parties. SHE is a pro. JACK, against all his better judgement and will - despite the pimple cream - is rendered helpless by this woman's passion...He returns the embrace and guides her to the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S LIVING ROOM - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

JACK sits in his underwear on the living room floor in front of an open closet with a cardboard box between his legs. The box is filled with TAPES OF JACK'S PAST RADIO SHOWS. HE begins to sort through them...reading titles, remembering moments...then stops. The memories hurt. HE dumps the box back into the closet and moves to the bar as ANNE exits the bedroom. SHE stands in the doorway.

ANNE

Whatsa matter hon - can't sleep?

HE doesn't answer as he pours a drink. ANNE sees the radio tapes.

...Honey?

JACK

I tell you something, Anne.
I really feel like I'm cursed.

ANNE

Oh stop. Things will change. My Aunt Mary always said, there's a remedy for everything in this world except death and having no class.

JACK

That's just what it feels like. A curse. I can't seem to...
I get this feeling like I'm this magnet but I attract shit.

(PAUSE)

Out of all the people in this city,
why did I meet a man who's wife I killed?

ANNE

You didn't kill anybody. Stop.

JACK

I wish there was some way I could..
just...pay the fine and go home.
(eyes fill with tears)

ANNE crosses to JACK and gently touches him. JACK turns and clutches her to him tightly. Lowering his head to hers, he cries...

ANNE

I know. I know honey.

CUT TO:

INT. PARRY'S BASEMENT - THE NEXT DAY.

JACK is alone in the basement.

JACK

Anybody here?..Uh...Parry?

HE slowly walks around the room - picking up little items here and there, as if trying to discover some clue to PARRY.

HE crosses to the dumpster. HE looks at the CHUTE. HE figures, "what the hell"...

JACK

(to the chute)
Hey there!

VOICE (OC)

YEAH - Can I help you?

JACK, startled, turns around - to find FRANK standing at boiler.

JACK

Oh, it's you...I'm...just looking
for Parry...

FRANK

He's not here.
(beat)

Ya mind my asking what your doing
with this guy - I mean, you seem
like a regular person.

JACK

I'm sort of...an old acquaintance of
his wife's.

FRANK throws garbage in the dumpster as he speaks:

FRANK

Oh. Beautiful woman...

JACK

Yeah...I guess, there's nothing of hers' here, huh?

FRANK

No. I got that stuff upstairs.
The hospital said it'd be better.

JACK looks to the mural, then back at FRANK.

JACK

Can I see it?

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT.

C.U. DUFFEL BAG OF PARRY'S THINGS before JACK.

JACK looks through the items: various textbooks entitled "MYTH AND LEGEND", "HERO WITH A THOUSAND FACES"...a masters degree in Mythology...Another in Romance Literature...A torn picture with PARRY standing near a bar-be-que with an apron that reads- FIRST ANNUAL DOG BAR-BE-QUE...a man's wedding ring...a beautiful photographic portrait of PARRY'S WIFE.

FRANK

She was a beautiful girl...He
was crazy about her.

JACK looks at the photograph.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREAT JONES ALLEY - DAY.

The BLACK, the IRISHMAN and the HIPPIE are in their usual place. THEY lean against the wall, observing the afternoon life that walks by. JACK enters the scene and asks them where PARRY is. The HIPPIE begins to speak and points to his right. JACK nods in appreciation and hands them a couple of dollars.

CUT TO:

EXT. CORNER OUTSIDE OFFICE BUILDING - LATER THAT DAY.

JACK sees PARRY from across the street; waiting near a hot dog vendor and eyeing the entrance to a midtown office building. JACK approaches.

JACK

Parry?

PARRY turns and smiles, acting as if he knew JACK would come.

JACK

(reaching into his pocket)

Hi. Listen, I thought maybe you could use-...

PARRY

Sshhh.

HE pulls JACK to his side. THEY sit on the hood of a parked car and watch the entrance to the office building.

CUT TO:

EXT. ENTRANCE OFFICE BUILDING.

Several business men and women, secretaries, etc...make their way out for lunch. Among them is PARRY'S damsel in distress: LYDIA - a dowdy, waif-like sparrow of a thing, who waits for several more aggressive co-workers to pass through the revolving doors before she gets up enough nerve to go herself.

PARRY

Isn't she a vision?

"A VISION" is not exactly the phrase that would come to mind in describing LYDIA - torturously self-conscious, painfully shy, clumsy, formless, plain - these are much more in keeping with LYDIA'S persona. SHE wears loose frocks that give her no figure and make her appear to be swimming in material..SHE wears no make-up; her stringy unstyled hair is kept in place by a beret that keeps sliding off her head and her contact lens are always dry, causing her to constantly blink and use eye drops.

PARRY

Let's go.

JACK

NO...wait, really. I just wanted to give you...

JACK pulls out some money, but PARRY is off camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - DAY.

Behind the glassed-in exterior, we can see LYDIA sitting by herself eating lunch. CAMERA PANS OUT TO STREET where PARRY and JACK are sitting on the hood of another car, watching.

PARRY

She's loves dumplings. It's
her Wednesday ritual.

LYDIA raises a dumpling to her lips with a pair of chopsticks. SHE then accidentally drops it into a dish of soy sauce and splatters her dress. Unnerved, she hastily wipes herself down knocking over a water glass when she removes the napkin.

PARRY

Isn't she sweet? She does that everytime.

JACK squints at LYDIA as if trying to see what PARRY sees.

CUT TO:

INT. BOOK STORE - DAY.

JACK and PARRY have followed LYDIA into a book store. SHE stands browsing through romance novels. THEY watch from a safe distance.

PARRY

She buys a new book every two days.

LYDIA reads the cover of a book entitled, LOVES' LUSTY LONGINGS.

PARRY

(smiles, says with great affection)
She's into trash. Whadda you gonna do?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - DAY.

PARRY and JACK are following LYDIA, when she stops at a news stand.

PARRY

She's got a real sweet tooth. If
anybody ever told me I'd be in
love with a woman who eats
Jawbreakers, I'd said they
were nuts.

(reverentially)

But look at that jaw!

JACK doesn't want to look. If the Little People made PARRY seem crazy, this infatuation confirms him as beyond hope.

LYDIA buys some candy then turns and walks back toward her office building, once again waiting her turn to dive into the revolving doors. SHE disappears into the building.

JACK

Do you follow her every day?

PARRY
Huh-huh. I'm deeply smitten.

JACK
What's her name?

PARRY
I don't know.

Things are sounding weird again, so JACK seizes the moment to accomplish his initial task - he pulls out a fifty dollar bill and hands it to PARRY.

PARRY
What's this for?

JACK
Uh...I just would like to help you. I thought...maybe...you could use some money.

PARRY
Tch...isn't that nice of you.
Awww...

HE hugs him on the street which embarasses JACK to no end.

...What a nice thing to do...

JACK
(pulling away)
That's O.K.

PARRY
Can I take you to lunch?

JACK
No..I have to get back to work.
Take care of yourself.

JACK walks away. CAMERA stays on JACK for a few yards until he turns around and sees:

PARRY handing the fifty to a bum in a doorway.

JACK
HEY!!...HEY!

JACK walks back to PARRY, who is explaining to the bum:

BUM
(LOUD gibberish)
FUCKKAMAL...BASTAA..NOCOIDETION...

PARRY

(as if he understands)
Well, I think you should be realistic.
Ya can't start an ad agency on fifty dollars!

JACK

What are you doing? I gave that
to you.

PARRY

Well what am I gonna do with it?

JACK

I don't know. But I gave it to
you...to help YOU...not him.

PARRY thinks a moment - staring at JACK, then smiling.

PARRY

You really want to help me?

A wary JACK, who's afraid to reply.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANGSTON CARMICHAEL'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY.

On the Upper East Side, PARRY and JACK stand across the
tree-lined street from the five million dollar townhouse.

PARRY

I read there's an alarm system
on the doors and windows but there
IS a skylight on the roof - so
I think that would be the best
way. What do you think?

JACK

You can't just break into this man's
house. This man has done nothing.

PARRY

Jack, I have to get...

JACK

All right! Listen - please...don't
start drooling or...rolling your eyes
when I tell you this but - You shouldn't
do this..There is no Holy Grail.

PARRY

Tch. You are so sweet.
You're afraid I'm in danger.
You're trying to protect me.

JACK

No. I think you're a moron and
I don't want to get into trouble.

Ignoring this, PARRY gets filled with emotion and hugs JACK.

PARRY

...You are such a great guy. First
the fifty, now this.

JACK

(pulling away)
Please don't hug me in public again, O.K.?

PARRY

(shouts)
I LOVE THIS MAN...YA HEAR ME...

JACK

My God...

PARRY

I'M DAFFY ABOUT THIS GUY AND
I DON'T CARE WHO KNOWS IT!!!

An COUPLE pass by, obviously not wanting to know it.

JACK

Will you shut-up!!!

PARRY

You're a true friend.

JACK

I'm not. Believe me. I'm scum.

PARRY

You're a real honest to goodness
good guy.

JACK

I'm self-centered, I'm weak - I don't
have the will power of a fly on shit...

PARRY

That's why the Little People sent you.

JACK

I don't believe in Little People.
I used to try to kill
Tinkerbell by not clapping.

PARRY

So, you're going to help me get
the Red Knight, aren't you?

JACK
WILL YOU PLEASE...please listen to me
(HE GRABS PARRY by the shoulders)
You know none of this is true -
the Grail, the Little People, all
of it. There's a part of you that
knows this isn't true.

PARRY
(smiling, but getting upset)
Jack...

JACK
I know who you are...or who you were.
You don't belong on the streets. You're
an intelligent man...you're a teacher...

PARRY breaks away from him. HE looks completely disoriented
and confused. HE keeps looking around, not meeting JACK'S eyes.

PARRY
You're acting really weird Jack.

JACK
Parry..or what ever your name is...
Let me help you. (beat).
THERE - IS - NO - RED-KNIGHT!

PARRY looks over JACK'S shoulder, and smiles - almost relieved:

PARRY
Oh yeah? Then who do you call that?

JACK turns to look in the direction of PARRY'S glance. HE
sees nothing.

JACK
Call who!?

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP PARRY.

CUT TO:

PARRY'S P.O.V;

A MAGNIFICENT BURNISHED RED STEED STANDS IN THE INTERSECTION OF
5TH AVENUE AND 74TH STREET. ON TOP OF HIM, SITS THE RED KNIGHT -
A HELMETED FIGURE IN A FLOWING RED CAPE, HOLDING A LANCE. HE
STARES BACK AT PARRY.

CUT BACK TO:

PARRY, taking a step forward.

PARRY

God he's beautiful...He knows
I'm close to it. He's afraid. I can tell.

JACK (OC)

You're totally gone, aren't you?

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT

HE pulls the reins back, forcing the horse up onto it's hind legs.
Then, he gallops off.

CUT TO:

PARRY and JACK.

PARRY

COME ON!!!

PARRY runs O.C. in the direction of the knight. JACK is not about
to follow, until he sees - PARRY run right into the intersection
and almost gets hit by a cab.

JACK

Jesus.

JACK runs after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE CORNER OF FIFTH AVE. and 74TH. - DAY.

PARRY reaches where the RED KNIGHT stood and looks.

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT riding onto the sidewalk and jumping over a stone
wall into Central Park.

CUT TO:

PARRY, as JACK reaches him.

JACK

What is going o-

Before he can finish, PARRY is off again. JACK races after him.

THEY climb the wall and run into the park. THEY dodge past women with strollers, runners, bikers, sun worshippers, etc....
THEY run deep into an extremely woody section of Central Park. Trees and foliage surround them.

PARRY stops suddenly. Panting, JACK catches up.

JACK

Oh...Oh...Oh God...I'm dying.
I can't breath and I'm dying.

