

ALICE DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE

An original screenplay by Robert Getchell

Director: Martin Scorsese

Producer: David Susskind

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. A WOOD-FRAME HOUSE, MONTEREY - DAY (1949)

Open on old Warner Brothers' color logo. The following scene is to be shot in the studio style of a late 1940s film-- the old three-strip Technicolor look.

The house, surrounded by a multitude of trees, sits on a small hill. It is summer, and some of the trees are in bloom. The wind blows, making changing patterns of light and shade. The scene should look like every child's memory of early summer-- idyllic. In the background, we HEAR Alice Faye's recording of "You'll Never Know." CREDITS BEGIN HERE. As the record continues, the camera ROAMS around the exterior of the house: it is large and in need of paint, and has a porch that runs around three sides. Through a window, WE SEE the silhouette of a Woman working in the kitchen, and a dog, stunned with the sun, is lying by a pump in the side-yard. From ANOTHER ANGLE, we see a grey-haired Man outside the yard throwing grain through a pen to chickens. The CAMERA finishes a complete CIRCLE of the house and MOVES OUT the front gate which is covered by a huge arch of climbing roses. In front of the gate, an obviously new 1949 Ford station wagon is parked on a dirt path which runs toward a small road a quarter mile away. The CAMERA MOVES DOWN the path toward a small figure walking up the path to the house. CREDITS END HERE.

The figure is ALICE GRAHAM, a ten-year old girl, cradling a half-grown chicken in her arms. As she continues up the lane, Alice Faye's record ends; there is a five-second silence and we HEAR Alice's voice begin the same song. She starts the song far too high for her child's range, and after the first two lines, she stops. By now she is close enough to the CAMERA for us to SEE her clearly: she is pretty enough, with light brown hair and huge eyes, but is bone thin. She is dressed in a tee-shirt, too short jeans that graze fruit at the knees, and girl-scout shoes with thin white anklets. To the chickens she says, "Wait, now. Wait. I can do that better." She starts the song again, several notes lower. Although her voice is still reedy with youth, it is clear and loud, and she gives a fair imitation of Alice Faye's "You'll Never Know." To the chicken again:

* ALICE *

(dreamy, with no particular emphasis;
she's said it a hundred times)

I can sing better than Alice
Faye, I swear to Christ I can.

1 CONTINUED: (2)

MOTHER'S VOICE
(from house)
Allie?

ALICE
(Stroking the chicken;
same delivery as before)
You wait and see. And if anybody
doesn't like it they can blow it
out their ass.

MOTHER'S VOICE
(louder)
Allie?

Alice ignores the voice and continues singing "You'll Never Know".

MOTHER'S VOICE
(louder, but not really
angry)
Alice! Alice Graham! You get in
here or I'll just beat the living
daylights out of you, you hear me?

Alice drops the chicken and begins to trot toward the house,
not at all worried. Her arms spread wide for dramatic empha-
sis, she finishes the song as she runs.

ALICE
'You'll never know
If you don't know now...
Now.

As she hits the last note, "now," the film FREEZES her in mid-
step.

SLOW FADE OUT

2 FADE IN

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA - AFTERNOON - (TODAY)

The CAMERA NOSES DOWN the street, eventually FOCUSING on a parti-
cular house. The house is much like the others on the street:
small, cheaply-made, and baking in the summer sun. A 'sixty-nine'
Ford station-wagon is parked in the driveway, and two small trees
stand dispirited on either side of the front walk. Inside, Harry
Nilsson is SCREAMING "Spaceman" from a record player, caught in
what must have been the precise moment before his heart burst.

3

INT. KITCHEN OF THE SAME HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A woman is fixing dinner. She is Alice, the adult version of the girl we've just seen. Now thirty-five her hair has darkened to a deep brown. She is slender, pretty if not beautiful, with large, expressive brown eyes that dominate her face. She is wearing a skirt and blouse, both of light-weight cotton. A MAN calls from the bedroom:

MAN'S VOICE

(harsh)

Alice? Alice, will you for God's sake do something about that kid?

CUT TO:

4

INT. THE LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

TOM, Alice's eleven-year-old son, is lying on the floor as close to a portable stereo as he can get, his head literally surrounded by the speakers. Alice appears from the kitchen. The following is said strongly, but not in total seriousness. The boy knows.

ALICE

What do you want from me?

(jerking her head

toward the bedroom)

You want me to have a fight with him? Turn the damned thing off-- now.

Tom rolls his eyes, but shuts off the music. He is rather small and thin for his age, and as a result many of his movements are awkward.

ALICE

(mock-serious)

How the hell am I supposed to work up any maternal feeling for you if you spend your days making me deaf?

The boy doesn't respond.

ALICE

(continuing; same as before)

How can we have a...

(she gestures the words in the air)

... Meaningful Family Relationship when I'm on the verge of killing

A small smile appears on Tom's face, in spite of his efforts to stop it.

ALICE
(continuing)
And why Harry Nilsson twenty-four
hours a day?

TOM
(from the floor)
Maybe if I had a Lu Ann Simms record ...

ALICE
(over her shoulder, to
an Invisible Someone she
uses for rhetorical remarks)
My luck. I'm an okay person: I
don't steal, I don't pee in the
street -- why did I have to raise
a smart-ass?

Tom smiles again, in spite of his efforts to show that
he's bored.

ALICE
(continuing; seeing his
mood is okay now)
How does peach shortcake strike you?

Really? TOM

ALICE
Yes, really. Dinner's in half an
hour. Now clean up those records
and act like you've got good sense.

For no real reason, except excess vitality, she does
two quick bumps, saying, "Zow, zow" to punctuate each
hip movement. Then she disappears around the doorway.

CUT TO:

5 INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

Alice, Tom, and DONALD, Alice's husband, are eating
peach shortcake. Donald is dressed in the uniform of
a Coca-Cola delivery man. The room is stifling, and
they occasionally wipe their foreheads with the backs
of their hands.

DONALD
It's too hot to breathe

5 CONTINUED (2)

TOM
It's too hot to live.

DONALD
Shut up.

TOM
Why?

DONALD
Just shut up.

TOM
All I said was...

DONALD
(raising his arm as
if to backhand his
son)
One word. One more word.

ALICE
(over her shoulder)
Aren't I lucky?
(facing front again)
Delightful. Really delightful.

They eat in silence for a while. A WOMAN'S VOICE is
HEARD calling for her son from several houses away:

VOICE
Chuck? Chuckie? Supper's in fifteen
minutes.. Don't you go out of the
sound of my voice, you hear me?

Then:

ALICE
It is hot, though.

ALICE
(continuing)
I remember one summer back home it
was so cold that daddy had to light
the oil stove every night.

DONALD
(sighing loudly)
Alice, no more about Monterey,
please.

5 CONTINUED: (3)

ALICE
(wanting to share it)
No, listen. At night the fog would
come up off the beach...

DONALD & TOM (TOGETHER)
"... and march right through my
bedroom."

ALICE
(a bit hurt)
Okay. All right for you two.

DONALD
(intending to hurt)
Who do you think cares about a
place you lived in twenty years
ago?

(putting on a shrill,
excited voice)
Northern California! Northern
California!
(normal voice)
Jesus! The way you run off at
the mouth... if it's not that God-
damned shack you grew up in. it's
that singing.

He snorts and shakes his head disgustedly.

ALICE
I was a singer!

DONALD
Sure, in a dump.

ALICE
You call the Rathburn Hotel in
Monterey a dump?

DONALD
What were you there for, three
days?

ALICE
I played...

5 · CONTINUED: (4)

While his parents argue, Tom's face reflects pleasure; he is truly glad that they're fighting.

TOM

(as he leaves the table)

If you two are going to fight, I'm going over to Harold's.

He exits, and there is a pause. Donald continues eating. Alice pushes her plate away, lights a cigarette. She smokes in silence for a few moments, then:

ALICE

Don, if you'd just visit Monterey with me, I know you'd love it. You like to hunt, there are...

DONALD

(just stubborn)

No.

ALICE

Why?

DONALD

Just no..

ALICE

(mad; she gets up, starts to clear the table)

I swear to Christ, you'll sit here in this hell-hole forever, won't you?

(a beat)

Ponca City graveyard, here I come!

DONALD

You can leave anytime, anytime at all.

ALICE

(instinctively lowering her voice, even though Tom is gone)

And Tom? What about Tom?

DONALD

(shrugs)

What about him? The way you two side in against me, I might as well not live here.

5 CONTINUED: (5)

Alice gives him a disgusted look and turns to the sink.

DONALD

(continuing; mean)

I doubt if he's mine, anyway.

ALICE

(turning slowly from the
sink, her voice level)

You don't exist for me, you know
that?

Donald gets up from the table, fake-spits at her, then
leaves the house. Alice continues to wash dishes for
a few moments, her face blank. Suddenly she stops,
walks to the screen door leading to the back yard;
leaning against the doorjamb, she begins to cry. Im-
mediately, though, she viciously bangs the screen door
open, sticks her head out the door and screams:

ALICE

(top of her lungs)

Ponca City, We Love You!

5A EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - DAY

Alice is coming out of the supermarket, trailed by a Clerk
who's carrying her two bags of groceries.

CHECKER

How are ya, Mizz Hyatt?

ALICE

(nice)

Oh, my lips are above the water-
line Joe, but that's about it.

CHECKER

Who can ask for more?

As he puts the packages in the back seat of her station-wagon,
he notices the contents.

CHECKER

(continuing)

You're sure laying out the money
for meat. Company coming?

ALICE

(straight)

No, my husband hates me -- I'm
hoping to make him chase me around
the bedroom.

5A CONTINUED: (2)

CHECKER
(embarrassed)
Oh. I... uh. Oh.

CUT TO:

6 INT. ALICE'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Tom is again playing MUSIC -- Leon Russell's "Roll Away the Stone" vibrates the room. Alice enters the room, kneels down, turns the MUSIC to a low level, then:

ALICE
(whispering to Tom)
Do you want to go to the Army?

TOM
What?

ALICE
(same; confidential)
I said that you're going to be the only twelve year old ever signed into the Army by his mother unless you keep that thing turned down tonight.

TOM
Mom, he isn't even here yet. Can't I just play...?

Alice sits down on the floor with a thump. She is completely serious with Tom for the first time since we've seen her.

ALICE
Tommy, for God's sake, do what I tell you. He'll be home in a minute, and if he walks in to Elton John...

TOM
It's Leon Russell.

ALICE
(gives him a look but goes on)
If he walks in to Leon Russell you know he'll scream like a panther. Let's try to get through one evening -- just one evening -- without a hassle.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

She runs her index finger down the side of his face.

ALICE
(continuing)
Come on -- please.