PARRY

Ssshhh.

HE looks around - past the trees, as if trying to see through them - but sees nothing.

PARRY

He's gone.

JACK

(HE'S had it!)
WHO! WHO'S GONE?! WHO HAVE WE BEEN
CHASING!?? CAN I ASK THIS QUESTION NOW!!!

PARRY

I'm sorry Jack. I thought you saw him.

JACK

SAW WHO!?!?

PARRY

(excited)
The Red Knight! The horse! I finally saw him!

JACK'S face fades into disappointment. HE heads through the trees to the road, as he talks; PARRY follows.

JACK

That's it! I gave you the money you
want to keep it fine, you want
to give it away - fine.
(looks up to the heavens)
I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW, I DID
GIVE HIM THE MONEY! O.K.! ARE WE CLEAR?!

At that moment, a BUSINESSMAN walking down the road witnesses JACK'S declaration to empty air. PARRY gets embarassed.

PARRY

(whispers)
Jack, who are you talking to?
(he looks around)
Are THEY here?

JACK looks at him with murder in his eyes.

JACK

Who?

(sarcastic)

The Little Persons?

PARRY

(nods)

Can you hear them now?

JACK

(patronizing him)

Yeah, I hear them. And they're saying to me "Jack, go unto the liquor store and findeth the Jack of Daniels that ye may be shitfaced. DOOLANG...DOOLANG..."

PARRY

(hearing something else)

Do you hear THAT?

Frustrated, JACK turns to leave but this time there is a sound - someone is crying. Someone close by. PARRY follows the cries OC.

JACK

This is too hard.

A reluctant JACK follows him.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

The park's bridle path. A BEATEN MAN cries as he sits in the middle of the bridle path - mumbling to himself incoherently. HE is drunk. His manner and voice portray him as a gay man at the end of his rope. There are cuts above his forehead. His leather jacket and jeans are covered with stains. PARRY kneels beside him.

GAY BUM

GET AWAY! I WANNA GO! I WANNA GO NOW!

PARRY

Hey...Come on, we'll help you up. You can't sit here.

GAY BUM

NO! I want a debutante on a horse

to step on me.

JACK
(wanting to leave)
Parry...

PARRY
Buddy, the days of the debutantes
are...not what they used to be.

GAY BUM
(starts to cry)
Isn't that awful? Poor Brenda
Frazier. Poor Little Gloria.
They ruined them! THEY ATE THEM
ALIVE!

PARRY
(helping him up)
It was a crime.

GAY BUM
Leave me alone...I wanna go...

PARRY lifts him up - he looks to JACK for help.

PARRY
Will you get the other side.
(JACK hesitates)
Jack?

The man's cuts and suicidal demeanor turn JACK off.

JACK
Listen, he just needs to sleep
it off. Someone will take care
of him.

PARRY
Who?

JACK
Well, maybe he wants to stay here.
(to bum)
Do...do you want to stay here?

GAY BUM
(suddenly lucid and
pissy)
Oh, yes, thank you - I really love
bleeding in horseshit. How very
Gandhiesque of you.

PARRY looks to JACK, who then begrudgingly helps the BUM to his

feet.

CUT TO:

INT. BELLEVUE EMERGENCY ROOM - LATER

In a room at the end of the line of chairs, PARRY sits next to the GAY BUM. JACK stands a safe distance away, unable to take his eyes off the scene before him. Seated against the wall are an assortment of derelicts, drunks, screaming withdrawal victims and jacketed schizophrenics. JACK has a hard time moving.

PARRY
(to JACK, referring to
GAY BUM)
Will you watch him for a minute?

Before JACK can respond, PARRY is up and about - introducing himself to the various patients as JACK watches on.

PARRY moving down the line...saying hello, wiping people's brows, holding the hands of an angry bag lady mumbling incoherently.

What seems extraordinary to JACK is the soothing affect PARRY seems to have on them.

JACK, somewhat inspired. HE tries to communicate to the GAY BUM.

BUM
I wanna go...just let me go...

JACK
Uh...Where...where do you want
to go?

BUM
(upset)
Ah...can't get there. Not tonight.

JACK
(being positive)
Well, maybe you can. Where do
you want to go?

BUM
Venice. Like Katherine Hepburn
in SUMMERTIME.
(JACK is speechless)
Why can't I be Katherine Hepburn?
(cries again)

JACK

(trying to make
conversation)
Well...What ...what did you do?
You know, what...were you?

GAY BUM
(enjoying talking about
himself)
I was a singer. Ya know, stage...
summer stock...God.
(disgusted)
I could do CABARET - backwards
- every part. But what does it
all mean?

HE genuinely asks. JACK is at a loss, his expression obviously
replying "nothing." The GAY BUM regains his sarcasm for a
moment.

GAY BUM
(eyebrow raised)
You know, you always have such
a cheerful effect on me.
(cries again)
I wanna die...I just wanna...
die...

JACK, against all better judgement, pats the BUM'S hand in
comfort. The BUM leans his head on JACK'S shoulder and cries.

JACK, wide-eyed with embarrassment, looks over to PARRY -

POV

PARRY is now playing charades with a STREET BUM, A YOUNG MAN
IN A STRAIGHT JACKET, and a BAGLADY who is arguing to herself.
PARRY is trying to be PINNOCHIO, by miming a long nose...

BUM
(guessing)
HORN...A HORN...

THE YOUNG MAN in the straight jacket just looks on in wonder.

BAG LADY
(talking to herself)
Where the hell am I gonna put the
children? Goddamn daughter-in-law!
Comes into my house looking for
dustballs!

PARRY mimes the loose movements of a marionette...

BUM

Thorazine!

CUT BACK TO:

JACK, who turns his attention back to the bum, takes a deep sigh, and eases his arm around the despairing GAY MAN. HE sits patiently.

BAG LADY (O.C.)
PINNOCHIO...GODDAMN IT!

After a moment, PARRY rushes by JACK.

PARRY
Come on, Jack. We're going to
be late. It's almost five!

Before JACK can ask why, PARRY is already out the door,
YELLING...

...Hurry up! We'll miss her!

JACK
(whispers to BUM)
Um...I've got to run. I've been
doing this all day. Are you going
to be all right?

The BUM sits up, sniffing, with a "stiff upper lip" attitude:

GAY BUM
Please - I was born a Catholic
in Brooklyn...I've been to hell
and I survived...It's O.K...

JACK nods and rises, when the BUM adds quite sincerely:

...Thanks...You're a gem.

JACK nods, a little self-consciously, and exits.

CUT TO:

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - RUSH HOUR

PARRY and JACK sit on the floor enjoying a cup of coffee. A KOREAN VET in a wheelchair with no legs sits near the opposite wall, along with at least fifteen other homeless beggars. Another MAN sits against a cash machine, crying. A WOMAN passes by and drops some change in the VET's cup without saying a word. The VET smiles broadly and says - GOD BLESS - HAVE A NICE DAY!

JACK
You'll never see her in this

crowd.

PARRY

She walks the same trail every day. Just keep your eyes on the newsstand.

JACK looks to the newsstand, doesn't understand, then looks away. HE watches as a BUSINESSMAN drops some change into the VET'S cup.

JACK

(referring to
"change-droppers")
They don't even look at him.

PARRY

(smiles)
They're paying so they don't have to look.

JACK

Poor guy. What must he feel?

PARRY

Grateful. His name's Sid. Great guy. Says everyday he can sit in the middle of Grand Central and watch the rush hour, he's won...I mean, you have to admit...

PARRY smiles and looks around the mobs rushing through Grand Central.

Life at 5:00 in Grand Central...
it's pretty breathtaking. Don't
you think?

JACK is impressed by PARRY'S interpretation...and by the VET'S seeming good nature in the face of his situation.

JACK looks around this mad rush hour scene, as if trying to see it as PARRY does.

WE CUT to the various sizes and shapes of people hurrying home, stopping to buy a paper, talking with their co-workers, the colors, the sights, the sounds...

OFF CAMERA a WOMAN begins to sing. JACK and PARRY turn to look. PARRY smiles with great respect.

PARRY

Margaret.

CUT TO:

MARGARET, A BLACK WOMAN in a paisley kaftan, stands near a photo lab across from JACK and PARRY. With a box in front of her for donations, she starts singing..YOU MAKE ME FEEL LIKE A NATURAL WOMAN." Some rush hour commuters stop to listen. HER VOICE is strong and soulful, she performs uninhibitedly.

WE PAN around the faces of the business crowd listening to MARGARET - looking grateful for the opportunity to stop their day for a moment and listen.

JACK'S sitting on the floor of Grand Central - beside a crippled VET and a row of beggars, listening to a woman singing for quarters, and suddenly feels almost happy; for the first time in a while, he's stopped to look around and finds he is not alone - but a part of a small group of tired people like himself; listening to a woman bare her soul in song. HE turns to PARRY and finds him staring in the other direction. JACK looks.

CUT TO:

LYDIA...going home from work. SHE moves with the crowd, as if totally without her own will, looking through her handbag for her token. SHE walks into the newspaper stand PARRY had pointed out.

IRANIAN NEWSSTAND OWNER
WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU!!! EVERY
DAY, EVERY DAY YOU KNOCK OVER THE
FUCKIN' PAPERS...

A mortified LYDIA makes a hasty exit. PARRY watches in adoration.

PARRY
God. Just one night with her.
I'd die happy.

JACK hears this as if a light bulb went off above his head.

CUT TO:

INT. LYDIA'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

A door opens. LYDIA enters with a bag of groceries she picked up on the way. SHE turns on the light to reveal an extremely neat, albeit modest, one bedroom apartment. SHE carries the grocery bag into the kitchen.

Out of the bag, SHE removes a LEAN CUISINE; a giant bottle of Cream Soda and four giant bars of CHUNKY chocolate. SHE pops the LEAN CUISINE into the oven and walks back into the living

room to an old stereo. SHE turns the turntable on - a record already set upon it. She stands by her coffee table, as if taking position:

SUDDENLY, WE HEAR ETHEL MERMAN - AS LYDIA LIP-SYNCS EVERY WORD WITH COMMITMENT - GIVING A FULL OUT PERFORMANCE.

ETHEL/LYDIA
GOT NO SUNSHINE, GOT NO RAIN
STILL I THINK I'M A LUCKY DAME
I GOT THE SUN IN THE MORNING
AND THE MOON AT NIGHT....

HER attempts at hand gestures and choreography are awkward - bumping into the coffee table, banging her hand against a lamp, but we see a part of LYDIA that few (actually no one) sees. HER abandon, her joy...her smile.

From upstairs, THE NEIGHBORS bang to keep the music down.

LYDIA casually crosses to the stereo, turns off the turntable and heads back to the kitchen - as if the neighbors interference were all a part of her nightly ritual.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - SAME EVENING

ANNE sits alone at her fomic table, smoking a cigarette. Two plates are set. SHE waits for JACK. SHE is hurt and pissed off. TONY ORLANDO AND DAWN play on her stereo.

TONY ORLANDO
KNOCK THREE TIMES...ON THE CEILING
IF YOU WANT ME...TWICE ON THE PIPE

The song continues as the CAMERA slowly pans up to close-up of ANNE, Who is fighting with an imaginary JACK.

ANNE
Ya fuckin' bastard. I don't need this...
(emphasizing)
...I Do Not Need This! A woman my age...I am a person. This is kid stuff. You come! You go! And all I do is cook like a jerk! You're a waste of good cutlets...I don't need this...Find yourself another dope...ya fuckin' bastard...

SHE takes a puff off her cigarette and sings along with TONY -trying, in vain, to cheer herself up.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK'S GREAT LAWN - SAME NIGHT

JACK is helping PARRY lay out nets beneath an oak tree.

PARRY

This is a very popular tree with the crack dealers.

JACK

What I don't understand is - so you catch them in a net - what good is that? They don't go to jail.