TOM
(as he starts to put
away his records)
It's his fault -- he starts it all
the time.

ALICE
(pleased)
I'll make it up to you; I'll buy
you more records tomorrow. I'll
sell my wedding ring, I'll try to
get a loan on the house. Maybe
I could...

TOM
(grinning)
All right. All right.

He puts the records on the shelf, takes up an exaggerated-
ly stiff position on the sofa.

TOM
(continuing)
I'm ready for...
(breathy)
... Him.

ALICE
(smiling)
Good. And don't be a smartass for
once in twelve years. Just sit
there and smile.

TOM
(smartass)
How should I breathe?

ALICE
Shallowly.

She exits.

CUT TO:

7

INT. DINING ROOM - EVENING

The three are eating in silence; then:

ALICE

(conversational)

Irene Payson got back from Denver today.

(she looks at Donald;
no response)

She had a wonderful time.

She waits -- no response again. He merely goes on eating, so Alice takes both parts of the conversation.

ALICE

(as Don, exaggeratedly
interested)

She did? What all did she do?

ALICE

(as herself, over-
enthusiastic)

Well, she saw her family, went to a resort in the mountains, did a lot of shopping.

ALICE

(as Don; same as
before)

Whatever did she buy?

ALICE

(as herself; still
maniacally enthused)

Why, mercy, all sorts of things.

She stops, and after Tom's small laugh, there is silence again. After a few moments:

ALICE

(continuing; nice)

I fixed lamb because I know you like it.

DONALD

(continues eating)

M-m.

ALICE

Is it good?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

DONALD
(not looking up)
It's okay.

ALICE
(a wry expression on
her face)
Right.

FADE OUT.

8 INT. THEIR BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alice and Donald are preparing for bed. They get into a double bed without talking. Both lie on their backs for a few moments. Alice says "Good night", and closes her eyes. Donald makes a swift motion with his arm under the cover, sliding his hand quickly up her thigh. She stiffens, her eyes fly open.

ALICE
(quick)
Uh, wait.

DONALD
(his voice thick)
Come on.

ALICE
(raising her head and
shoulders off the bed)
No, I... wait.

DONALD
(his hands everywhere)
Come on.

He rolls on top of her, his body and hands busy.

CUT TO:

9 SHOT OF THEIR UPPER BODIES

Alice's face is visible. Her eyes are open; Donald's face is buried in her neck.

ALICE
(not really meaning it;
to the air)
Wouldn't you like to tell me that
you love me first?

9 CONTINUED: (2)

A pause; Donald goes right on.

ALICE
(continuing)
That I've got pretty eyes? That
I've got one really sexy bod?

Donald continues to lunge away.

ALICE
(continuing)
How about that I'm a good housekeeper
or that I have well-shaped hands?
(softer)
Or that you're glad I made you lamb?
(a whisper)
Look at me, Don. Look at me.

Donald doesn't. The CAMERA HOLDS on Alice's face.

CUT TO:

10 INT: ALICE'S HOUSE - MORNING

Alice and BEA WEBB, her neighbor and friend, are having coffee and sewing. Alice is in a half-completed dress, which is inside-out, the seams sticking out; Bea is busy pinning it as they talk. Before the following dialogue begins, the women's voices are only a murmuring.

BEA
(laughing)
Did you really say that to him?

ALICE
(nodding)
Uh huh. God, if he'd just act like
he knew I was alive once in a while.

BEA
(stretching her arms
over her head)
Oh, he's okay.

ALICE
Live here for three days -- you'll
talk out of the other side of your
mouth.

10 CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE
(Continued)

I never thought, I mean I really never thought I'd wind up living in Oklahoma married to a Coca-cola delivery man.

BEA
Well, I couldn't do without some kind of man around the house, and neither could you.

ALICE
(snorts)
The hell I couldn't. I could live out my life on a picture of Robert Redford and a vivid imagination!

BEA
(laughs)
Allie!

ALICE
(laughs with her)
It's the God's truth, I could.

BEA
(shaking her head but still laughing)
I swear, the way you talk!
(beat, provocatively)
I wonder what he'd be like in bed?
(she laughs again)

ALICE
I bet he wouldn't roll over and go to sleep afterwards.

They both start laughing all over again, one last time, and then Bea changes the subject.

BEA
You know that dress ~~you wanted~~
you wanted at Iverson's?
It's half-price now. I saw
it...

The PHONE RINGS. Alice answers it.

ALICE
Hello? Yes what?
(Pause)
Are you sure, I mean ...
(Long pause)
When?
(Pause)
I see. Thank you.

BEA
What is it? Allie, what is it?

ALICE
(quiet)
Don's dead.

BEA
What? How?

ALICE
(still quiet)
There was a car accident at work.

BEA
(touching her arm)
Oh, Allie.

Suddenly Alice begins to laugh, but there is an hysterical tinge to it.

BEA
(continuing; scared)
What's the matter? What's the matter?

ALICE
(between whoops of laughter)
Oh, God, how awful. What I just said about Robert Redford.

She laughs again.

BEA
You didn't mean it, you were just joking.

ALICE
(laughing even harder at this; very near hysteria)
No, I meant it, I meant it. Oh God, how awful.

11 EXT. STREET - DAY

DONALD - dead in his truck - the victim of a terrible accident. In the background, WE SEE a woman being pulled out of a wrecked car, and put into an ambulance: a small crowd of curious on-lookers have gathered; police, etc.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Alice and Tom, sober-faced, are sitting in a '69 stationwagon. Tom is dressed in a sport coat, Alice in a dark dress, as we

CUT TO:

13 INT. CAR

They sit in silence for a few seconds, then:

ALICE

You want to come with me?

TOM

No. Do I have to?

ALICE

(wanting him to)

No... no.

(a beat)

I'll be back in a minute. You sure you don't want to come.

TOM

Yeah.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

Alice gets out of the car, walks up the steps and through the door; on her way, she passes an EMPTY HEARSE. The camera stays outside the door; the following snatches of dialogue is V.O.

MORTICIAN (V.O.)

(overly solicitious, and
jarringly jolly)

Of course, Mrs. White, of

MORTICIAN (V.O.)
(continued)
Did the deceased carry any insurance?

ALICE (V.O.)
No. Yes. Well, yes, he had a life insurance policy, but no, it wasn't specifically for burial.
(a pause)
I want something nice, but not too expensive.

MORTICIAN (V.O.)
(still jolly)
Of course, of course.
(pause, then)
The bronze is \$3500.

ALICE (V.O.)
I don't want to sound rude, but that's insane.

MORTICIAN (V.O.)
(after another pause)
I'm sorry, but \$2200 is our least expensive model. And you'll want flowers and limousine service.

ALICE (V.O.)
(jolly, in imitation)
Of course, of course.

There is another pause, and then Alice reappears; upset at spending so much money, she stands just against the door for a moment, gazing at Tommy in the car.

ALICE
(continuing; half under her breath)
Oh, shit. Shit. What am I going to do?

CUT TO:

OMIT SCENES 15 AND 16

17 INT. ALICE'S LIVING ROOM, DAY

Tom is dressed in a dark suit, ready for a funeral. Alice is partially dressed, wandering aimlessly around. Eventually she sits down, lights a cigarette. After a pause:

ALICE

Your father was a good man.

Tom slants his eyes at her.

ALICE

(continuing; trying to mean it)

He was!

TOM

(abrupt; looks at her again)

How much money is there left?

ALICE

Don't ask.

TOM

I'm asking.

ALICE

Counting the equity and the insurance there was a little over seven thousand, but...

TOM

What's left?

ALICE

Nine hundred. Nine hundred big ones. That's what's between you and an orphanage, kid, and there's still the bill for the cemetery lot.

TOM

What're you going to do?

ALICE

What do you mean, what am I going to do? It's "we". "We." You're in on this too.

TOM

(dryly)

I'm eleven, Mother. I can't do anything.

ALICE

(musing)

Maybe I could sell you.

TOM

Or yourself.

ALICE

(over her shoulder)

TOM
(serious)
What are we going to do, Mom?
Did you ever take typing in school?

ALICE
(Same as TOM)
Sure, but I flunked it.

TOM
Well, you've got to be able to
do something. You could get a
job in a topless bar I suppose.
Get yourself a green apron and
a little cap. You'd be great.

ALICE
(grim)
Good luck with your mouth.

They sit looking at each other for a few seconds. Then:

TOM
So how do we eat when the money's
gone?

ALICE
I don't know honey, I honestly just
don't know.

18 INT. ALICE'S KITCHEN - DAY

Alice is alone, washing dishes, her face worried.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. ALICE'S BACKYARD - ANOTHER DAY

Alice and Bea are taking laundry off the line. Alice stops for
a moment, clothespins in hand, and Bea notices.

BEA
Tonight's Thursday. Coming bowling?

ALICE
(vague)
No. To tell you the truth, I
never liked it very much.

BEA (surprised)
After three years on the league you tell me that?

ALICE

20 INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM, ANOTHER DAY

Alice is making her bed. From the living room, Tommy's stereo is SHRIEKING -- this time Elton John's "Daniel." Suddenly, she drops the bedspread, bites her lower lip as an idea strikes her. She stands still for two or three beats, then:

ALICE

I'm going home. We're going to Monterey.

CUT TO:

21 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Alice walks quickly in from the bedroom, snaps off the record player.

TOM

(resentful)

Hey! What's that supposed to mean?

ALICE

(preoccupied)

Go play.

TOM

What? I don't want...

ALICE

(not really paying attention to him)

I mean it, Tommy. Go outside -- away -- for an hour or so. I've got something important to do.

TOM

What? What've you got to do?

ALICE

(mock-serious)

Nothing that concerns you. Why don't you smoke pot like everybody else? Go get high somewhere -- just go away.

TOM

I want to listen to...

ALICE

(strong, but not in total seriousness, as she holds up her open hand)

Do you see this?

21 CONTINUED (2)

Tom doesn't answer.

ALICE
(continuing)
Do you?

Yeah. TOM

ALICE
Well, I'm going to leave the print
of it across the side of your face
if you're not out of here by the
time I count to five.

Tom doesn't answer.

ALICE
(continuing)
One... two...

TOM
Mom, I don't want to...

ALICE
Three...

TOM
(whining)
Mom!

ALICE
Four...

She draws back her hand. Tom scrambles up, bolts out the door, yelling:

TOM
One hour and I'm coming back!

As soon as he's out the door he's out of Alice's mind. She stands in the middle of the floor for a beat or two, not moving. Then she holds up her hands, looking at the back of them. Suddenly she wipes her palms on her dress and walks toward the piano. She sits down, moving her hands over the keys without striking any notes. Then she strikes one chord, very softly. Then another. After this she stops, obviously nervous, and puts her hands in her lap. Immediately, though, she places her hands on the keyboard and

21 CONTINUED: (3)

the introduction into "Where or When!" She sings a few lines very softly and uncertainly. Then

She stops, biting the side of her lower lip. Her voice is good -- not great, simply good. She hums the rest of the verse and slides into the song, gaining just a bit of confidence as she goes along. She finishes the verse, sighs with relief at having gotten through it, and says:

ALICE
(continuing; to the
air)
It ain't Peggy Lee.

CUT TO:

22 SAME SCENE - MORNING

In a different dress, Alice continues a respectable version of the second verse of "Where or When." She is a bit more sure of herself this morning, and she has an intelligent way with a song; she listens carefully to the lyrics, with the result that WE do too. As she completes the verse:

CUT TO:

23 SAME SCENE - ANOTHER DAY

ALICE launches into "You'll Never Know.", handling it rather well. Stopping in the middle of the song, satisfied that she can do it, she sits thinking for a few beats, saying, "Let's see ... let's see ...". Then she continues and as she is singing the CAMERA, which has been FAIRLY CLOSE during the songs, pulls back to show TOM standing in the doorway, an incredulous look on his face. He watches for a few more moments; then, his arms spread wide, a dying-calf expression on his face, he walks into the room, singing in horrible imitation of his mother:

TOM
"... You'll never know
If you don't know now
Now ..."

ALICE
(jumps, embarrassed)
Cute. That's really cute.

TOM
(enjoying himself)
No, go on, I love it. 1957 rides
again.

23 CONTINUED: (2)

Alice is silent.

TOM
(continuing; exaggerated;
Mickey Rooney)
Hey! My uncle's got a barn --
maybe we could put on a show!

He waits for a response, then dances an imitation boogie.

ALICE
(quiet)
You know what I like about you?
TOM
(stops)
What?

ALICE
Nothing.

Tom laughs a little, then 'boogies into the kitchen and pours himself a glass of milk, all the while punctuating his movements with every forties expression he's ever heard. He comes back into the living room slouching and twirling an imaginary keychain.

ALICE
(continuing)
You through?

TOM
Almost.

He does one or two more steps, then sits on the sofa smiling.

TOM
(continuing)
Now I'm done--what was all that?

ALICE
That, sweet baby, is how we eat
on our way to California. We're
going to Monterey.

TOM
Laugh, laugh.

23 CONTINUED: (3)

ALICE
I'm serious.

TOM
You're not.

ALICE
Am I smiling?

TOM
(embarrassed for her)
Oh, mom.
(He tries to think what to say)
You can't sing.

ALICE
Thanks pal, I needed that.

TOM
I mean ... you can't get a job
singing, can you?

ALICE
I did before.

TOM
Yeah, but when?

ALICE
Shut up.
(pause, enthusiastic)
Come on, name a song, I'll show
you. I'm not bad... I'm fairly
good. Decent, anyway. Come on,
name a song.

TOM
"Everybody's Got Something to Hide
Except Me and My Monkey?"

ALICE
(impatient)
Damn it, Tommy! Name something
I know.

TOM
"The Old Rugged Cross?"
She gives him a look; he relents.

TOM
O.K. How about that James Taylor thing?
You know that.

23 CONTINUED (4)

Alice turns back to the piano, says some of the words of "Fire and Rain" rapidly under her breath to make sure she knows them. Then she starts the song, doing it gently, again with attention to the lyrics. Tom is a little impressed, but tries to hide it when she's finished.

TOM
I've heard worse.

ALICE
Who, Jane Froman?

TOM
(laughs)

Yeah, and Lu Ann Simms.

(pause)

No, it wasn't bad. Can you feed us with it?

ALICE
(suddenly happy, she bangs the flat of her hand on the keys)
Hell, yes I can! Your mother's gonna be a chanteuse!

TOM
(caught up too)
We is goin' to California!

CUT TO:

24 EXT. ALICE'S BACKYARD - DAY

Alice is having a garage sale. Scattered over the garage and lawn are small pieces of furniture and clothing; several Women and a single Man are looking through them, and in the background Bea is supervising. It's clear that the sale has been going on all day, and Alice, exhausted, is sitting on a piece of lawn furniture, sipping lemonade with Tom.

ALICE
I wish your grandma and grandpa were still alive. You realize they only saw you once, that summer when you were a baby.
(To herself)
Was that '63 or '64?

TOM
I can remember a few things about their house.

24 CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE

Tommy, you can't. You couldn't have been more than two.

TOM

I do, though. I remember...

ALICE

...what I told you, that's what you remember.

TOM

No, really. I can see the windows-- they were real big and set low in the walls. And I remember you lifting me up to look at a bird's nest in a lilac bush.

ALICE

You're making that up--I don't even remember that.

TOM

It's true.

(Pause; pleased)

Hey, I'm gonna' turn twelve in Monterey.

ALICE

You'll love it there Tommy.

TOM

Well, it's gotta' have Ponca City beat.

ALICE

(soft)

You'll just love it.

CUT TO:

24A SAME SCENE - LATE AFTERNOON

Tommy has gone inside, and only one or two customers remain. One frail ELDERLY WOMAN, dressed in a light coat in spite of the heat, is lost in thought over one of Alice's dresses. As she holds up the dress we see that one of her hands is terribly twisted with arthritis.

OLD WOMAN

You asking \$12.50 for this dress?

ALICE

(pleasant)

Uh-huh.

OLD WOMAN

I don't know. That's awful high,

24A CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE
(still pleasant)
The dress is brand new -- the tags
are still on it.

OLD WOMAN
I don't know ...

ALICE
(not so pleasant)
Neither do I.
(in a low voice to
Bea)
I'm going to commit murder before
this day's out, I swear to God.

By now all the people have left except the Old Woman.
She looks at the dress a bit longer, fingers it long-
ingly, walks slowly out of the garage. Alice and Bea
have been watching her. After the Woman has been
gone a few seconds, Alice leaps up and grabs the dress
off the rack.

ALICE
(as she grabs the dress)
Oh, hell! What's the matter with
me anyway?

She runs out of the garage, tears in her eyes. As she
runs after the Woman:

ALICE
(continuing)
Lady? Lady?

The Woman stops, turns toward Alice.

ALICE
(continuing)
I'd like you to have this --
as a gift.

OLD WOMAN
Oh, my, no... I couldn't...

ALICE
Please. As a favor. Please.

OLD WOMAN
(taking it)
Well, I surely do thank you.

24A CONTINUED: (3)

ALICE

(in a rush)

I'm not always so hateful, I've
been nervous lately, my...

(pause)

I hope you enjoy the dress.

OLD WOMAN

(as she starts to
walk away)

I surely will, you can bank on
that. Thank you.

Alice stands watching her walk away. When she is about
thirty feet away, the Old Woman turns around and calls:

OLD WOMAN

You sure do have sweet taste in
clothes, honey.

Alice smiles and waves, but the smile is a tremulous one,
and as soon as the Woman is on her way again, Alice
covers her face with one hand and weeps bitterly. Tom
suddenly appears.

TOM

What's wrong with you?

ALICE

I don't know.

TOM

You don't know? What kind of an
answer is that? What happened?

ALICE

(still crying)

Nothing. Oh, I don't know.

I was rotten to an old woman with a
crippled hand, we didn't make very much
money today, and I'm just worried.

There is a long pause while Tom stares at her. Her weeping
subsides, she shakes her head and sighs.

FADE OUT

25

EXT. ALICE'S DRIVEWAY - MORNING

The stationwagon is loaded with suitcases, blankets,
pillows, a picnic hamper, etc. Alice and Tom put the
last bundle in place. Then:

25 CONTINUED: (2)

TOM
That's it.

ALICE
Let's check one last time.

CUT TO:

26 INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - DAY

They walk slowly into the house and through each of the rooms. Alice looks in the kitchen cabinets, Tom checks a hall closet. Basically, they are saying goodbye to the house. They circle back to the front door and lock it behind them.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. ALICE'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

Tommy gets into the car. Alice's face is sad for a moment, then she slowly, solemnly thumbs her nose at the front door, and turns to Bea, whose face is also sad:

BEA
..Christ, I wish you weren't going.

ALICE
(light)
Come with us -- there's room.

BEA
(same)
Maybe I will. Just leave Ken and the kids flat.
(pause)
I almost wish I could.

ALICE
(starting to get into the car)
I'll write you.

BEA
(her eyes beginning to tear)
No, you won't, people never do. They say they will, but they never do.
(a beat)
I'll miss you, Allie.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE
(from the driver's seat)
Don't cry or I'll cry.

BEA
(weeping slightly)
Who'll make me laugh now?

ALICE
(on the verge of tears)
Damn it, Bea, don't.

Bea leans through the car window, kisses Alice, waves to Tom, and the car pulls away as all three call "Good-bye" repeatedly. The car moves down the block, turns a corner, and is gone.

CUT TO:

28 INT. THE CAR

Tom is turned around, peering through the back window for one last glimpse of the house. He flops back into a normal riding position, waits three beats, and asks:

TOM
Are we almost there?

Alice pinches his leg lightly.

FADE OUT.

29 - 31 EXT. HIGHWAY - VARIOUS TIMES OF DAY

Aerial shots -- including hi-angle-overhead shots of Alice's car from several vantage points: on highways, flatlands, at a toll-booth station. WE HEAR Elton John's "Tiny Dancer" on the car radio and Alice and Tom singing along.

32 EXT. DRIVE-IN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

From a VANTAGE POINT several cars away, we SEE Alice and Tom eating hamburgers, drinking cokes in the stationwagon. None of their words are heard, but they are laughing so violently that Tom eventually spits coke, which only makes them laugh harder.

33 EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

There is a LONG SHOT showing the station wagon moving along the highway. The countryside is flat, barren, pocked with occasional dilapidated gasoline stations and drive-ins. Alice sings softly, "I've Got A Crush On You".

CUT TO:

34 INT. ALICE'S CAR - SLIGHTLY LATER THE SAME MORNING

The radio is not playing, the two are silent. Suddenly a large sign looms to the right of the highway, with the legend, "You are now leaving Oklahoma, the Friendly State. Hurry Back." As the two catch sight of the sign:

TOM
(softly)

Boooo.

ALICE
Don't look back, honey, you'll
turn into a pillar of shit.

TOM
That whole state is shit.

ALICE
Don't talk dirty.

CUT TO:

35 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The stationwagon moves past a huge sign saying "Highway 66" and disappears around a curve.

CUT TO:

36 INT. ALICE'S CAR - EVENING

The CAMERA is inside the station-wagon as it moves along. A sign flashes by, reading "Albuquerque, 27 miles". Alice and Tom are dishevelled, hot, and fatigued.