PARRY

Jails are crowded. The way I think is...if you can just...annoy them on a regular basis...let them know there are forces out there that are out to stop them - forces they can't see or even fight... maybe, eventually, they'll give up and the Red Knight won't be able to use them.

JACK was following this philosophy with great interest until the mention of the Red Knight.

JACK

(cutting him off)

Yeah, yeah, yeah...right - but, why...not just go after Carmichael. I mean, call the police, call the newspapers - put some pressure on him to fork up the uh...ya know...the cup.

PARRY changes the subject.

PARRY

What a beautiful night.

HE walks deeper into the open field. This makes JACK nervous.

JACK

Don't you think we should be getting out of here - it's getting late...

PARRY starts to take off his clothes.

JACK

...What are you doing?

PARRY

Have you ever done any cloudbusting? See, you take your clothes off, you lie on your back and you concentrate on staring at the clouds...and you try to break them apart with your mind. It's wild.

He is now naked. HE lies down.

JACK

Parry, you can't do this. It's dangerous.

PARRY

Well, that's stupid. This is my park just as much as it is theirs. You think it's fair they keep us out just because they make us think we'll get killed or something?

JACK

Yes. I think that's very fair.

PARRY

Come on, try it. Ya feel the air on your body - ya little fella's flappin' in the breeze...everybody in the city is busy with their business an no one knows we're bare assed in the middle of it. Come on!

JACK

NO! I'm leaving! I mean it...this is nuts.

(walking O.C.)

You're going to get yourself killed. I'm leaving. I mean it!

JACK starts walking away from PARRY, talking to himself...

Ha...little fella? I mean, what do I expect? The man talks to invisible people - he sees invisible horses - and he's naked in the middle of Central Park. I should be surprised. I'm fucking out of my mind to even

be here!
(turns back and yells)
YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR FUCKING MIND!!

HE walks O.C.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREAT LAWN - TEN MINUTES LATER.

JACK, naked, is lying next to PARRY looking up at the clouds.

JACK
They're not moving.

PARRY
Sshhh.

THEY stare up. JACK raises his head.

JACK
You sure no one's coming?

PARRY
Why do you care?

JACK
I don't know how I would explain this. "JACK LUCAS FOUND DEAD NAKED - BESIDE ANOTHER DEAD, NAKED MAN...THE TWO WERE DEAD...AND NAKED"...It'll probably boost my biography sales. People have a fascination for murdered naked celebrities.

PARRY
You're a celebrity?

JACK realizes his opportunity. HE faces PARRY.

JACK
Listen...it was a little over a year ago...Something happened...
I...
(with great difficulty)
I caused...I was responsible for--

PARRY
Man, you are wound up so tight, Jack. I venture to say if I stuck a coil up your ass I could roast marshmallows. You oughta relax a bit.

JACK
(heartfelt)
How do you do it? How do you get
through every day the way you do?

PARRY
Did you ever here the story of
the Fisher King?

JACK shakes his head. CAMERA focuses on PARRY.

PARRY
It's all about this king who lived
in the castle where the Holy Grail
was kept. Now this king was a
good man, but he'd been through
some awful times - tragedies,
betrayals, disappointments,
abandonment...So much so, that
the older he...got, the more
bitter about life he became...

CUT TO:

JACK, listening...

...He had no faith in any man.
No trust in himself...he could
no longer truly love, or feel
loved - And so he started to die.

CUT BACK TO:

PARRY...

And the only thing that could save
him was the Holy Grail, but see,
he forgot where he put it. Then
it goes...on about - how all the
knights in the land try to find
it - they brought him gold and
jewels...but they never worked.
The King was still dying. Then
one day, a fool came to the
village. And he knelt beside the
King and sang him some songs.
Told him some jokes...But the
King felt weak and needed a drink.
So the fool took a cup from beside
the bed, filled it with water and
handed to the King. When the King
took the cup, he suddenly felt
better. And he realized, it was

the Holy Grail the fool had handed to him...the cup that was right beside his bed all along.

(BEAT)

The King said, "How could you find what I could not find?"...and the fool said, "I didn't know I couldn't. I only knew you were thirsty."

JACK doesn't know how to respond. HE's never known PARRY to be eloquent.

JACK

Is that who you are...my fool?

PARRY turns to face JACK and smiles.

PARRY

(suddenly a professor)

The Fisher King myth has a lot of derivations...I remember I was at this lecture in Princeton once. It was this awful weekend seminar in occidental Mythology but there was this one speaker Dr...uh... Doctor...uh...um...

HE stops. As if this memory escaped with any warning.

...What was I saying?

JACK is as surprised as he is. PARRY'S face is frightened and confused again. There is panic in his voice.

...What was I saying?

JACK grows anxious at PARRY'S discomfort, so he covers:

JACK

Nothing...Listen, how come you've never asked that girl for a date?
...Parry?

But JACK'S VOICE BEGINS TO FADE AWAY FOR PARRY.

HE raises his head, looks to the outskirts of the field and sees:

THE DARK SILOUETTE OF THE RED KNIGHT UPON HIS HORSE. Staring -knowing exactly where PARRY lies even though it's dark. HE pauses for a moment then gallops off.

PARRY watches the RED KNIGHT ride off. HE looks frightened as

he lays his head back down.

JACK'S VOICE COMES BACK AND SNAPS HIM OUT OF IT.

JACK

How come you've never asked that
girl for a date?

PARRY snaps out of it somewhat.

PARRY

I don't know. I thought it might
upset our relationship.

JACK

Well...would you go on a date with
her if it...happened?

PARRY

God yeah.
(he hears something)
SShhh.

THEY turn on their stomachs and look to the trees.

CUT TO:

THREE BLACK YOUTHS, silhouetted by a park lamp, making a deal
beneath a tree.

CUT TO:

A frightened JACK and a suddenly confident PARRY. PARRY picks
up his sling shot, loads a rock, takes aim and fires.

CUT TO:

The rock hitting a nail, whose point secures a rope. The nail
flies off, releasing the rope.

CUT TO:

WIDE ANGLE - THE TREE and surrounding area - as the nets spring
up out of the ground and catapult the youths up into the trees.

BLACK YOUTHS

HEY! WHAT THE FUCK! SHIT! GET
ME THE FUCK DOWN FROM HERE!!

THEY continue to complain and curse OC AS WE

CUT BACK TO:

PARRY and JACK, who suddenly feels safe and more confident.

THEY lie back down on the grass to continue their cloudbusting.

CUT TO:

The billowy night clouds slowly drifting apart.

JACK (OC)

Ha...Look they're moving.

(beat)

Am I doing that?

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY, OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING.

JACK waits near the elevators as the nine-to-five crowd make their way into the building. HE spots LYDIA and follows her in.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR -

The elevator is packed with the lunch crowd. JACK stands at the rear. LYDIA is nuzzled against the floor buttons facing front. THE DOORS OPEN. LYDIA gets off with two leggy business women. JACK follows. SHE walks through two glass doors with the words HOWARD BOOK PUBLISHING INC. written in gold letters and enters the office...JACK waits until she had disappeared into the office then enters the reception area.

JACK

Could you help me - what was the name of that girl who just came in...

RECEPTIONIST

I didn't notice. What girl?

JACK

Uh..she was wearing a kind of a flouncy...uh...plain...uh...

HE makes big gestures with his arms to describe the dress, then "stringy" gestures with his fingers to describe her hair.

RECEPTIONIST

(winning at Charades)

Oh, Lydia.

JACK

Lydia. Lydia what?

RECEPTIONIST

God...I have no idea. She's worked here for fifteen years and I have

no idea...Wait, I'll call her...

JACK

NO..no..that's all right...I thought
I knew her....Thanks...

HE starts to leave. HE glances through the glass doors into the office just as LYDIA disappears behind a cubicle partition.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S OFFICE - DAY.

JACK is on the phone, with an open yellow pages beside him.

JACK

Yes. Howard Publishing? May I speak
to Lydia please.

HE waits. ANNE enters. SHE is obviously very irritated with him.

ANNE

Can I have my desk please.

JACK

I just have to make this...
(to phone)
Hello, I'd like to speak to Lydia?

ANNE

Lydia?! Lydia who!?

JACK

(to ANNE)
I don't know her last name...
I'll be off in a second.

ANNE

You're calling LYDIA in MY office.
You must think I'm some dope.
You fuckin bastard.
(she punches his arm)
You stay out all night long...

JACK

(overlapping, to phone)
What..No..Lydia...I want to speak to her
name is Lydia...I..uh...

ANNE

(overlapping)
...I don't get a friggin phone call.
You stroll in here at noon..I got...
...Two people out sick. Ya think

I need this? I Do Not Need This!

JACK
...FORGET IT...GOODBYE!
(HE hangs up)

ANNE sits down at her desk. SHE is waiting for an explanation.

JACK
I was not with a woman last night.
I was out with Parry.

ANNE
The moron?

JACK
He's not a moron.

ANNE
And who's Lydia?

JACK
Lydia is the girl Parry likes.
And I thought, if I could get
them together I..

ANNE
What? The curse'll be lifted?
WILL YOU PLEASE!

JACK
I...You're not going to understand this.

ANNE
Don't treat me like I'm stupid.
It pisses me off.

JACK
All right..Sorry...I feel in debt to him.

ANNE
(pause)
What does that mean?

JACK
See, I told you!

ANNE
Well, what the hell does that mean?

JACK
I thought...if...if I can
help him in some way...you
know?...Then... maybe....

things'll start changing for me..
My luck, ya know...Maybe...

ANNE looks at him incredulously. HE sits down and breathes a sigh - the absurdity of the idea hitting him as well. ANNE softens - feeling like she has unfairly taken the wind out of his sail.

ANNE
Oh you poor kid...You're a mess.

ANNE stands and buries JACK's face in her breast. SHE decides to be positive.

...Well, listen....stranger
things have happened.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT AFTERNOON.

JACK on the phone to LYDIA. This time ANNE is right beside him.

JACK
Hello Lydia?

LYDIA
(abrasively)
Yeah? Who is this?

HER abrupt manner surprises JACK. JACK uses his old, confident radio voice.

JACK
This is Jack Lucas and I'm calling
from Video Stop video rentals.

LYDIA
Yes.

JACK
Yes well...
(guessing and hoping -)
You are a credit card holder, are you not?

LYDIA
Huh-huh.

JACK
Well, congratulations Lydia, because
out of several thousand card holders,...
in conjunction with several major
credit card companies...
you have just won a free membership
at our store on Second Ave.

HE puts the reciever near a tape player and presses play. "HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN" plays for a moment, then he shuts it off.

LYDIA
(deadpan, not getting it)
How did this happen?

JACK is prepared for LYDIA'S, shall we say, reluctance to buy it!

JACK
Your name was picked.

LYDIA
(suspicious...and dense)
Well, I don't understand. What did you do - did you pick my name out of a hat or...or..a list?

JACK
A list.

LYDIA
Well - were there alot of people in the room or just you or what?

JACK
(about to answer)
Well there....
(then)
What's the difference?

LYDIA
Well, I mean...I don't know you. This has never...I've never won anything and...I don't have a VCR.

JACK
You get a VCR with the membership.
(ANNE hits him)
..For a short time until you get you're own. Listen, why don't you come down to the store and you can check it out. See if you're interested.

LYDIA
Did Phyllis in accounting tell you to call me?

JACK
(fed up)
NO! I TOLD YOU! YOU WON A CONTEST!

LYDIA hangs up. JACK turns to ANNE.

....This is going to be rough.

CUT TO:

INT. HOWARD PUBLISHING - DAY

The elevator doors open. JACK stands beside THE GAY BUM, who is now dressed like JOEL GREY in CABARET and carrying a handful of balloons with the name VIDEO STOP written on them. JACK, remaining inside, taps him on the arm.