TOM
(bored)
Are we in California yet?

ALICE
(not really mad)
Ask me that again and I'll beat
you to death.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED. (2)

TOM
(whining)
Mom, I'm bored.

ALICE
So am I. What do you want from
me, card tricks?

Tom groans, flings himself against the side of the car,
his face pressed against the glass. Alice sees that
he is truly tired.

ALICE
Tell you what, we'll be in Albu-
querque in half an hour.
(facetiously)
Let's get gussied up and have a
swanky dinner.

TOM:
What?

ALICE
I said fix up, because we're going
"goin' out amongst 'em."

TOM:
What??

ALICE
Who the hell are you, Helen Keller?
I said try to look handsome tonight.

TOM
(sullen)
I don't want to.

ALICE (an alternative)
Next time we hit an empty stretch of
road, I'll let you take the wheel,
okay?

TOM
(same)
I don't care.

ALICE
(over the shoulder)
I ask you...isn't he fun to be around?

CUT TO:

37 EXT. MOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Alice and Tom are taking their bags into a neon-covered motel. Each of them has a white paper bag filled with food, french fries sticking out the tops.

CUT TO:

38

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The two are dressed in night clothes, ignoring the T.V.

TOM

Is this where you're going to look
for a job?

ALICE

Uh-huh.

(she glances at herself
in the mirror)

God, I've got to have my hair done
tomorrow and buy something sexy
to wear.

TOM

What if you can't?

ALICE

Find something sexy?

TOM

Get a job, dummy.

ALICE

Don't be rude to your mother; she
just bought you a cheeseburger.
(pause; determined)
I'll get a job. I'll get a job.

TOM

(after a pause)
Did you love Dad?

ALICE

(surprised)

What! What a question! I don't know.

TOM

But did you really?

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE

Yes, I did really. Why're you asking?

TOM

Well ... um you don't seem unhappy.

ALICE

What're you talking about? I'm unhappy, I'm unhappy..

TOM

Well, I thought maybe ... because you used to fight with him so much.

ALICE

Sure I fought with him. He was a pain in the ass sometimes. Hey, what's going on with you?

TOM:

No, Mom, I want to know. Why did you marry him?

(Alice is silent; then, insisting)
Mom!

ALICE

Boy, are you nosey. Why do you run off at the mouth. Go to bed.

TOM

(serious)

Tell me!

ALICE

(same, after a pause)

He was a great kisser.

TOM (incredulous)

A great kisser! You mean that's why you married him? How great can you kiss?

* ALICE

Ask me again in a couple of years.

Tom gets into the only bed, a king-sized one, and turns on his side, pondering the notion

INT. THE MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Alice is dressed to go out; Tom is still asleep, but wakes up as Alice moves around the room, finding her gloves, putting on her shoes, touching her hair, etc.

TOM

(sleepy)

Where you going?

ALICE

(abstracted)

I told you, I'm getting new clothes
and new hair. I'll be beautiful
when I get back.

TOM

How'll I know you?

ALICE

(absently)

I'll stencil "Mother" on my forehead.
Or something.

TOM

(after a pause)

What am I supposed to do all
morning?

ALICE

Make a friend.

TOM

In a motel?

ALICE

There's a whole world out there--go out
and explore! Go talk to a tree, I don't
know.

TOM

Wonderful. Suppose my heart'll stand up
under the thrill of it all?

ALICE

Fling yourself at it and find out.

Tom rolls onto his stomach, burying his head in the
pillows. Alice picks up her purse, ready to leave.

ALICE

(continuing)

I'll be back by one at the latest.

Tom: doesn't answer.

39 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE
(continuing)
Hey, I'm leaving.

Still no answer.

ALICE
(continuing; walking
toward bed, baby-voice)
Aw, is it mad? Is "duh-widdle baby mad?

She tickles his ribs; he squirms, but keeps his face hidden.

ALICE
(continuing)
Does it want a bottle while
mommy's gone?

She gives him a playful smack on the rear, picks up her purse from where it has fallen on the bed.

ALICE
(continuing; as she walks toward the door)
And keep your hands above the covers
while I'm gone or you'll go blind.

As she reaches the door Tom spins around and sits up in bed.

TOM
(loud)
Bring me a present!

ALICE
What kind?

TOM
A pony!

Alice gives him a look, then shuts the door behind her.

FADE OUT.

40 SAME SCENE - AFTERNOON

Tom is looking at a magazine. OVER HIS SHOULDER we SEE that he is staring intently at the picture of a woman who looks rather like Alice. A KNOCK is HEARD.

Who is it? TOM

ALICE'S VOICE
Diana Ross: Are you ready to
see a great beauty?

Alice unlocks the door and enters the room. There is quite a difference in her appearance. Her hair is simply but attractively cut and styled, and she is wearing a beige suit and a loose silk blouse.

ALICE
Am I breath-taking or am I breath-taking?

TOM
You look good, but is it sexy?

ALICE
(looking at herself in the mirror)
For Albuquerque, it's sexy. Besides, I'm not applying at the Boom-Boom Room.
(changing the subject)
When I was in the fitting room buying this---

TOM
(abruptly)
How do you know you can find a job?

ALICE
I'll find one. Anyway, when I was buying the dress...

TOM
And what about when school starts in September?

ALICE
Don't worry about the mule going blind.

TOM
(whining)
Yeah, but what if...

40 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE

(suddenly angry; loud)

What in the hell's the matter with you? What is it you want? I've just spent too much money on a damn dress, I'm trying to look twenty-eight so somebody'll hire me, and you sit there whining like an idiot.

(pause)

I'll get a job, I'll get you to Monterey by your birthday, and I'll get you in school by September. I give you my word. You want me to swear it? You want me to slit open a vein and sign it in blood?

No response from Tom.

ALICE

(continuing)

Do you?

Alice closes her eyes, puts a hand on her stomach, and breathes deeply several times. She walks across the room to Tom, stands behind the chair he's sitting in, and cups his face in her hand.

ALICE

(continuing; soft)

I know you're upset, dragged away from home and everything, but Tommy, when we get to Monterey things'll be different, I promise you.

TOM

(subdued)

How do you know?

ALICE

(she strokes his hair)

Come on, honey, act like you've got good sense, huh? Give me a little time to make some money and things'll be okay.

(pause)

Okay?

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED (3)

TOM
(quiet)

Okay.

Alice kisses the top of his head, then starts to gather her purse, gloves, etc. As she walks toward the door:

ALICE
I'll be back by five or six, sweetheart.

TOM
Okay.

ALICE
Wish me luck.

TOM
I do. Good luck, Mom.

Alice exits. The CAMERA STAYS in the room with Tom. He picks up the magazine he was looking at previously, and thumbs through it. He finds a picture of a model, and places one hand over the bottom of her face, the other over her forehead, leaving only the woman's eyes exposed. He continues staring at the picture, and we

FADE OUT

41 EXT. DOWNTOWN ALBUQUERQUE STREET - DAY

Alice is walking in the broiling sun, her eyes squinting, looking at the various nightclubs, trying to guess what's inside by what's outside.

ALICE
(making a face as
she passes a club)
The Chez Rendezvous? In Albuquerque?

She walks on, passing one or two other clubs, then stops in front of one bearing the sign "Joe and Jim's." The exterior of this club is not really different from the others she's passed, but she touches her hair, straightens her shoulders, and enters.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - DAY

The bar is dark, and Alice stands blinded for a few moments. As her eyes focus, she sees a BARTENDER cleaning behind the bar, a Man delivering beer, and a very Old Man sweeping the floor. The club has the dead, dirty look of most bars seen in the daytime. Alice walks to the bar.

ALICE
(to the Bartender)
Uh... is Joe or Jim here?

BARTENDER
What?

ALICE
I said, "Is Joe or Jim he..."

BARTENDER
I heard what you said, I just didn't believe it.

ALICE
(puzzled)
What do you mean?

BARTENDER
They ain't no Joe or Jim.

ALICE
What?

BARTENDER
They ain't no Joe...

ALICE
I heard what you said, I just didn't believe it.

The Bartender looks at her for two beats.

ALICE
(continuing)
Could I speak to the manager...
someone? I'd like to ask about
a job.

BARTENDER
We got all the waitresses we need.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE
 (definite)
 I don't want a job as a waitress.
 I'm...
 (it's hard for
 her to say)
 ... a singer.

BARTENDER
 (looks at her with
 genuine curiosity)
 A singer, huh?

ALICE
 Yes. Is the owner or manager
 around?

BARTENDER
 He's in the hospital havin' part
 of a lung removed, but I can tell
 ya he won't want no singer.

ALICE
 (after a long pause)
 Okay. Thanks.

All three of the Men in the bar have listened intently to her conversation. As she walks toward the door, the Elderly Sweeper makes three or four wet, exaggerated kissing noises with his mouth. Both the Bartender and the Delivery Man laugh raucously., and Alice responds to them with a zinger.

CUT TO:

43 EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF "JOE AND JIM'S"

Alice, perspiring from embarrassment, stands still on the glaring sidewalk.

ALICE
 (whispering to herself)
 Bastards. Oh, the bastards!

CUT TO:

44 INT. A BAR - DAY - THE HURRICANE

Alice is standing talking to a well-dressed, forty-ish MAN.

MAN
 Whatever it is, no.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED (2) ALICE
I'm a singer.

MAN
Singers don't sell drinks. I had
one two years ago -- cost me nothing
but money. Sorry.

CUT TO:

45 INT. ANOTHER BAR - AFTERNOON

There are a few early Drinkers at the bar; Alice sits
at a booth with an over-dressed MAN in his early fifties.
The Man is portly, with a ring on each hand; he is bald,
but has parted his hair low on one side, combing it
over the top of his head in a horribly futile effort to
hide his scalp.

MAN
(oily)
So maybe we got a deal.

ALICE
(effusive)
Oh, I hope so! I really need a
job and I promise I'm steady,
and...

MAN
Don't worry, don't worry. This
is a friendly place. We're all
friendly here.

With this "friendly" comment, he takes her arm and leads her over
to a booth in which the bar owner is sitting.

MAN
Uh..Chicken, I'd like you to meet Alice..
umm..Alice...

ALICE
Alice, Alice Hyatt.

CHICKEN
Mighty nice meetin' you, Miss---

ALICE
(over-anxious)
Hyatt.

CHICKEN
Chicken Holliman. Would you be kind enough
to turn around for me.

45 (CONTINUED) (2)

Alice's back is to the camera. She turns halfway, and as she faces the camera, she stops, quickly sizing up the situation.

ALICE
Turn around for you?
 (beat)
 Don't you mean lay down for you?