JACK

(adamant)

Remember. One chorus and out.

GAY BUM

I'm a man with a mission, Jack.

THE GAY BUM walks to the office entrance. JACK pushes the down button. As the doors close, we hear him say to himself:

JACK

I can't believe I'm on a first name basis with these people...

CUT TO:

INT. HOWARD PUBLISHING - MOMENTS LATER

THE GAY BUM enters the reception area, much to the surprise of the receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I...help you?

GAY BUM

Is there a mousy woman who works here named Lydia?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes..if you'll wait here I'll...

GAY BUM

This is a personalized message. I have to give it in person.

THE GAY BUM strolls nonchalantly into the office and down the aisle, relishing in the amazed expressions of the employees. HE approaches a cubicle on which he reads a small name plate - LYDIA SINCLAIR.

LYDIA has her back to him, but slowly turns as she feels someone watching her. SHE lets out a tiny scream when she sees him standing there like a deranged clown.

The GAY BUM take notice of her outfit - a cordoroy, forest green jumper with a lime green turtleneck -

GAY BUM
You MUST be the one.

LYDIA
Huh?

GAY BUM
(sings to the tune of "WILKOMMEN")
WELCOME - LYDIA - WELCOME....

HE lets go the balloons...PEOPLE'S head pop up from cubicles...

GAY BUM
...WELCOME TO VIDEO STOP - VIDEO RENTALS...
YOU HAVE...JUST WOOOON..A FREE MEMBERSHIP...
FOR MORE..DETAAAILS...LALALALALALLA...DA!..DA!

HE hands her a card with the information. LYDIA, paralyzed with embarassment, takes it. A group of office girls are hysterical.

GAY BUM
(BIG FINISH)
WELCOME! LYDIA!!! WELCOME!!!
(dance/kicking his way out)
TO VIDEO STOP...TO VIDEO STOP
FOR VIDEO RENTAALLLLLSSS!
(drops the act and exits)
Jesus...

Stunned, LYDIA looks down at the information card she holds frozen in her hand.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STOP - 5:30 THE NEXT DAY.

CAMERA PANS ANNE behind the counter arranging boxes of movies - JACK with one eye on the door and one eye on a receipt he's filling out - and PARRY; clean shaven, his hair slicked back - Except for a slightly nerdy awkwardness, he looks almost handsome.

LYDIA cautiously enters the store.

Behind the counter, JACK spots her immediately and nudges ANNE. When SHE turns to look, her bra straps are visible. JACK fixes them quickly. PARRY already has his eyes locked on LYDIA.

LYDIA
Hello. My name is Lydia Sinclair.

JACK

Yes. Hi. Congratulations. Jack Lucas.
Nice to meet you finally. This
is Anne Napolitano, the owner of
Video Stop.

ANNE

(overly friendly)
Hello..Congratulations.

LYDIA just nods.

JACK

And this is our other..uh...worker..
Parry..uh...
(no last name)
Parry.

PARRY looks at her in awe. HE can think of no words to say in
his excitement.

LYDIA seems unnerved by his stare, but quickly shrugs it off and
turns back to JACK.

LYDIA

(snotty)
So how do we do this?

JACK is once again surprised by her abrupt manner.

JACK

Well...um...you get an official
membership card...
(takes one out)
Just sign that and we'll laminate
it right here...Parry? You want
to laminate Miss Sinclair's card?...

PARRY stands still, in shock

JACK

....Parry?

PARRY snaps out of it and crosses from behind the counter to
the laminating machine next to JACK.

ANNE

This will last you one year after
which you have the option to renew if
you like at a membership discount.

LYDIA

(defensive)
But now it's free, right?

ANNE

Yeah.

ANNE backs off. SHE stands next to an equally perplexed JACK as they watch LYDIA fill out the card. Her abrasive demeanor is not what they expected. LYDIA finishes the card and pushes it toward them.

LYDIA

Now what?

JACK

Uh...you...you can pick out up to ten movies....

LYDIA

Free?

JACK

Yes. They're free.

ANNE

(butts in)

Only the first ten. After that they're 2.99 a rental.

LYDIA eyes ANNE suspiciously, then turns to survey the shelves.

PARRY picks up her card and laminates it - all the while, keeping his eyes fixed upon LYDIA'S every move. ANNE and JACK, having set the trap, watch with interest.

LYDIA surveys the film boxes, H-L. SHE spots one of interest and pulls it off the shelf - causing two other boxes to fall down on her. She catches one box and, as she replaces it back on the shelf, causes three more to fall. SHE catches two of the three.

PARRY, ANNE and JACK watching with an odd fascination.

JACK nudges PARRY to forget the laminating and go help her. PARRY gathers up his nerve and moves from around the counter, up behind her.

PARRY

...Can...can I help you?

LYDIA quickly turns - she is uncomfortable by his closeness.

LYDIA

No. No...I can look myself...

SHE moves away abruptly - like a fox terrier who pretends to ignore the mess she made on the living room rug.

PARRY turns to JACK and ANNE, as if to say "what do I do now?"
JACK encourages him to keep trying. PARRY organizes the boxes and
picks one out.

PARRY

(reads)

How about...ZBIEGNEW SPEIZAK'S "THE PURPLE BREAD".
'an intensely portrayed tale of
love and envy set against the sweeping
background of a Polish bakery.' In subtitles.

LYDIA

I don't like ... uh ...
(finding it hard to categorize)
Polish love stories...

SHE turns her back on him, but adds:

LYDIA

...I like musicals.

PARRY

(encouraged)

Well, we have plenty of those. Right over here.

(LYDIA follows him)

We got the MGM series, Astaire and
Rogers. the Judy Garlands, -

LYDIA

Got any Ethel Merman?

PARRY

Uh....

HE doesn't see any. HE looks to ANNE, who shakes her head.

.....Uh..we seem to be all out of
Ethel Merman.

LYDIA

What a gyp.

PARRY

Yeah.

JACK nudges ANNE to do something.

ANNE

You know, I think I..I ordered some
just the other day. They'll be in soon.

LYDIA

Well, I guess I'll come back then.

JACK

Here's your card.

LYDIA walks back to the counter. As JACK hands her the card, she notices ANNE'S painted star fingernails.

LYDIA

I like your nails.

ANNE

Thank you.

LYDIA

Where did you get them done?

ANNE

Ah...I do them myself. I used to work in a beauty parlor.

LYDIA keeps staring at them.

LYDIA

(without much feeling)

I like the stars.

JACK gets an idea.

JACK

You know, Anne does other people too.
Sort of a sideline.....

ANNE is surprised to hear this.

...If you want, she could do your nails.

LYDIA

How much?

JACK

Well, since you're a member, we could...

ANNE

(interrupts)

Twenty dollars.

LYDIA considers the offer. PARRY waits for the outcome.

LYDIA

O.K...twenty dollars...When can you...

JACK

Tonight! How's tonight?

LYDIA thinks. ANNE is ready to kill JACK. PARRY smiles hopefully.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - THAT EVENING.

JACK searches frantically through a closet. ANNE and PARRY sit opposite each other at the table, having coffee. ANNE doesn't quite know how to take PARRY, who smiles as if he were a child, grateful and excited that he was allowed to sit with the adults.

ANNE

(to JACK O.C.)

Getting your nails done is one thing
but going to dinner with a bunch
of strangers and HIM...She didn't
even look at him.

JACK (O.C.)

We'll make it very casual...
...not like a date or anything.
I just have to find something
he'll look good in.

ANNE looks at PARRY as if this were an impossibility. PARRY smiles back - he likes ANNE.

ANNE

I don't know. I mean, I've gone
out with some bums in my time,
but they were gorgeous. It's the
only reason to go out with a bum.

JACK (O.C.)

Well, she's no Grace Kelly.

ANNE

That's true. That outfit she wore!
She looked like a centerpiece.

PARRY

This coffee's delicious.
And you have a lovely home.

ANNE

Jack, he's talking to me.

JACK (O.C.)

Well talk back. He won't bite you.

ANNE

(cool and polite)
Thank you very much.

PARRY

(enjoying the conversation)
Your welcome. You know, a beautiful woman like yourself - your own business - I'm surprised some guy doesn't snatch you up for his own.

ANNE

(looking in JACK'S direction,
but replying to PARRY)
YOU'RE SURPRISED!...

(to PARRY)

But I guess I just never met the right guy. Whatta gonna do?

PARRY

I'm shocked. With a child bearing body like yours...

(ANNE doesn't know how to take that)
...Why a man would have to be out of his mind!

ANNE

Most men are.

PARRY

Why this is outrageous!....

PARRY, getting overly heated, slams down his fork. ANNE jumps.

....A woman of your value going to waste before my eyes....

(rising intensity)
Come on! I'm yours! Let's go!

ANNE

(nervous)
Go where?

PARRY

(clears the table with one move)
Come on - let us go to that place of splendor in the grass.

HE starts to unzip his pants.

ANNE

JACK!

Climbing over the table to her, he serenades, to the tune of "HAVIN MY BABY"...

PARRY

HOLDIN MY PENIS...
WHAT A LOVELY WAY OF SAYIN HOW
MUCH YA LIKE ME...

ANNE
WHAT ARE YOU, OUT OF YOUR MIND!

JACK enters...

PARRY
HOLDIN MY PENIS...

JACK
PARRY! Close your pants...

PARRY stops singing and gets off the table. HE bows with a courtly flourish, having given ANNE exactly what she expected from a crazy bum.

PARRY
(kidding)
You sure now?

ANNE looks at him like she's going to belt him.

....Well alright. But you let me know.
(with great sincerity)
You're too good a woman to go to waste.

ANNE, in spite of herself, agrees with him. SHE looks to JACK to see if he agrees but JACK is too busy inspecting PARRY.

JACK
What are you - a 40 in a jacket?

ANNE, frustrated with the two of them, exits.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT EVENING.

ANNE'S opens the door to a cautious LYDIA.

LYDIA nods, self-consciously, as if to say "Yeah, I'm here".

ANNE
Hello...welcome....Come in.

LYDIA enters, subtly inspecting the apartment.

LYDIA
I've never been in an apartment above a store. You always pass them on the street but you never think anyone really lives in them.

ANNE

(raising an eyebrow)
Can I get you anything...coffee...
tea...a little tequilla?

LYDIA

No, thank you.

LYDIA sits at the formica table, already set up with nail care paraphernalia - with the gleaming steel nail files it looks a bit like surgery equipment.

LYDIA

Will it hurt?

ANNE

(threateningly)
That all depends on you.
...Sure you don't want a drink?

LYDIA's a little nervous about this attempt at nail beauty.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT EVENING.

ANNE is seated at her formica table opposite LYDIA. SHE delicately holds one of LYDIA'S hands, carefully applying the stars to her nails. LYDIA sips her tequilla with one hand. ANNE'S glass is almost empty as she talks non-stop;

ANNE

...So he says to me, "you'll never find another man like me"...I said, "please, men like you have one hand on their dicks and the other hand on their mother's leg... I said, there's the door - take a trip.

LYDIA

(paying close attention)
You threw him out?

ANNE makes a confident nod. LYDIA sips.

LYDIA

My parents were divorced.

ANNE

It's an awful thing, let me tell you.
(emphasizing)
"divorce is the sister-in-law of death".

ANNE nods knowingly. LYDIA squints as she considers this.

CUT TO:

INT. PARRY'S BASEMENT - SAME TIME.

JACK stands behind a seated PARRY in front of a mirror. PARRY'S hair is wet. JACK places a can of styling mousse in front of him. PARRY squeezes a ball of mousse in his hand, then applies it to his head....

PARRY proceeds to experiment with a number of styles - adding more and more mousse as JACK watches in silence. PARRY molds his hair into a cone, then divides into two cones, then mashes it into a pompadour, then splits the pompadour - PARRY is having a wonderful time - applying enormous amounts of mousse to his head and eyebrows....Finally, JACK grabs the can out of PARRY'S hand and throws a towel onto his head.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER.