CHICKEN
 (startled by her bluntness)
 What? Why, no...

ALICE
 Isn't that what you mean? That you'll
 give me a job if I lay down for you?

CHICKEN
 (to the man)
 Lenny, for Chrissakes, didn't you--

ALICE
 Listen, just tell me so I'll know how to
 act now. Is that part of the bargain?
 Cause if it is, it's no sale.

CHICKEN
 (getting angry)
 Now, listen here, Miss---

ALICE (furious)
Hyatt.

She storms out the door, leaving the angry Chicken and Lenny
 arguing in the background.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF THE SAME BAR - AFTERNOON

Alice walks through the door fighting back tears. She
 moves down the street a few steps, but then leans one
 hand on the side of a building and sobs twice.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

47 INT. A SMALL BAR - EVENING

Alice, her face composed and re-madeup, enters. The
 bar is lighted primarily by candles in red glasses,
 and it has regulation Naugahyde booths. There are
 scattered Couples and an occasional stray Drinker
 seated throughout the bar. Alice moves toward a WAITRESS.

ALICE
Is the manager here?

WAITRESS
There's no manager, just the owner--
Mr. Jacobs.

She gestures toward a short, squat man in his fifties with salt-and-pepper hair, BOB JACOBS. He is dressed in an outlandish cowboy outfit (a la Nudies of Hollywood). Alice walks over to him.

JACOBS
Something I can do for you?

ALICE
Yes, I...

Alice is worn out, Mr. Jacobs' face is friendly, and she's feeling very sorry for herself. Her throat closes, a prelude to more weeping.

JACOBS
(takes her arm, leads
her toward an empty
section of the bar)
Whoops, whoops now. What's the
matter?
(to the Bartender)
Morrey, bring us two scotch rocks.
(to Alice)
You wanna ruin my afternoon trade?

Alice shakes her head; the drinks arrive.

JACOBS
(continuing)
Well, you act like it. Here, swig
on this and troubles vanish.

He takes a long pull from his drink and Alice sips from hers.

JACOBS
(continuing)
See, what did I tell you? Now
you got money in the bank and a
faithful husband.

A pause. Alice smiles slightly.

JACOBS
(continuing)
So. You came toward me with a
question mark on your face...

ALICE
(as she realizes he's
asked her a question)
Oh. I'm a singer; I'm looking
for a job.

JACOBS
Sorry, I got no money to pay a
singer.

ALICE
(soft -- to the air)
Oh, hell.. Hell, hell, hell, hell,
hell.

JACOBS
If I could do it, I'd give you a
job.

ALICE
(as before)
... hell, hell, hell, hell.

JACOBS
I don't even have a piano in here.

ALICE
... hell, hell, hell.

JACOBS
(a long pause)
You had any experience?

ALICE
Yes...no...yes, before I was married.

JACOBS
(another pause)
You any good?

ALICE
(a ray of hope)
Yes. Yes, I am.

JACOBS
I don't even have a piano in here.

ALICE
(sensing that he's
weakening)
I could split the tips with the
house -- right down the middle.
(pause)

(CONTINUED)

ALICE (continued)

A good singer always makes drinks go faster, you know that, and I do a lot of up-tempo stuff to keep their elbows moving.

JACOBS

(softly)

I don't even have a piano in here.

ALICE

I'll pay for piano rental for the first month. If it works out, if business is better, you take over from there.

JACOBS

Maybe you could come back tomorrow -- let me have the night to think on it.

ALICE

(looking around as if she expected a piano to magically appear)

No, please. You'll say no tomorrow. If I could only sing someplace for you.

JACOBS

Oh, hell. I guess it doesn't hurt to listen. There's a piano bar down the street, come on!

(to the Bartender)

Back in twenty minutes, Morrey, don't burn it down.

CUT TO:

48. INT. THE PIANO BAR - EVENING

Alice and Jacobs enter. He whispers briefly to her, then walks across the room to talk to a Man. The Man turns to stare at Alice, then shrugs "why not?" to Jacobs, who beckons to Alice. She joins the two Men.

JACOBS

Lou says go ahead, but just don't drive anybody away.

ALICE

Okay. Is there any particular song you like? Something special?

JACOBS

Nope.

(he gestures toward the piano)

Have at it.

Alice turns and walks toward the piano, which is elevated in the middle of the oval bar on an eighteen inch platform. As she walks, the CAMERA IS CLOSE on her face, and gives an almost inaudible groan of fear. She reaches the piano, arranges herself on the bench, glances around: no one except Jacobs is paying her the slightest attention--not the few patrons, not the man who's sweeping up in the back. Alice starts:

ALICE

(singing, to a slow piano)

It seems we've stood and talked like
this before.

We looked at each other in the same
way then,

But I can't remember where or when.

The clothes you're wearing are the
clothes you wore,

The smile you are smiling you were
smiling then,

But I can't remember where or when.

While she has sung this much of the song, Alice's eyes have been busy sizing up the audience. They are more or less what one would expect to find in a piano bar in Albuquerque. They range in age from thirties to sixties, with a predominance of Couples or Foursomes in their middle-to-late forties. After a few cursory glances, they have more or less ignored her. Realizing that she has to do something to get their attention, she holds the last note that she's sung, "when", for several beats, then, changing into a lower key, she slides into "When Your Lover Has Gone", but she gives it a faster-than-usual, Latin backing. She is now singing slightly louder and faster, with her piano asking for attention.

ALICE

When you're alone, who cares for
star-lit skies.

When you're alone, the magic moonlight dies.
At break of dawn, there is no sunrise,

When your lover has gone.

Two or three heads have turned to watch Alice; she realizes it, gains a bit of confidence.

ALICE

(continuing; stronger)

What lonely hours the evening shadows
bring,

What lonely hours, with memories
lingering,

Like faded flowers, life can't mean
anything,

When your lover has gone.

The bar is still fairly NOISY, but a few People have stopped their conversations to listen, and one Man, whose back had been turned to Alice, is turned around in his seat, sitting in an uncomfortable position so he can watch her. Alice repeats the kind of transition she used between the first and second songs: she holds the last word, "gone", for several beats, then, changing keys upward, she glides into "Gone With The Wind", again using the rather loud, Latin-style backing.

ALICE

(continuing)

Gone with the wind, gone like a
leaf that has blown away,

Gone with the wind, my romance has
flown away,

Yesterday's kisses are still on
my lips,

I had a lifetime of blisses at my
fingertips.

Now I'm alone. Gone is the gladness
that filled my heart,

Now I'm alone. Gone is the rapture
that thrilled my heart.

Just like a flame, love burned
brightly, then became

An empty smoke ring that is gone
with the wind.

The whole number has taken no longer than a single song sung all the way through; Alice puts a big finish on it, and some of the Drinkers respond with applause. It's a long way from a standing ovation, but it's at least respectable. Alice smiles at the most enthusiastic (the Man who turned in his seat) and walks to Jacobs.

(CONTINUED)

JACOBS
You'll go for the piano the first month?

ALICE
(enthusiastic)
Yes, yes!

JACOBS
I couldn't pay more than eighty a week.

ALICE
(disappointed)
Eighty.

JACOBS
Well, you should make at least ten a night in tips if you prime the plate, and your half of that adds up to an extra thirty a week.

ALICE
(still disappointed)
Okay. That's all right.

Jacobs waves toward Lou, and he and Alice walk toward the door, stopping just before they exit.

JACOBS
I could maybe make it eighty-five.

ALICE
(takes his hand)
What a nice man you are, Mr. Jacobs.

JACOBS
And what's your name, woman that I'm paying eight-five dollars a week to?

ALICE
Alice. Alice Hyatt.

JACOBS
(opens the door for her,
gestures her through)
Miss Hyatt.

They exit.

CUT TO:

49 INT. ALICE & TOM'S MOTEL ROOM

They are eating sandwiches, drinking milkshakes, and are dressed in pajamas and robes. Both are excited.

TOM

... and then what?

ALICE

(waving a french fry
for emphasis)

Well, hell, there I was sitting up there, nervous as a whore in church-- I could barely keep my hands on the keys.

TOM

And?

ALICE

And he hired me! Hired me! I'm a singer! Sweetheart, your momma's a singer!

TOM

Are we rich?

ALICE

Not yet, but we will be.
(pause)

And the woman said we could get a monthly rate on a room with a kitchenette. It's dirt cheap, and we can save like hell.

TOM

But what am I supposed to do all the time?

ALICE (sarcastic)

Visit a pueblo; play with the Indian kids.

TOM

It's too hot outside.

ALICE

(heavy sarcasm)

Well goodness, take a fan with you, for Christ's sake.

CUT TO:

50 OMIT

51 SAME SCENE - LATER IN THE EVENING

Tom is propped up on the motel sofa; the "Tonight Show" is on the television, but Tom's asleep. Alice, dressed only in a gown, is sitting on the toilet (lid down), shaving her legs. She doesn't realize that Tom is asleep.

ALICE

(voice raised a bit
so Tom can hear)

You know, just once I wish they'd
show a woman shaving her legs like
they really do it.

(a bit louder)

You know what I mean? On television
they always have on a three-hundred
dollar negligee and high-heels.

(she laughs)

Imagine shaving your legs in high-
heels.

There's no response from Tommy, and Alice--curious at
his silence--walks into the other room and sees him
asleep. With the back of her hand, she brushes the
hair off his forehead.

ALICE

(soft)

Poor baby. I'll get you to
Monterey, I promise.

THE CAMERA HOLDS on Alice's face.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

52 INT. THE NEW MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

This is similar to their previous room, but it has a
small kitchenette. It is cheap, cheap. Tom is sitting
alone on the sofa, his feet on the coffee table. He
is alone at the motel and is watching Betty Grable on
television -- singing in the old film CONEY ISLAND.
The song is "Cuddle Up a Little Closer."

DISSOLVE TO:

53 INT. JACOBS BAR - NIGHT

Alice, wearing a surprisingly low-cut dress she's obviously
bought to perform in, finishes singing "I've Got a Crush
On You." Her tip dish is pretty full, and quite a few of
the customers applaud sincerely. Smiling back at them,
she lifts her glass in answer, and sips from it. It is
time for her break, and she takes her drink and starts
walking toward a small table in a back corner of the bar.
A man joins her in transit; he is twenty-seven, slender,
with dark brown eyes and hair. He is extremely attractive,
and knows the effect he has on women. This is BEN EBERHARDT.

(CONTINUED)

BEN
I like your singing.

ALICE
(continuing walking; coolly)
Thank you.

She sits down and lights a cigarette; Ben remains standing.

BEN
Well?

ALICE
(puzzled)
Well?