ANNE works on LYDIA'S other hand, as LYDIA sips her tequilla from a straw.

ANNE

...SO...anybody special in your life?

LYDIA

(defensive)

Do I look like I have someone special?

SHE moves to pick up her tequilla with the manicured hand but ANNE eyes her down.

ANNE

Well, don't say it like that. It's not so...ya know, crazy an idea. You are a healthy woman...You hold a steady job. Ya not crossed eyed or anything...

LYDIA

(curtly)

Well, there's nobody special!

ANNE

Fine.

PAUSE.

LYDIA

I mean, it's not easy in this day and age.

ANNE

What?

LYDIA

Meeting ... people.

ANNE

Tell me about it. I've been dating longer than I've been driving. I can't believe that.

LYDIA

I never really...went through a... dating period.

ANNE

It's a disgusting process. You haven't missed anything.

LYDIA nods in agreement, but her face tells us she feels she has missed a great deal.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS FOYER OF ANNE'S BUILDING - SAME TIME.

PARRY, cleaned and dressed up - his hair moussed back, the suit is a big snug but attractive - paces the hallway in front of JACK. Looking handsome, you could imagine him in front of a lecture hall, being the object of many a young girls fantasy.

JACK

You know those shoes are old. You keep pacing like that, you're going to walk into the apartment barefoot.

PARRY

I'm excited.

(JACK smiles)

You must have felt this way when you first met Anne, huh? Where did you two meet?

JACK

In a bar called Hellfire.

PARRY

Awww...how romantic. Yeah. If I wasn't already committed to Lydia, boy. Except Anne'd never go for me though. She loves you too much. And you really love her, huh?

JACK

No. But that's not the only reason

people get together or..stay together.

PARRY

What are the other reasons?

JACK thinks a moment, then answers plainly:

JACK

Survival.

PARRY puts his arm on JACK'S shoulder and speaks very sincerely.

PARRY

You love her alot Jack. You're ...
crazy about her... I know it.
It's just that, sometimes -
(whispers)
you're a little bit of jerk.

JACK is surprised by the remark and abruptly focuses on PARRY.

JACK

Come here...you're all crooked.

JACK adjusts PARRY'S tie, then undoes it and re-ties.

...Do you have my wallet to pay
for dinner?

PARRY nods, keeping his eyes on JACK, as JACK primps him.

PARRY

...You're a nice man, Jack.
Doing all this for me...

JACK doesn't pay attention as PARRY'S expression grows pale and frightened. HE suddenly raps his arms around JACK and whispers;

PARRY

I'm scared Jack.

JACK, uncomfortable at the intimacy, tries to comfort him.

...I feel so much for her...I
feel like something awful is going to happen.

JACK

No. Nothing bad's going to happen.
Anne'll be there. I'll be there.
Nothing bad will happen.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER

LYDIA is a little more loose and talkative now as ANNE refills her glass, then takes LYDIA'S other hand to apply the stars.

LYDIA

(deadpan)

...My mother calls every week.
Like a recurring nightmare.
"So, have you met anyone?"..."No mom"..
"So what's going to happen?"...
"I don't know Mom"..
I only thank God I moved out.

ANNE

I can't believe you lived with
her for that long. If I had to live
with my mother, I'd stab myself six times.

LYDIA

Maybe I'm meant to be alone.
Maybe I was a man in a former life
and I used women for pleasure so
now I'm paying for it.

ANNE

You have to not try so hard.

LYDIA

(sipping her drink)

I don't feel like I have any effect
on people. At parties I usually
spend my time re-arranging the hors
d'oeuvres as people eat them, so
the platters will always look full. I don't
start conversations because I have
no idea how to end them.....
I think some people are just born to
live in the background of things.

ANNE

Don't say that...I think you have a very
(searching)
effecting personality...we're having
a lovely conversation.

LYDIA

I'm paying you.

ANNE drops her hand. SHE'S pissed.

ANNE

You know, let me tell you something!
I'm not that kind of person. I don't
do people favors. If I talk to you

it's because I want to.
O.K., you're a little plain -
but we can't all be..uh...Jerri Hall.
You do the best you can.
You're not so helpless and desperate....
You want a personality. Try this;
 (whispers)
you can be a real bitch.

 LYDIA
 (her face lights up)
Really?

 ANNE
Yeah!

SHE grabs her hand back. LYDIA feels oddly exhilarated at the thought of her having a strong enough effect to be a bitch.

 ANNE
Now, you have to sit for at least a
half hour or, I'm telling you...
Ya want another drink?

Before she can answer, JACK knocks on the door and enters with PARRY.

 JACK
 (to LYDIA)
Oh hi? How's it going?

 LYDIA
Hello..

 JACK
Parry, it's Lydia Sinclair - our membership winner.

 PARRY
 (not understanding the game)
I know!
 (to LYDIA, with deep sincerity)
Hi.

 LYDIA
 (not knowing what to make of him)
Hi.

 ANNE
 (lightning a cigarette)
What are you two up to?

 JACK
Well..everything's closed up.
We thought we'd get some dinner.

(overplaying it)
Say!....
(to LYDIA)
Have you eaten? Would you
like to come along?

LYDIA
(rises, uncomfortable)
Oh, no..I have to get home...

ANNE
The nails!! Watch the nails!!...
(LYDIA sits back down)
Listen, you still have to eat.

PARRY stands by hoping against hope.

LYDIA
No really..I don't want to impose.

ANNE
Hey? What did I tell you?
(she leans in confidentially)
Why don't you come? It's just dinner.
You'll have something to tell
your mother next time she calls.

LYDIA smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT.

PARRY and LYDIA walk up ahead from ANNE and JACK.
WE INTERCUT THE TWO CONVERSATIONS;

JACK
So what do you think?

ANNE
Well...like my Aunt Margie said -
Some matches are made in heaven...
and some are made in hardware stores.

JACK breathes a heavy sigh.

ANNE
....What's the matter?

JACK
I'm beginning to understand you.

ANNE smiles and hooks her arm into his. Instead of this seeming
a burden, JACK accepts her arm and smiles back.

CUT TO:

PARRY and LYDIA.

LYDIA

(self-conscious)
...I..uh..I get to read some of the books
but mostly I..just calculate production
costs from first edition hard cover
publication to paperback. After
paperback it's basically someone
else's problem.

PARRY

It sounds exciting.

LYDIA

(calling him on his lie)
Why does it sound exciting? There's
absolutely nothing exciting about it.

PARRY

(genuinely)
Well, you're calculating costs that
could have an affect on whether or
not the book is published and if
it is, it could be a book that...

HE picks up some garbage as they walk and carries it.

...might somehow change the way people
think or act - a book can do that
and you would be a part of creating
a cultural shift that could change
our society forever.

HE drops the garbage in a garbage can. LYDIA watches, curiously.

LYDIA

We mostly publish trashy romance novels.

PARRY

Well - empires have fallen
because of trashy romances.

LYDIA considers this. THEY continue to walk. PARRY spots a drunk
in a doorway. HE yells to him.

PARRY

Hey Martin...!

MARTIN

Parry? Don't you look all duded up!

PARRY

This is Lydia!

MARTIN

Nice to meet you Lydia! Got a quarter?!

LYDIA is mortified by the introduction. PARRY smiles proudly. THEY continue to walk.

LYDIA

How do you know him?

PARRY

Martin worked for the sanitation department until...

HE is cut off when A LARGE MAN walks by, bumping into LYDIA without apology.

...Hey!

The LARGE MAN continues walking as PARRY reaches to his back pocket to pull out his SLINGSHOT. From behind, JACK yells out;

JACK

PARRY!

PARRY and LYDIA stop and look to JACK and ANNE. PARRY reluctantly leaves the sling shot where it is. LYDIA doesn't understand what's going on. THEY all continue walking.

LYDIA

SO what do you do?

PARRY

Well, I'm in search of the Holy Grail.

JACK

PARRY!

ANNE

(saving it)

How about The Szechuan House?

PARRY

(pats LYDIA'S arm)

I'll tell you later.

CUT TO:

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT.

ANNE and LYDIA sit opposite JACK and PARRY.

THEY are served three large orders of dumplings.

ANNE

Oh..I could eat all of these

LYDIA is nervous about this. As everyone begins to eat, SHE eyes her chopsticks with reluctance.

PARRY looks at her and smiles encouragingly.

LYDIA forces a smile back, picks up her chopsticks and dives in.

PARRY watches her in adoration. JACK subtly tries to get PARRY to stop staring. But PARRY is glued to his vision.

LYDIA, even more awkward now with her new nails, drops her first dumpling into her lap.

LYDIA

Oh..god...

To save her from embarrassment, PARRY drops his dumpling into his lap as well.

PARRY

Oh boy...

LYDIA takes her napkin and dips it into a glass of water. PARRY follows suit.

When LYDIA removes the napkin, her glass falls over. PARRY forces his glass over, as well.

ANNE and JACK are looking at this mirror exercise in fascination.

PARRY

(to LYDIA)

Can't take us anywhere, huh?

LYDIA can't help but smile - a little more at ease now. Grateful she is not the clumsy center of attention.

FADE TO:

LATER IN THE EVENING.

WE PAN the table as everyone eats their main courses.

LYDIA, we discover, has another eating idiosyncrasy. SHE unconsciously, but quite loudly, smacks her mouth when she chews.

LYDIA (O.C.)

SMACK..SMACK...SMACK...

WE HEAR THIS SMACKING OFF CAMERA as we begin on JACK; trying not to look at LYDIA but having difficulty enjoying his own meal. CAMERA moves to PARRY, staring at her, helplessly in love, not paying any attention to his own food; moving to LYDIA "SMACK, SMACKING" , beginning to accept PARRY'S attraction in her and, warming up to the idea, SHE throws a smile at him in between "smacks"; and finally ANNE, chewing quietly, staring at JACK with her eyes widened twice their normal size, indicating her disbelief at LYDIA'S vocal variety of noises.

CUT TO:

PARRY; Gazing at his sweetheart, a song to serenade comes to mind and he softly begins;

PARRY
"LYDIA...OH LYDIA...THAT ENCYCLOPEDIA
OH LYDIA THE TATTOOED LADY..."

HIS gentle voice counterbalances the odd lyrics and makes it sound like a love song.

ANNE eyes JACK to stop him.

JACK is about to make an attempt but can't seem to find the way, so he doesn't bother.

LYDIA doesn't know how to respond either. At first SHE smiles politely, then she pretends to be too busy eating to listen - but something about PARRY'S sincerity pulls her in. HIS face glows as he floats the lyrics across the table to her. Slowly, her "smacking" subsides, she lowers her fork, forgets her self - consciousness and listens to PARRY - slightly hypnotized; like a little girl watching a ballerina for the first time.

JACK is fascinated by PARRY'S complete adoration of this mess of a woman. HE looks to ANNE, who tries to continue her meal nonchalantly. HE notices her bra strap hanging out from her sweater.

CAMERA CUTS BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN THE EXPOSED STRAP and JACK, as PARRY continues serenading O.C.

ANNE realizes JACK is staring at her and immediately thinks something's wrong.

But JACK just smiles at her. HIS hand reaches across the table, not to fix her sweater, but to take her hand.

ANNE is in shock. SHE slips her hand into his and smiles back, her eyes almost tearing.

When PARRY finishes, he smiles.

PARRY

Would it be all right...I mean would
you mind...if I walked you home tonight?

LYDIA nods. From OFF CAMERA, PARRY'S hand holds a napkin and
gently dabs a stain of soy sauce on her sleeve.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT.

CAMERA PANS the apartment as ANNE speaks from the bathroom.

ANNE

I tell ya, I'm very surprised.
She seemed to like him very much.
He wasn't that bad looking either.
I mean, he's still a little on
the disgusting side but some women
go for that...