BEN
Well, aren't you going
to ask me to sit down?

ALICE
No.

BEN
Why not?

ALICE
Because I prefer to sit alone.

BEN
Oh, come on.

ALICE
(snapping)
You're right, that's a lie. The real
reason you can't sit down is that I
don't want you to.

BEN
Why?

ALICE
(more irritated)
Oh, Christ. Because I'm in a rotten mood,
that's why.

BEN
(squatting down so their faces
are more or less level)
Why? Why are you in a rotten
mood?

ALICE
(argumentatively)
You really want to know?

BEN
Yes.

ALICE
(trying to turn him off)
Good enough: I've got a kid in a motel who's bored out of his skull, I don't make enough money in this place, I cut my finger on a tin can this morning and it hurts every time I play a chord, and if one more guy comes on to me--

BEN
Sorry about your finger.

Alice suddenly runs out of steam.

ALICE
Oh, hell, sit down.

He does. There is silence for a few minutes. Then:

BEN
My name's Ben Eberhardt.
(there's an awkward silence)

Sometimes I've thought I'd like to mimeograph a page that listed my age, where I went to school, my favorite color, my most embarrassing moment, and what I do for a living.

ALICE
(after a pause)
So. What do you do for a living?

BEN
(small laugh; then)
I fill bullet casings with powder.

ALICE
Oh.

BEN
Yeah, there's not a lot to say about it.
(beat)
I really like your singing.

ALICE
I really thank you.

(CONTINUED)

BEN
Let me drive you home.

ALICE
I have my own car.

BEN
Then you drive me home.

ALICE
(smiles but shakes her head)
No. Sorry, but no.

Both of them pick up their drinks, and Ben walks away. Though Ben is young, he is extremely attractive, and Alice watches him as he leaves her table.

CUT TO:

54 INT. ALICE & TOM'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Tom is lying on the bed, reading a book. Suddenly Alice unlocks the door, and dances in, humming an introduction to a vaudeville act.

ALICE
(trumpet flourish; all show biz)
Ta da!

TOM
(not too impressed)
Ta da?

But she's already disappeared. Then she returns, first sticking only her head in the doorway. Tom looks at her quizzically--as if she's slightly out of her mind--she re-enters, humming the same tune, this time with a guitar in her hand.

ALICE
Who was always jealous of Harold's guitar, and now who's got a better one?

Tom leaps from the bed and takes it from her.

TOM
I love it! Was it expensive?

ALICE
(entering)
Expensive enough. Do you remember the chords Harold taught you?

(CONTINUED)

Sure I do. TOM

He sits down immediately and starts to strum the guitar.
Alice touches his neck.

ALICE
(tender)
Do you like it?

TOM
I love it. Can we afford it? I
don't care--I love it anyway.

He stops playing and holds it out at arm's length, then
strokes it.

TOM
(continuing; southern
accent for no partic-
ular reason)
Ain't this fine?
(normal)
Andre Segovia, here I come!

CUT TO:

55 EXT. MOTEL

Alice pulls up in her car; immediately afterwards Ben
pulls up in his car, and gets out. He walks over to her
and they continue what is obviously a previous conversation.

Why? BEN

ALICE
Is that the only word your mind
can understand?

BEN
(insistent)
Why?

ALICE
Because I don't date teen-agers,
that's why.

BEN
I'm twenty-nine.

55 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE
Liar.

BEN
Well, I'm twenty-seven.

ALICE
Maybe.

BEN
I am!

ALICE
When?

BEN
(abashed)
Last month.

ALICE
I'm thirty-five; does that register
with you at all? That's three dash
five. I was in the first grade
when your mother was pregnant with you.

(pause)

I graduated from high-school when you
ate popsicles.

(pause)

I don't date teenagers.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. ALICE'S MOTEL - DIFFERENT ANGLE - NIGHT

Tom, barefoot and dressed in his pajamas, is at the window
staring at Alice and Ben as they talk -- looking at them
between the slats of the venetian blinds.

DISSOLVE TO:

56A INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - EVENING - THE NEXT NIGHT

Alice is scurrying around, late for work. She throws
a blouse on, buttons it wrong, clicks her tongue, re-
buttons it, etc.

TOM
(huge sigh of
boredom)

56A CONTINUED (2)

ALICE

Wish us up some money and we will.

TOM

Well, I wish we could.

ALICE

(abstracted; she is
putting on lipstick)

Oh, wish in one hand and shit in
the other--see which gets full first.

Tom gives her the raspberry.

ALICE

(continuing; over her shoulder)
Why don't I just run off and leave him
here. I need him, right?

(a change of tone as she notices some-
thing in the mirror)
Oh, God, I've got a bump.

TOM

The heartbreak of psoriasis?

ALICE

No, just a bump.

TOM

Acne at thirty-two. Tsk, tsk.

Alice puts on her beige suit-jacket. Sarcastic:

ALICE

Goodbye, sweetheart. You're so
pleasant to be around I think I'll
ask to get off early tonight.

TOM

(same as Alice)

Goody.

Alice walks to him, kisses the top of his head. There
is real affection in her voice.

ALICE

'Bye, honey.

TOM

(no longer sarcastic)

Bye.

Alice exits. Tom walks aimlessly around the room for a
little while, flicking the light switch on and off,
turning on the television. He walks into the bathroom,
stares at himself in the mirror, then makes a terrible face.

57 FADE IN: INT. COFFEE SHOP, LATE NIGHT

Alice and Ben are toying with coffee; Alice is fighting her attraction to him.

BEN

Why is it you never look at me?

ALICE

(not looking at him)

I look at you.

(looking at him)

I look at you.

BEN

(pause; then a slow grin)

Is it yes or no?

ALICE

(reacts; level)

No.

(A beat; uncertain)

Stop grinning at me.

BEN

(all charm)

No?

ALICE

(pausing; less definite)

No.

(dry)

The single one thing I don't need in the whole world right now is to get messed up with a 27-year-old. I just don't need it: period.

BEN

(a beat; even more charming)
You sure?

Alice looks at him. He is charming, he is sexy. She gives in, capitulating on a purely sexual level.

ALICE

(long pause; wry smile)
No, I'm not sure.

CUT TO:

58 INT. YET ANOTHER MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Perspiring heavily, Ben and Alice lie quiet in bed. Alice has her arms stretched above her head, Ben is lying on top of her, his arms exactly over hers.

FADE OUT.

59 FADE IN:

INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Alice is dressed in a robe, Tomy is in day clothes. He has just taken a coke from the tiny refrigerator in the tiny kitchen.

TOM

You going out again tonight after work?

ALICE

(trying to be casual)
I don't know. Why?

TOM

Oh, I don't know, I was just wondering when you were going to introduce me to that guy you're running around with.

ALICE

His name's Ben. Sure I'll introduce you.

TOM

Should I call him Uncle Ben? Isn't that what men like that are called?

ALICE

(warning)
Just don't start on me today. I don't feel like it.

TOM

I can imagine. You should see those things under your eyes.

ALICE

Tom....

TOM

(all innocence)
Well, I mean, you've been late coming home for almost a week now, so I figure he's going to be around for awhile, and I have to call him something.

59 CONTINUED (2)

Suddenly there is a

KNOCK on the door. Alice answers it, opens the door to an incredibly slight woman in a maternity dress. The woman, RITA EBERHART, is twenty-three, but she could easily pass for seventeen, or fourteen if her clothes were different. She is five months pregnant, so her stomach is only gently rounded, and the maternity dress hangs slack on her, giving the ludicrous impression of a child dressing up in her mother's clothes. Her voice is as small as she -- a mere whisper.

ALICE

Yes?

RITA

(so soft)

Uh, are you Mizz Hyatt?

ALICE

Yes.

The girl doesn't go on; she simply stands there.

ALICE

(continuing; prompting)

Yes, I'm Mrs. Hyatt.

RITA

(glancing around
nervously)

Uh, could I come in and talk to you
for a minute?

ALICE

Well, I don't... what was it you
wanted?

RITA

(a whisper)

I'm uh... my name's Rita Eberhart.

Alice stands shocked for a moment, then:

ALICE

Come in.

Alice leads the girl to a chair, then looks carefully at her. Rita has obviously tried to make herself presentable, but has failed miserably: her lipstick has smeared onto her front teeth, and her hair is thin, so that one ear sticks out through it, in spite of her habitual gesture of fluffing the hair to cover it. Tom stares at her in real amazement.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED (3)

ALICE
(continuing; to Tom)
Go outside.

Tom doesn't move.

ALICE
(continuing)
I said, go outside.

Tom instead walks quickly into the bathroom, where he locks the door. Alice, not wanting to argue with him in front of Rita, gives up and turns to her.

ALICE
(continuing)
So he's married. I didn't know.
(a beat; sincere)
I really didn't know.

RITA
(still soft)
Oh, I can believe that, all right.
For all I've seen of him in the
last two years I almost don't know
it myself.

ALICE
Your name's Rita?

RITA
Uh, yes. I wouldn't of come here
like this, only Ben's been missin'
work off and on the last week or so.
-- ever since he met you, and...

(a note of desperation comes into her voice)
... lady, we've just gotta have his
salary regular. Uh, George --
that's my little boy -- he's got
this ear trouble. It just, uh,
drains and drains. It don't seem
like anything will stop it. The
medicine costs a terrible price,
and...

She starts to cry. Actually it's more a mewing sound than anything else. She fishes in her pocketbook and drags out a used, crumpled Kleenex.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

(over her shoulder)

Isn't this charming? Don't I do
wonderful things?

(to Rita)

How did you know my name?

RITA

(recovering a bit)

Uh, I left George with my girl
friend Nancy and followed Ben night
before last. I saw him and you
come out of Jacobs' place. Then,
uh, yesterday I asked around about
you.

Tom has unlocked the bathroom door, opened it, and is
listening intently. Alice sees him and snaps her fingers
at him, but he only closes the door a fraction of an inch.
Alice turns back to Rita, straightens her back, and:

ALICE

You don't have to worry, Mrs.
Eberhart. I won't ever see him
again. I'll tell him tonight that
I've talked to you and...

RITA

(really loud; her
eyes wide)

Oh, no! Tell him what? You can't,
I mean, please don't say I've been
here, please.

(soft again)

Uh, I mean, he'd be furious. You
don't know.

Tom has edged out of the bathroom and is leaning on the
doorjamb. Suddenly there is a VIOLENT KNOCKING on the
door. Ben's VOICE is HEARD. All three stiffen immediate-
ly, looking from one to the other.

BEN'S VOICE

Rita? Rita, you in there? You
bitch, I know you're in there, so
you might as well answer me!

(pause)

Alice? Is she there? Open this
door!

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED (5)

Suddenly he SCREAMS, punctuating it with three violent, flat-footed KICKS on the door.

BEN'S VOICE

(continuing)

I said open the God Damned Door!!

Alice walks to the door, opens it to REVEAL quite a different Ben from the one we've seen before. His face is contorted with anger, taking away almost all the attractiveness it had held. His eyes are narrow, his mouth is pinched. He walks just inside the door, looks at Rita who is huddled against the back of her chair. He snaps his fingers and points out the door.

BEN

(furious)

All right, bitch, out!

RITA

(a whisper)

Ben, I had to.

BEN

(through lips that barely move; still pointing out the door)

I said out!

Alice has been shocked into motionlessness and silence by his actions, but now she recovers.

ALICE

Okay, Ben, go away. I'll send your wife home in a few minutes, but just go away. I don't want any trouble.

BEN

(even more vicious than before)

Screw you!

His next words are addressed to Rita; as he says them, he takes out a knife, eases the blade out.

BEN

(continuing)

If you don't drag your ass out that door I'll cut it off, you hear me? Move!

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED (6)

Rita, terrified, gets out of her chair and edges toward the door. She wants to leave, but she is afraid to walk past him. She does, though, increasing her pace as she tries to sidle past him. He is too fast for her though, and gives her a horrible blow on the side of the head with the back of his clenched fist. Rita screams quietly, hopelessly, and runs out of sight. Ben slams the door and looks at Alice and Tom, who are both petrified. Alice, though, tries to pretend nonchalance.

ALICE

(surface-calm)

Ben, why are you acting like this?

He doesn't answer and she becomes a little bolder.

ALICE

(continuing)

Why don't you just go home now?
You go home and...

BEN

(loud)

Don't tell me what to do! Don't
tell me what to do!

As he says this his violence returns, and he knocks over a lamp with one blow of his fist, then slams the telephone off the table with his open hand. Then, more quietly:

BEN

(continuing; softer)

Don't tell me what to do, Alice.

Without looking at Tom, who is still cowering by the bathroom door, Ben walks over to Alice, grabbing the front of her robe with such force that the seams give audibly. Holding this handful of robe, he jerks her softly five times to punctuate his next sentence:

BEN

(continuing; still
soft)

Don't tell me what to do.

ALICE

(now truly frightened)

All right. I'm... sorry. All
right.

59 CONTINUED (7)

Ben lets go of her robe. His face begins to look normal for the first time in the scene. He leans against the sofa arm, wiping his forehead with the back of his hand.

BEN
(breathing heavily;
still dangerous)
Now. I tell you what. I'll be at
Jacobs' to pick you up when you get
off work, okay?

Alice doesn't answer immediately. He is more insistent:

BEN
(continuing)
Okay?

ALICE
(saying what he wants
to hear)
Yes. Yes, I'll be there.

Ben's face smooths out; he acts as if nothing much had happened.

BEN
Good. I'll see you around one-
thirty, then.

ALICE
(as before)
Fine. I'll be there.

Ben leaves. For an instant both Alice and Tom stare at the door as if they expected it to burst open again, then Alice lunges across the floor to lock it. She turns and stares at Tom; both of them are horrified.

CUT TO:

60 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Alice and Tom are frantically rummaging through drawers, closets, and flinging whatever they can find into suitcases that are open on the bed. Tom runs into the bathroom, comes out with an armload of toiletries that he slams into one of the suitcases. Alice says, "Oh, Lord! Get the money out of the book!" Tom does, gives it to her, and she stuffs it in her purse. Alice then fights with dresses hung in her closet, trying to get the coat-hangers untangled. Suddenly Alice freezes, her face

60 CONTINUED (2)

65.

ALICE
(a finger to her lips)
Sh-h-h!

Tom stops instantly, his face mirroring the look on hers. They stand motionless, listening intently for a full five seconds. There is no sound.

61 OMIT

OMIT

62 INT. ALICE'S CAR - NIGHT

Alice and Tom are riding in silence; the radio is not playing, and they do not look at each other. As they pick up the large interstate highway, enough cars are going by in both directions to make them feel safe. After two or three beats:

TOM
(subdued)
You pick great friends.

ALICE
(shaking her head)
Don't I? Don't I just?
(a pause)
He was really scary. I had no idea...

TOM
(bravado)
Oh, he wasn't all that scary.

ALICE
(slanting her eyes
at him)
Ho. You were ready to pee down
your leg any minute.

TOM
(smiles)
I was not.

ALICE
You were! You should have seen
yourself.
(she laughs)
I thought you were going to back
yourself right through that wall.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

(laughs too)

Well, if you'd seen the look on your face when he grabbed your robe you wouldn't feel so smart. Your eyes were the size of coffee cups.

ALICE

(laughs even louder)

I admit it! When he...

Her laughter is gushing up now, partially out of tension. Tom is infected by it, and joins her.

ALICE

(continuing)

Oh, did you see him when he hit that...

She is laughing too hard to finish the sentence, actually tearing from laughter, and Tom is roaring and stamping the floorboard with one foot.

ALICE

(continuing)

Oh, God! I think he hurt his hand. I hope to hell he broke it off at the wrist!

They continue to laugh.

ALICE

(continuing)

Well, you wanted to meet him.

Both she and Tommy laugh, and we

CUT TO:

63 EXT. RESTAURANT ON HIGHWAY - ANOTHER DAY

Alice and Tom emerge from the restaurant--a huge cow's head in the shape of a place to eat.

TOM

How much money did we save in Albuquerque?

ALICE

A whole ninety dollars. There just wasn't time enough to put much away, and I had to buy all those dresses.

63 CONTINUED (2)

TOM
(abrupt)
Did you sleep with him?

ALICE
(shocked; loud)
Tommy!

TOM
(avoiding her eyes)
Well, did you?

ALICE
(blustering)
Of course not! I barely knew him.

TOM
Then why'd you come home late
those four nights?

ALICE
(same as before)
We talked! We had coffee and we talked.
Wait a minute, I'm sure as hell not
going to discuss this with you, I can
tell you that.

They're about to get into the car.

TOM
I'd have hated to call him "Uncle
Ben."

ALICE
(relieved, but trying to cover it)
You're going to get your face smacked
off, that's what you're going to do.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The stationwagon zips by THE CAMERA, which TURNS UPWARD to
SHOW a huge sign reading "Tucson."

CUT TO:

64A INT. THE STATION-WAGON - DAY

Alice and Tom are laughing, having a great time playing
"two-thirds of a ghost."

CUT TO:

65 INT. THE STATIONWAGON - LATER

They are on the outskirts of Tucson -- bored and quiet.

TOM
So far I hate it.

ALICE
That's funny, it always speaks
well of you.

(as she looks at
various motels)
God, I wish I could find something
that looks cheap.. Why don't they
just put a sign out saying "Cheap
Motel" for people who are poor slobs
like us?

CUT TO:

66 INT. ANOTHER MOTEL - EARLY AFTERNOON

Room key in hand, Alice leads Tom through a door in a
seedy motel. The room itself is awful. The single bed
looks twenty years old. All the furniture is tired,
and there is a single closet with two coat hangers. Tom
and Alice look around.

TOM
(to imaginary visitors)
It's not fancy, but we like it.

ALICE
(same)
It's home to us.

DISSOLVE TO;

67 SAME SCENE - FEW MINUTES LATER

Alice, having combed her hair, comes out of the bathroom
as she finishes putting on her make-up.

ALICE
I'm off to get rich. See you later.

TOM
Thanks for the warning.

ALICE
(over her shoulder)
God, he's a card.

She stoops over, kisses the top of his head.

TOM

67 CONTINUED (2)

69.

Alice smiles and is out the door. As the door shuts, we hear her singing "Long Ago and Far Away."

CUT TO:

68 INT. COUNTRY-WESTERN BAR - TUCSON

A country-western three-piece band is rehearsing in an almost empty bar. Alice looks exhausted--as if she's already been in every place in town. As THE CAMERA picks her up, she's trying to talk to the owner of the bar over the considerable noise of the band rehearsing.

OWNER

What?? I can't hear you!

ALICE

(yelling)

A singer, I'm a singer!

OWNER

Does it look like I need a singer?
Look, lady, there's only country-western and strip joints in this town!

On Alice's dismayed face, we

CUT TO:

69 OMIT

70 OMIT

71 OMIT

72 OMIT

73 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Tom is alone, reading a book which he guiltily throws under the bed when he HEARS the key in the lock.

Alice's song ends as she shuts the door. Her face is (deliberately bright, exhausted, but up. Tom sits up in bed.

ALICE

Okay, kid, you can relax:
I got a job.

TOM

Where?

ALICE
Mel and Ruby's cafe.

TOM
(excited)
They got a good piano there?

ALICE
(trying to busy herself)
No pianos -- (very low)
I'm waiting on tables.

TOM
What?

ALICE
(trying to make the
best of it)
I'm waiting on tables. I'm a
friggin' waitress, that's what.

Alice begins to cry in earnest, hiding her face with one hand. Tom is surprised both by what she's said, and how she's reacting to it.

TOM
(trying to help)
Is it a nice place anyway?

ALICE
Oh hell, yes. "Mel and Ruby's Cafe".
Do you believe that?

TOM
(lying)
That doesn't sound so bad.

Alice holds out her hands to him; he sits down on the floor, and puts his head in her lap.

ALICE
Yeah, and Ruby's been dead for
eleven years.
(pause)
Oh, Tommy. I promised myself once
that I'd never do that no matter what,
and here I am.

TOM
(after a pause)

73 CONTINUED: (3)

He takes one of her hands.

ALICE

(calming)

Oh, no, honey, it's all right.

(she shakes her head)

Mel and Ruby's ... it killed Ruby
and it's gonna' kill me too.

She sees that she is depressing Tom, so she brightens.

ALICE

(continued)

But it's a job anyway, and we need
money to get to Monterey. I won't
go back there without a dime.

(as she suddenly remembers)

And it won't be so bad here. I saw
a place where you can take guitar
lessons a couple blocks from here.

TOM

(pleased)

Really? Is it a good place?

ALICE

(straight)

Andre Segovia teaches there on
Tuesdays.

CUT TO:

74 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - MORNING

The place is not as bad as its name would imply; there is a clean floor, and the Waitresses are neat, but Royal Crown ads dating from the fifties hang on the walls, and the whole cafe is terribly NOISY. Ruby doesn't exist--she's been dead eleven years, but MEL is there. He is bald, with heavy eyebrows and a dark beard. Hair covers his forearms and sprouts from under the neck of the immaculate white T-shirt he wears. There are two waitresses other than Alice. VERA is virtually invisible, a mouse who talks only to customers. FLORENCE is her opposite: loud, vulgar, vital, warm, she dominates the cafe. She is fifty or so, with a fairly good figure and lots of dry, blonde hair, done in a hopelessly out-of-date fashion. It is the height of the breakfast trade, and Alice looks a little tired and more than a little harassed. On top of that, she feels hostile toward the whole establishment and everyone in it.