CAMERA PANS TO JACK, who is sitting on the couch in the living
room, very pleased with himself.

JACK

You know, I can't believe I did it.
She really likes him.

ANNE

(entering in a robe)
...I think you should feel very
proud. You did a real nice thing
for somebody else. I'm very proud.

ANNE leans her body next to JACK'S leg. JACK looks up at
her, then suddenly pulls her down on the couch into his arms.

JACK

You were great. Thanks alot.

HE kisses her hard and long. ANNE pulls away to catch her breath.
SHE is surprised, to say the least.

ANNE

Your welcome.

JACK tenderly brushes her hair off her face. HE kisses her again,
rapping his arms underneath her - lifting her off couch, and
gently carrying her to the floor O.C.

ANNE (O.C.)

Oh my.

CUT TO:

EXT. LYDIA'S STREET - NIGHT.

PARRY and LYDIA walk - noticeably more comfortable with each other than before.

PARRY

Tell me more. I want to know everything.

LYDIA

There isn't any more to tell.

PARRY

Don't say that.

LYDIA

(deadpan)

No, really..believe me - there isn't any more. This is it.

PARRY

Well, it's enough for me.

LYDIA

You don't have to say that.

PARRY

I never say anything I have to.

LYDIA

I mean you don't have to say nice things to me...That kind of thing is a little old fashioned for what we're about to do.

PARRY

What are we about to do?

LYDIA

Well...you're walking me home I ..I guess you're sort of... attracted to me and you'll want to come upstairs for...coffee...

PARRY

I don't drink coffee...

LYDIA

(continuing)

...and then we'll probably have a drink and talk and get comfortable with each other and...and we'll...then you'll sleep over and then in the morning (driving herself into a complex) you'll be distant and you won't be... able to stay for breakfast...you'll

just have some coffee maybe...

PARRY

I don't drink coffee...

LYDIA

And then we'll exchange phone numbers
and you'll leave and never call and
I'll go to work and feel great
for the first hour and then slowly
turn into a piece of dirt by
lunch. Why I am I putting myself through this?

(to PARRY)

It was very nice...

(quickenning her pace)

uh meeting you. Goodnight..

SHE walks quickly away.

PARRY stops, confused to say the least, then runs after her.

LYDIA is just about to enter the front door of her building when
PARRY stops her.

PARRY

Excuse me...

LYDIA

Listen, I'm not feeling well.

PARRY

Well no wonder. We just met,
made love and broke up all in
the space of thirty seconds and
I can't even remember the first
kiss which is the best part.

LYDIA

Listen, you're very nice.

PARRY

So are you, but I think maybe you
should shut-up now...

LYDIA is surprised

...I'm not coming up to your
apartment. That was never my idea.

LYDIA

Oh..You mean you don't want to.

PARRY

(deeply sincere)

Oh no, I want to.
(sweetly)
I've got a hard-on for you the
size of Canada ... but I don't
want just one night.
I have a confession to make?

LYDIA
You're married.

PARRY
No.

LYDIA
Divorced.

PARRY
No, I...

LYDIA
You have a disease.

PARRY
Will you stop!.....
(pause, he looks at her)
...I'm in love with you....

LYDIA is about to speak when PARRY puts his hand over her mouth.

PARRY
....It's not just from tonight. I've
known you for a long time. I see
you come out of work everyday. I
walk with you to lunch. I know
what you order...I see you buy
Baby Ruths before going back in...
(slowly removes his hand)
I know how you feel on certain
days by whether or not you go
into the bookstore.....

LYDIA doesn't know how to respond, but she listens with fascination.

PARRY (CONT'D)
...I know you hate your job and
you don't have many friends and
you sometimes feel like you're
not as...as wonderful as everybody
else and you're a little uncoordinated

LYDIA begins to cry.

..and feeling like you're the only
one who's as separate and

alone as you are...and I love you. I love you. I think you're the greatest thing since...spice racks and I would be knocked out several times if I even got just a first kiss. But I'll be back in the morning. And I won't be distant. And I will call if you let me....But I still don't drink coffee.

LYDIA

Shhh...

SHE kisses him, tentatively - almost awkwardly. PARRY feels a surge of emotion that makes his whole body tremble. LYDIA separates from him and looks into his eyes. SHE pinches his cheek, hard.

LYDIA

(earnestly)

You are real, aren't you?

THEY kiss again. Then LYDIA quickly pulls away...

...You can call...

SHE pushes away from him and runs into the building - as if she was afraid to linger and ruin the moment.

PARRY stands transfixed. HE cannot believe his fortune; HE takes a step back from the building. HIS mind is reeling.

CUT TO:

INT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - ELEVATOR - SECONDS LATER.

As LYDIA ascends she re-enacts the entire love scene in her mind, to make sure it went as well as she thinks.

CUT TO:

EXT. LYDIA'S BUILDING - NIGHT.

PARRY is still standing transfixed. HE takes a deep breath, and starts to walk away. But something is suddenly very wrong. The good feeling takes a darker shade, but PARRY doesn't know why. HE looks frightened - the fear of losing something you've wanted for so long and have only recently won. But PARRY feels an even deeper fear - he turns his head and looks down the block to the corner;

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT sits upon his horse as if waiting for PARRY. The street lamps cast a glow around his imposing figure.

The night air lifts his cape up around his massive shoulders.

CUT TO:

PARRY - vulnerable, in love - is afraid.

PARRY
Please let me have this.

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT - silent, unforgiving, unrelenting.

PARRY begins to move away, taking a step back and then another and another...until he is running down toward the opposite corner.

THE RED KNIGHT shifts his horse into PARRY's direction and begins to charge.

PARRY runs through deserted city streets - running for his life as the sounds of the RED KNIGHT galloping grows closer.

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT, a surreal figure hunting his prey.

CUT TO:

PARRY

As he runs, IMAGES/MEMORIES begin to flood his mind uncontrollably;

AN AMBULANCE ARRIVING AT A HOSPITAL... HIS WOUNDED WIFE BEING
MOVED ON A STRETCHER -

CUT BACK TO:

PARRY running.

CUT TO:

- PARRY AND HIS WIFE MAKING LOVE.

CUT TO:

PARRY running.

PARRY
SSTTTOPPP!!

PASSERS-BY on the street witness the familiar sight of a bum
screaming at thin air.

The RED KNIGHT pursues. WE HEAR THE GALLOPING GETTING LOUDER.

CUT TO:

PARRY running, mumbling incoherently. People on the street get out of his way or snicker behind his back.

CUT TO:

THE RED KNIGHT galloping toward PARRY, as he runs; his face wet with tears - yet contorting with angry, incomprehensible reprisals. PEOPLE on the street pay no attention.

CUT TO:

A BAR WITH BROKEN GLASS SURROUNDED BY POLICE AND SPECTATORS.
- PARRY AND HIS WIFE MAKING LOVE.
- JACK'S PICTURE ON A T.V. NEWS BROADCAST.

WE INTERCUT the following BUILD OF IMAGES with PARRY, THE RED KNI and THE PEOPLE ON THE STREET:

PARRY'S WIFE PLAYFULLY WAKING HIM UP IN BED.
- THE DOORS OF A FUNERAL CHAPEL CLOSING
- PARRY AND HIS WIFE MAKING LOVE.
- PARRY AND HIS WIFE MAKING LOVE. THIS TIME WE SEE PARRY'S EXPRESSION AS HE HOLDS HER - SO FULL OF LOVE.
- THE DOORS OF A FUNERAL CHAPEL CLOSING.

CUT TO:

WIDE ANGLE - EXT. EAST RIVER PROMENADE - NIGHT

PARRY has run all the way to the promenade along the river.

PARRY
NOOOOOOOO!...COME ON!...WHERE ARE
YOU!!!! WHERE ARE YOU!!
(softer; dropping to
his knees)
Where are you...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE END OF THE PROMENADE - NIGHT.

THE TWO JUVENILE DELIQUENTS, LEATHER AND WINDBREAKER, come strutting down the promenade, in SLOW MOTION.

PARRY looks toward them, as if surrendering.

CUT TO

HIS POV

THE TWO YOUTHS ARE BEING LEAD BY THE RED KNIGHT ON HIS HORSE.

PARRY, tear-stained face, rises to meet them. THE YOUTHS reach PARRY and surround him. LEATHER flicks open a switchblade.

LEATHER

...We're tired of looking at you people...

PARRY looks at him. HE stands before them, surrendering to his fate.

CUT TO:

PARRY'S POV

The RED KNIGHT is pointing a sword at him in front of LEATHER with the switchblade. HE slashes PARRY chest AS WE-

CUT TO:

WIDE ANGLE OF PROMENADE

PARRY sinks to his knees... The YOUTHS close in around him.

CUT TO:

INT. ANNE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME.

Outside the bathroom door, we hear the toilet flush. ANNE exits in an imitation silk kimono, feeling very much the satisfied woman. SHE crosses into the living room and finds JACK, on the floor with his box of radio tapes, feverishly organizing himself.

ANNE crouches down behind him, wraps her arms around his shoulders and kisses his neck.

ANNE

Whatcha doin'?

JACK

I'm trying to get these in to some order. I'm going to call a few agents tomorrow. Make some appointments.

ANNE

(excited)

Really? Oh Jack, that's terrific.

JACK

Yeah...I...

(stops to tell her)

I feel real good Anne. I don't know, I ... feel good and I feel ready.

(laughs)
I don't know how else to say it.

ANNE
No, no, I understand....God,
I think it's great.
(she kisses him)
It's so good to see you like this.
(JACK continues to organize)
Ya know, I'm thinkin - with another
income coming in, I would love to
get a bigger place.

JACK
Huh?

ANNE
I don't want to rush things - you
have to get a job first, but I'm
so sure that's gonna happen I'm not
even thinking about it.

JACK realizes what she's saying and stops organizing.

ANNE
... But, I would love to start looking at least.
You know, maybe a two bedroom or even,
maybe the top floor of a house - like
in Brooklyn or Staten Island...

JACK looks at her, not knowing what to say.

..What?..You don't want to commute?

JACK
No, it's not-...Come here...

HE turns her around and cuddles her up in his arms, with her
back to him.

JACK
You're an incredible woman Anne-

ANNE breaks away suddenly and looks at him, sternly.

JACK
What?

ANNE
"I'm an incredible woman?" What is
this, a death sentence?

JACK
No, I ... I just want to talk about it.

ANNE

(aware and suspicious)

You want to talk? Come on, Jack...
Did I cross the line by mentioning
the future or what?

JACK

No..it's just...

ANNE shifts her body to face him directly.

....Listen, alot has happened and
I think it would be a good thing
if we slowed things down a little.

ANNE

Slowed things down? Where have I been?
Have we been going fast!?

JACK

Right now, I'm just not sure about things.

ANNE

What things!?

JACK

Will you let me talk!...It's been.
a real...difficult time for me...
The past year or so...And now, for the
first time, I feel like I'm above
water. I feel like I know alot
more than I did, and I want the
time to make the right choices.
And...I think that maybe...I
need to be alone for awhile.

ANNE is speechless - for the moment.

JACK

I need to clear my head, Anne.
Like I said, I feel
like I know alot more now and-

ANNE

(interrupts)

First of all, let me tell you something-
you don't know shit. Second of all,
what time? What time do you need?
What have we been doing here, except
TIME? Have I ever...ever pressured you!

JACK

No.

ANNE

No. So what time do you need? I love you - you love me - you want to start your career, great! I want to be a part of it - I deserve that!
What do you need to figure out!?

JACK doesn't answer. PAUSE. ANNE is afraid she knows.

ANNE

All right. I'm going to ask you one question.
(summoning up all her strength)
Do you love me?

PAUSE

JACK

I don't know.

SHE slaps him.

ANNE

You can't even give me that. You were just gonna organize your life...
(indicates the box)
...walk out that door, move in by yourself and what - drop the news when you find somebody else?
What were you planning to do Jack?

JACK

I didn't know. I just said all I want is some time.

ANNE

(fighting back tears)
Bullshit! If you're going hurt me, you hurt me now - not some long drawn out hurt that takes weeks of my life because you don't have the balls!

JACK doesn't answer.

JACK

All right...I'll pack my stuff tonight.

ANNE slaps him again.

ANNE

What have you been doing here!
HUH! I WANNA KNOW!

JACK

LISTEN! We both got something out of it, all right!

ANNE

Oh yeah? What did I get? What did I get I couldn't've gotten from somebody with no name any night of the week? You think your company is such a treat? Your moods, your
(sarcastic)
"pain", your problems...You think you're entertaining?

JACK

Then what do you want to stay with me for?

ANNE physically attacks him-

ANNE

BECAUSE I LOVE YOU!...STUPID!...FUCKIN!...

JACK blocks her blows and holds her arms. ANNE surrenders to her tears. HE is about to embrace her, when she pulls away.

ANNE

No. You don't get to be nice. I'm not a modern woman Jack. I don't like being friends with men I used to love. No way...

At that moment, THE PHONE RINGS. JACK answers it.

JACK

Hello?..Yeah...My wallet, what do you mean?...
(his face drops)
What?....What?

INT. BELLEVUE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

JACK, ANNE and A DOCTOR talk as they walk.

DOCTOR

He was brought in early this morning. Must have been lying there for hours. He's lost a lot of blood.

HE opens the door to PARRY'S room.

PARRY lays in bed - his face bandaged, his arms in casts, his chest rapped tightly. HE has been severely beaten.

JACK

Parry?

DOCTOR

He can't hear you.

JACK sits beside the bed as the DOCTOR fills him in.

DOCTOR

I have his record here.

(he reads)

Henry Sawyer - brought in a few years ago - catatonic stupor rendering him non-verbal for over thirteen months...

JACK

I know. I know all about it.

DOCTOR

Well, it says he was sent to a psychiatric hospital.

JACK

I know all this. Why are you telling me this?

DOCTOR

Well - his beating's bad but... that's not the problem. I'm afraid he's re-experiencing the same symptoms of his earlier condition.

JACK

What are you saying?

THE DOCTOR pulls him aside.

DOCTOR

Sometimes victims of tragedies are subject to the brain's replay system. The brain never loses anything - it just stores it up and waits. A person could actually re-experience the full effect of a tragedy, long after the actual incident took place.

JACK'S goes numb. HE looks to PARRY, who is clearly in his own world.

JACK

Is there anything you can do?

DOCTOR

Knowing his history, I'd say no.
Was he having hallucinations?

JACK

Yes.

DOCTOR

(reading the chart)

That's in keeping with the
diagnosis. The nervous system
has these - neural secretions that
actually cause hallucinations to
protect the ego from something
it can't handle.

JACK

But he was happy.

DOCTOR

There are people who have been
through great tragedy that have
a harder time with feeling good
than feeling bad. It's not as
familiar...it can bring back the
pain of what was lost. Are you
a relative?

JACK

No. Just a friend.

DOCTOR

Well, it doesn't matter then
anyway. We're going to have to
send him back to the same
institution. They have the
facilities there he needs.

JACK

Well...What if I was a relative?

DOCTOR

You'd have the option to care for
him at home, but it wouldn't be
the best thing for him. He needs
hospital care. I just thought
you could sign the necessary
releases, but the city can do
that. There's really nothing
anybody can do. I wouldn't feel
responsible in any way. There's
nothing you can do.

JACK nods and the DOCTOR leaves. JACK looks at PARRY, who stares vacantly in space...

JACK and ANNE stand alone.

ANNE

Poor Lydia...First guy who shows any interest at all and he winds up in Bellevue...

SHE looks straight into JACK'S eyes...

...Some woman just have no luck, huh?

Including herself in this remark, and having cried all she could cry, SHE and JACK exchange one final look. SHE turns and walks down the long corridor, out of the ward.

After a beat, JACK calls her.

JACK

Anne...Anne, I'll call you, all right?

ANNE doesn't turn or stop - she just keeps walking.

JACK stares back at PARRY, CAMERA MOVES IN TO CLOSE-UP - his face hardening, a mixture of hurt...and hunger...and resignation.

FADE TO:

SUPER - SIX MONTHS LATER.

INT. RADIO STUDIO - DAY

CAMERA PANS PAST A STATUESQUE REDHEAD, watching JACK through the glass..to JACK in mid-broadcast:

JACK

...So, if you're an aspiring Picasso-salad maker, or if you just want to find out exactly what IS a multi-flavored pickle - come down to the Patterson Mall, this Saturday right off Route 130..

HE smiles at the REDHEAD. SHE kisses through the glass.

CUT TO:

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT DAY.

An even more luxurious version of JACK'S original apartment - expensive furniture, track lighting, multi-leveled, art pieces - very tastefully decorated.

The REDHEAD (BETH) is in the kitchen throwing out the remnants of a take-out Mexican dinner. JACK is sits on a stool near a counter, watching her. HE is wearing a bathrobe and his hair is wet, nursing a beer. BETH is clad only in an oversized tee-shirt.

JACK

Did they say when they were shooting for?

BETH

No, they didn't go into scheduling, but I'm telling you Jack - they are really hot on this. As soon as I said the phrase "cable talk show with a difference",,,I am telling you, his face lit up. He said they've been trying to develop something along those lines with these, you know, up & coming comedians, but nothing has worked out. When they heard it was you-

JACK

Did they know about me?

BETH

They knew what happened. They figured you dropped out for personal reasons, which they were. But Jack..

(faces him)

they were not at all - in any way - turned off by it.

(strokes his face)

Really honey. It's going to be great. SO I want you to write it down in your book - a week from tomorrow, 3:30...

JACK sits, thinking.

...Go on. Write it now, before you forget.

As if on remote, JACK slips off the stool and walks into the bedroom. HE finds his Filofax and writes down the date. BETH enters the bathroom, leaving the door open.

BETH

Oh, and Daddy wants to take us out to dinner Friday. The car's coming for us at seven.

JACK writes it down as he crosses to the bathroom. HE stands in

the doorway, admiring her beautiful figure as she takes off her tee-shirt. JACK moves in to embrace. THEY kiss. JACK is obviously getting more turned on than BETH.

BETH

Honey...honey..I feel all dirty and stinky. Why don't I take a bath, we get into bed...we can talk about next week...

JACK keeps kissing her, forcing her to the floor...SHE laughs.

JACK!...What are you doing...

(kissing him)

Jack the floor is cold...

(whines)

Honneeey...Can I at least put down the duvet?

JACK stops. BETH tilts her head, adding emphasis to her compromise.

JACK

(sits up)

That's all right. Why don't you take a bath, get into bed...

(stands)

I'm going to uh...I wanna buy a pack of cigarettes...

BETH

You don't smoke.

JACK

Sometimes I do...

BETH

(on floor, looking up)

Well, you better wait a little bit-

(points, baby voice)

Mr. Baldy's watching the parade.

JACK looks down at his crotch - his hard-on, or MR Baldy as BETH refers to it, is prominently extended (O.C.) from his robe. BETH gets up giggling. HE smiles, with cynical resentment.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT.

MONTAGE:

JACK walks the streets. It seems that no matter where he goes, or what he sees, he is reminded of the past:

- the neon sign of a VIDEO STORE; BUMS huddles in doorways...
- the EAST RIVER PROMENADE - the spot where he once contemplated

suicide until someone saved him. HE looks into the river and smiles, then turns to face the woody area from where PARRY first sprang. It seems dark and empty. He starts to walk further down the promenade. HE looks up to the night clouds drifting against in a clear night sky. HE continues to walk. HE spots two bums sharing a bench. Something about one of the bums seems familiar - he looks like a hippy. JACK approaches them, and discovers they are the BLACK and the HIPPIY from his first night with PARRY. THEY are both trying to sleep on the bench. JACK smiles. THEY look up at him, without any recognition.

BLACK

Got any change?

JACK

You remember me?..I'm a friend
of Parry's...Have you seen Parry?

THEY just stare at him, without any idea of what he's saying.

BLACK

Got any change?

JACK sees as if for the first time - whatever magic PARRY once brought to their lives, is clearly gone. JACK hands them some money, then walks off.

- PARRY'S BASEMENT: JACK walks around. HE looks at the wall of weapons and the mural of the medieval scene. HE stands before the drawing of the "tower" and the golden chalice.

CUT TO:

INT. OAKBROOK STATE INSTITUTION - THE NEXT DAY.

JACK is waiting in an area opposite the nurses station when he spots a familiar face walk up to the nurse.

LYDIA. We can notice a change in her. The self-consciousness replaced by a self-assuredness, the insecurity replaced with a maturity. Even her dress - a smart, tightly fit suit - gives the appearance of someone in control and confident.

JACK is about to call out, when he thinks better of it and purposely turns his back so that LYDIA will not see him.

CUT TO:

NURSE'S DESK

LYDIA

Excuse me, but the bed sheets I
brought last week...

NURSE

Oh, yes...I'm sorry. They're being cleaned. One of the doctors had a little accident with a hypo.

LYDIA

All right. Thank you.

LYDIA exits. JACK turns to watch her enter the elevator.

CUT TO:

INT. PARRY'S WARD - LATER.

JACK enters a room lined on both side with beds and patients.

CUT TO:

THE VARIOUS PATIENTS - all men - are confined to their beds. Some are mumbling inaudibly to themselves, others are rocking back and forth, others just stare off into space.

PARRY sits in bed - his eyes are dead, his body unresponsive. JACK stands at the foot of his bed. PARRY does not respond.

JACK

Hey..Sorry I haven't been around.
I've been working and...and..it's
uh...been..hard...ya know, it takes
alot out of ya to get things back on
track. Ya know?..You look good...You do.

PARRY remains the same. JACK moves closer to him. HE picks up his hand and holds it. Then shakes it.

...Hey...you gonna wake up for me? Huh?..

No response. JACK leans closer into him.

.....You're going to make me
do this, aren't you?..

(sternly)

Well, I just want you to know
...I don't feel responsible for you,
I don't. Everybody has
bad things happen to them...

...I'm not God! I don't decide...

(fighting back tears)

...people survive...If I do this,
I want you to know it's not for
me. It's not because I feel
guilty or...or...bad or
responsible or anything...

The tears come, JACK gently pushes the hair off PARRY'S forehead.

...I feel like an idiot for even considering this, I want you to know.

(HE kisses PARRY'S forehead)

CUT TO:

EXT. CHARMICHAEL TOWNHOUSE - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

JACK stands on the deserted block on front of the townhouse. HE looks around the neighboring houses - all the New Yorkers safely locked away behind their doors and windows, intentionally oblivious to what goes on around them.

JACK is holding a rope with a self-made hook at the end. HE looks up the five story building and takes a gulp. HE throws the rope up. IT MISSES and falls back toward him - scaring him to jump aside and making an awful sound when it lands. JACK tries again. IT CATCHES. HE tugs a bit. HE begins to climb up the front of the townhouse....

JACK

I was never good at this in gym.

HE places a foot on the wall and begins his ascent as he talks to himself - keeping his terror in check.

JACK

(climbing)

Listen, I'll just tell them the truth. I was stealing a gift for a sick friend. Public opinion will be on my side.

HE pulls and steps, pulls and steps...when suddenly HE HEARS THE SOUND OF A HORSE GALLOPING TOWARD HIM...

HE stops and slowly turns to the street.

But the street is vacant - lit by the glow of the street lamp...An eerie silence hangs as if for a moment, time stopped.

JACK

Oh terrific. I'm hearing horses now.

(turns back to the wall)

Parry will be so pleased! He's finally turned me into a moron too...

(climbing)

I can just see the headlines. EX-RADIO PERSONALITY TURNS SCREWBALL ON

MISSION FROM GOD...I just hope there's
a vacant bed -
(intensely)
Right next to his!

JACK hears a SIREN IN THE DISTANCE and freezes, closing his eyes:

SUDDENLY, THREE POLICE CARS come barrelling down the street -
sirens blasting, they screech to a halt! A least a dozen cops
hit the streets with rifles and spotlights aimed at JACK.

A REPORTERS talks to a news camera on the pavement -

REPORTER
A crazed radio personality dangles
from the townhouse of billionaire...

ANNE jumps out of one of the police cars and runs to the
townhouse. HER face is full of concern and love.

JACK
(seeing her, he whispers)
Anne.

HE is about to callout when WE :

CUT TO:

POV - STREET.

IT IS EMPTY AND STILL.

A REAL POLICE CAR and SIREN race down the adjacent avenue,
without any reference to JACK.

JACK blinks his eyes in disbelief - a garbage can stands where
ANNE "stood"...a page of newspapers blows gently out the top
and across the sidewalk. It was another hallucination.

JACK is a ball of sweat. The fear is peaking. But, HE gathers all
his strength - takes a deep breath - and continues to climb.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOF - A FEW MINUTES LATER.

JACK reaches the roof and climbs over. HE pulls up the rope and
quickly moves to the skylight. HE looks down into it and sees a
dark, ominous void. HE takes a breath and pulls out some masking
tape. HE takes three big tape loops and applies them to the
glass. HE then takes out a glass cutter and begins to cut a pane.
The sound, at first, is startling, but he continues;

HE suddenly looks up, into the darkness of the roof. HE stares

at the SHADOWS created by the moon and the night. When he finds himself caught up in staring, he shakes away any thoughts of demons in the dark, and continues to cut.

When he finishes the cutting, he replaces the cutter in his pocket and plasters his arm against the tape. HE gently bangs the pane loose. HE is impressed at his success. HE places the pane on the roof and begins to fasten one end of the rope to a pipe.

CUT TO:

INT. CARMICHAEL TOWNHOUSE - MINUTES LATER.

JACK is easing himself down the rope into a pitch black room. But the rope doesn't reach the floor. JACK hangs from the end - panting, frightened at falling - but then decides it is the only way to get down. HE takes a breath and lets go.

HE falls to the floor with a painful THUD!. The room is dark. Only faint shadows from the moonlight illuminate some art pieces hanging on the wall. JACK stands there for a moment and pulls out the page from PARRY'S ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST. HE lights his lighter and looks - the "GRAIL" is in the library on the first floor. JACK cautiously makes his way out.

CUT TO:

INT. FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY OF TOWNHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER.

JACK looks down the darkened hallway. At the far end, HE sees the top of a staircase and heads towards it - until he sees something that makes him freeze once again:

Slowly, A SHADOW holding a SHOTGUN emerges up the stairs to the fifth floor.

JACK stops in fear.

The SHADOW becomes a MAN, who reaches the top of the landing - it is EDWIN MALNICK... and he is staring right at JACK.

JACK doesn't know what to do. HIS heart is bursting out of his chest in panic .

MALNICK'S expression is the same as the photo JACK saw on the TV coverage of the massacre - sad and harmless. EDWIN cocks the gun and fires.

The BLAST hits JACK, echoing against the hallway. But there is no blood - no injury. HE looks to the stairs.

EDWIN is gone.

JACK leans against an endtable beneath a mirror. HIS hands wipe the sweat from his face. HE looks at himself in the mirror and pulls it all back together.

CUT TO:

INT. FIRST FLOOR TOWNHOUSE - MINUTES LATER.

JACK enters CARMICHAEL'S LIBRARY cautiously. A small lamp is on near a large LEATHER CHESTERFIELD CHAIR. The chair has a huge back that obliterates JACK'S view of the fireplace.

Within the antique COMODE, the "GRAIL" sits innocently behind two glass doors. JACK looks at it for a moment, the gently opens the doors. HE takes out the goblet and holds it reverently in his hands. HE notices an inscription on the bottom:

TO LITTLE LANNIE CARMICHAEL
FOR ALL HIS HARD WORK
MERRY CHRISTMAS
MRS. LINDSTROM, P.S. 247
CHRISTMAS PAGENT, 1939

JACK can't help but smile. HE takes the chalice and turns to leave, when he is stopped in his tracks by another sight:

CUT TO:

POV

LANGSTON CARMICHAEL, wearing only the bottoms of his silk pajamas, sits fast asleep in the CHESTERFIELD CHAIR. On a table beside him, lies an empty BOTTLE OF VOLDKA and a PILL BOTTLE.

JACK is paralyzed - until it occurs to him that CARMICHAEL has not stirred an inch. JACK doesn't understand. At first, HE thinks it is another hallucination - but then he notices the PILL BOTTLE and slowly moves towards it. The floor squeaks beneath his feet but CARMICHAEL does not move. JACK picks up the pill bottle and reads - SECONAL. The bottle is half-empty.

JACK looks at CARMICHAEL'S limp body. The man looks much older - much more worn out than the dashing pictures from the magazine. JACK lowers his head to listen to CARMICHAEL'S heart beat. It is very faint. JACK once again, doesn't know what to do. HE slowly backs out of the room

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY IN FRONT OF LIBRARY - FIRST FLOOR.

JACK is panicked. HE does not know what action to take. He wants to run away. He looks down the hallway to the front

entrance.

CUT TO:

POV

The FRONT DOOR ALARM SYSTEM - a beam of light a few inches above the floor.

CUT BACK TO:

JACK, who suddenly feels quite calm. HE has decided what to do, set off the alarm.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARMICHAEL TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT, MOMENTS LATER.

JACK exits from the front door, carefully making sure no one is on the street to see. A small BUZZ is heard when he crosses the alarm's beam of light.

ANNE (O.C.)
(endearingly)
Right out the front door, huh?

JACK looks up to see ANNE standing at the bottom of the stoop. SHE smiles.

...Ya bastard.

JACK smiles back and takes a step toward her - but she vanishes. He pauses a moment - then quickly runs down the block.

CUT TO:

INT. PARRY'S WARD - THE FOLLOWING DAY

JACK places the "GRAIL" in PARRY'S lap. HE pulls up a chair beside the bed. HE takes a newspaper off the chair and sits. The newspaper headline reads: ACCIDENTAL SUICIDE THWARTED BY NIGHT PROWLER....THIEF ESCAPES EMPTY-HANDED.

JACK props his feet up onto PARRY'S bed and settles into sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. PARRY'S WARD - LATER THAT NIGHT.

CAMERA MOVES past JACK'S sleeping face to PARRY'S bed, then to PARRY'S HANDS - as they gently begin to grasp the chalice.

CUT TO:

C.U. PARRY

HIS eyes open with awareness, he raises the chalice up and, with full knowing, looks at it. HE sees JACK sleeping in his chair, and smiles.

PARRY

(whispers)

Hey Jack...Jack?

(JACK remains asleep)

I had this dream Jack...I was married. I had a wife...A beautiful wife. I don't remember her face too well, but I remember her. 'Cause she died Jack...Yeah, she died....

(PAUSE. PARRY remembers)

And you were there...

(HE looks to JACK. BEAT)

I really miss her. Is that O.K. Jack? Can I miss her now?

CAMERA PANS to JACK - his eyes closed, pretending to sleep but in truth, hearing every word. A tear rolls down his cheek.

WIDE ANGLE

PARRY reaches out and places one hand on JACK'S shoulder, as he cradles the chalice to his chest with the other.

CUT TO:

INT. OAKBROOK INSTITUTE - DAY.

A somber LYDIA makes her way down the corridor with some flowers. SHE enters the ward and stops dead in her tracks - frozen with disbelief at what she sees:

CUT TO:

LYDIA'S POV

PARRY has gathered all the patients into the middle of the room and is teaching them to sing, "GROOVIN"...Some patients are quietly watching like little children, others are shouting non-sensical lyrics. But everyone is having a good time. PARRY notices one of the patients looking behind him and turns to see LYDIA. HIS face lights up!

PARRY

Hiya sweetheart! Where you been!?

LYDIA loses control and begins to cry through her smile. PARRY approaches and raps his arms around her.

PARRY

Don't cry...Hey...

LYDIA throws her arms around him.

...Are you my girl?...Are you my girl...?

LYDIA sobs and nods in his shoulder. PARRY holds her tighter.

CUT TO:

INT. VIDEO STOP - DAY.

ANNE sits in her office, a cigarette dangling from her mouth. There is a knock at the door.

ANNE

Come!...

JACK enters holding a bouquet of flowers. HE smiles. ANNE looks at him as if to say, "What do you expect me to do, applaud!"

...Well...don't you look nice..Who died?

JACK

(meekly)

How have you been?

ANNE

(coldly)

Terrific. Going on alot of dates...
seeing lots of men...lots of dates..
And you?

JACK

Fine...I...I..uh...

ANNE

(baiting him)

I haven't heard from you in a while...

JACK nods. HE is uncharacteristically nervous.

ANNE

I heard you on the radio...Very funny.

JACK

Thanks.

(PAUSE)

I...uh....I've

ANNE

(abruptly)

What? I got the weekend crowd coming in!

JACK is startled. HE takes a breath, looks at ANNE and pushes the words out of his gut.

JACK

I love you.

For once, ANNE is speechless. She slowly rises from behind her desk in such a way that JACK takes a step back in fear. ANNE up to him. She has no intention of making this easy.

ANNE

(tough)

Excuse me, I didn't get that!

Wanna run it by me again.

JACK is dying. HE could hardly say it the first time.

JACK

I think..(quickly corrects himself)

I...I realized...I love you.

ANNE looks at him and nods.

ANNE

Huh-huh....

(then)

You son of a bitch!

SHE hauls off and cracks him a slap across the face that stuns him - his knees giving out, lowering him to the floor. After settling the score for all the pain she's been through. SHE quickly grabs his face with her hands and plants a passionate kiss on his lips, that slowly causes him to rises back up. HE drops the flowers and grabs her. SHE mounts his body and begins to undo his suit. THEY go at it with such passion, they both fall to the floor. FROM OFF CAMERA, WE HEAR:

JACK

I love you.

ANNE

Jesus. What rock hit YOU in the head?

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT.

CAMERA OPENS ON NIGHT SKY - billowing clouds against a midnight blue backdrop.

CAMERA PANS DOWN past the New York skyline and into the park to reveal JACK and PARRY cloudbusting in the park.

JACK
Beautiful night.

PARRY
Mmmmm.

JACK
You know those Little People
you used to hear?

PARRY
Yeah.

JACK
Have you heard from them recently?

PARRY
Sure. Spoke to them last week.
They say hi!

THEY hear muffled voices OC.

JACK
Ssshhhh.

JACK and PARRY roll over and look towards the trees

CUT TO:

A FOURSOME OF YOUTHS, dealing drugs beneath an elm.

CUT TO:

JACK as he calmly picks up THE SLINGSHOT lying by his side
on the grass. HE stands up, loads, takes aim and fires.

WE HEAR the SHOT hitting it's target and the "WHOSH" of a net
being released and swooping the youths up into the trees.

YOUTH (O.C., in net)
I'm getting tired of this shit.

JACK picks up a hat with a branch sticking out of it and puts it
on his head.

JACK
You think maybe one day I'll get
to see them - the Little People.

PARRY looks up at JACK - standing naked in the park with a
branch sticking out of his head and an excited grin on his face -
PARRY smiles proudly.

PARRY

I'm sure of it.

CAMERA begins to pan out - as JACK lies back down beside PARRY.

WE HEAR HIM ASK:

JACK

Have you ever tried busting stars?