We also establish DAVID BARRIE, a thirty-eight year old Man who owns a farm a few miles outside Phoenix. Quiet, attractive, he is masculine in the best sense of the word: so sure of his own manliness that he never thinks of it. He comes to the cafe often, and watches Alice, both because she's new and because he finds her attractive. Even though she's harried by the new environment, Alice is aware that he watches her, but this is not obvious.

FLORENCE

(to Mel, who is also
the cook)

Hey, Mel! How about that order
of bacon?

(to Alice, who doesn't
respond)

I swear, that man moves like the
dead lice were falling off of
him.

As Alice walks by without responding in any way, Florence contorts her face into a grotesquely prissy imitation of her. Then:

FLORENCE

(continuing)

Mel, for Christ's sake! You back
there pulling your pudding or
something?

Mel's face appears in the window as he shoves an order of
bacon toward her.

MEL

Not with you around, baby. Anyway,
why all the talk about sex, am I
getting you all bothered up?

As she walks away, loudly enough so that several Customers
and Alice hear:

FLORENCE

I could lay under you, eat
fried chicken, and do a cross-
word puzzle all at the same time --
that's how much you bother me.

Alice staggers a bit, but Mel roars with laughter, and the Customers, mostly regulars, join him. Alice delivers several orders as efficiently as possible, taking care to have as little contact as possible with anyone in the cafe. Then, as she is taking an order from a woman near David Barrie, Florence decides to introduce her to the entire cafe.

FLORENCE
(loud, and friendly)

Hey! Everybody! We got a new girl here -- first day on the job. This is Alice. Mel says she was a singer, how 'bout them apples? Now I know she's got big tits, but hands off. Let the girl do her work. If you want to grab ass, grab mine. Look but don't touch.

Alice is mortified, but tries to hide it. Aware of David Barrie's watching her, she glances at him. He gives her a sympathetic grin.

DAVID
(imitating the Lone
Ranger)
Steady Big Fella.

Alice gives him a smile and turns to look for a coffee filter. She can't find one, and finally asks Vera, who immediately turns into jelly and waves her hands vaguely around. Florence from across the cafe, sees them, knows what they're looking for, yells:

FLORENCE
(continued; undismayed
by Alice's ignoring her)
Left-hand drawer on the bottom, Vera..
How many years you worked here?

Alice takes the filter and moves away.

CUT TO:

75 EXT. MUSIC BUILDING ENTRANCE - DAY

The lesson over, the three students exit. The crewcut

says, "See you guys," and shuffles awkwardly away. Tom answers, "Yeah," but the girl, whose name is AUDREY, just looks at him with a sneer. She turns to Tom.

AUDREY
Wow. Weird? He's weird even
for Phoenix, and Phoenix is the
weird capitol of the world. What's
your name?

TOM
Tom.

AUDREY
Mine's "Audrey." It's really not--
it's "Doris," but I like "Audrey"
better.

She looks at the crewcut boy disappearing down the
block.

AUDREY
(continuing: solemn)
Weird.
(no real change in tone)
You wanna get high on Ripple?

TOM
(taken back)
What? I don't know. What about
your folks?

AUDREY
My dad split two years ago, and mom
turns tricks at the Ramada Inn from
three on every afternoon.

TOM
(uneasy)
But what if she came home?

AUDREY
Darlin', she wouldn't even notice.
I could have a troop of Eagle Scouts
in for the weekend and she wouldn't
blink an eye.
(pause)
Why, is your mom a hardnose?

TOM
No. She's O.K. She's a singer...
or a waitress now, I guess.

AUDREY
(pleased)
A singin' waitress. Weird.
(suggestively)
You wanna Ripple or not?

TOM
I can't now. I'll see you Wed-
nesday--maybe then.

He turns, a bit unnerved, and walks quickly away.

76 MEL'S CAFE - LATER IN THE MORNING

Alice is filling sugar bowls, Florence is setting out silverware for the noon crowd. As they come to the same table:

FLORENCE

(friendly)

I can tell you're new to this kind of work.

Alice nods.

FLORENCE

(continuing)

You catch on quick, though. I've seen many of 'em out the door cryin' before ten-thirty in the morning.

Alice doesn't respond. She thinks she's being refined, but actually the cafe has affected her so violently that Florence is right -- she's prissy.

FLORENCE

(continuing)

You, though, you seem like a natural.

(when Alice still doesn't respond)

You don't like me very much, do you?

ALICE

(looking up)

Not very much, no.

FLORENCE

(cheerfully)

That's okay. I been dumped on by kings in my time.

ALICE

(too pleasant)

I don't doubt it

(pause)

Listen Florence. I can take care of myself!! I don't need anyone making speeches for me.

FLORENCE

(still cheerful)

M-m-m-in-m, I'd hate to have to eat breakfast with you every morning of my life.

Alice moves away without answering

INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tom and Alice are in bed; Tom is asleep, with one arm thrown over his mother. Alice's eyes are wide open, staring at space.

78 INT. MEL & RUBY'S - EVENING

CUT TO:

The place is crowded, and the three waitresses are rushing. As Florence walks by a Customer, he pretends he's about to slap her rear. She sidesteps him expertly, then:

FLORENCE

(as she goes by)

Watch it, Harry! You'll draw back a bloody stub.

Mel sticks his head out the kitchen window.

MEL

Tell Alice her roast beefs are ready.

(a beat)

Where is she?

FLORENCE

She's in the john trying to get her knees unwelded.

MEL

Lay off her, Flo. She's okay.

FLORENCE

I like her; she can't stand me.

Vera timidly edges by to pick up an order. Florence flutters her hands and rolls her eyes wildly in imitation of her, but then picks up two plates in Vera's order.

FLORENCE

(continuing; kind)

Come on, kiddo, I'll help you.
Race you to the table!

Alice appears, takes her order, and moves away. As she walks the length of the cafe, David Barrie says something to her. She smiles a bit, but keeps on walking.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MEL & RUBY'S - CLOSING TIME - SAME NIGHT

The place is deserted except for Mel, Florence, Alice, and Vera. Vera struggles into her coat and waves a timid goodbye. Florence and Mel are having a last cup of coffee together. Alice, back into her street clothes, gives them both a formal goodnight and they respond enthusiastically as she goes through the door.

CUT TO:

80 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Alice is in the clothes she wore in the previous scene, Tom is fully dressed. They are eating a huge pizza from a cardboard box and drinking cokes in waxed containers.

TOM

I don't know -- they don't sound all that bad to me. They're nice to you, aren't they?

ALICE

(impatient)

Oh, yes, yes, they're nice enough, but they're so common. The one named Vera wears nurse's shoes, and that Florence is so loud.

(she sighs)

God, I hate that place. I knew I'd hate it and I was right -- I hate it.

(brightening)

Look, though, I made over seventeen dollars in tips alone today, and Mel says I'm sure to do better in a week or so.

She opens her purse to show him the money.

TOM

How long do you think we'll have to stay in this hell-hole?

ALICE

I don't know, exactly. If we save every penny we can for a full two months, that should get us out of this hell hole, and let us live until I can find a job.

TOM

Not waitressing?

ALICE

(definite)

Not waitressing.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

(light)

You sure? I think maybe you've
found your true calling--your
place in life.

Realizing he's joking, Alice ignores him elaborately,
taking a huge bite of her pizza. Tom gets further into
his game:

TOM

(continuing)

I'll bet you could win an award--
"Waitress of the Year," or some-
thing.

With no expression on her face, Alice dips her fin-
gers into her coke, and flicks the moisture into
Tom's face.

TOM

(continuing; wiping
his face)

No, I'm serious. You'd probably
have to change your name to
Florence, though, and...

Alice dips her fingers, flicks him again, still with no
facial expression.

TOM

(continuing; smiling)

Quit it.

Alice does it again:

TOM

(continuing)

I said quit, Mom.

Alice does it again.

TOM

(continuing)

You're gonna start something.
You'd better stop.

Alice does it again.

TOM

(continuing)

Okay, you asked for it.

80 CONTINUED: (3)

He throws the remainder of his coke, which is mostly ice, hitting Alice square in the chest. Alice, almost as a reflex action throws her almost-full coke directly in his face. Tom, enjoying himself royally, says, "Okay, okay," and heads for the bathroom to fill his waxed container with water.

ALICE

(laughing)

Don't now, Tommy. I was just kidding. Don't! You'll get it all over everything.

Tom has no intention of stopping. As Alice HEARS the faucets RUNNING in the bathroom, she jumps up, grabs the motel pitcher of ice water, which has been standing on a small table near the bed. She holds it behind her. Tom appears around the bathroom door, his coke cup so full it is spilling on the floor.

ALICE

(continuing; still
laughing as she
holds the pitcher)

Tommy! Now, don't, I mean it.
Tommy!

He is stalking her around the room. Suddenly she brings the pitcher around in front of her.

ALICE

(continuing)

All right, you! Put it down or I'll drench you.

Tommy is willing, as long as he can throw his water. He corners her, throws the full cup of water directly in her face, then runs frantically for the bathroom, Alice in hot pursuit. She flings half the water at him, wetting his back as he runs. He yells when it hits him, and she empties the rest of the pitcher over his head as he rounds the bathroom door. The CAMERA STAYS OUTSIDE the bathroom, and we HEAR faucets TURNED ON full blast. Then there are SCUFFLINGS, SHRIEKS, LAUGHTER, and the SOUND of water SPLASHING violently. Suddenly Alice, so wet she is barely recognizable, shoots out the bathroom door, Tom behind her. He throws a double handful of water at her which misses and lands ineffectually on the floor.

ALICE

(continuing; laughing,
gasping, holds up one
hand)

Don't. Oh, don't. I quit. I give
up.

80 CONTINUED: (4)

TOM
(same as Alice)
You sure?

ALICE
Uh-huh. I swear.

Tom collapses in a chair. Alice moves to stand behind him; quickly, she brings out a sopping-wet washcloth she has hidden in her left hand. She squeezes it over his head, throws it at him, and is out the door, her wet dress flapping around her legs. Immediately, though, he is out the door after her, and we HEAR more LAUGHTER and SHRIEKING.

FADE OUT

FADE IN
81 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - MORNING

It is almost time to open, and Mel and the three waitresses are scurrying around, readying for the breakfast crush. Vera walks slowly, shyly toward Alice.

VERA
I can't get this jar of catsup open.

Alice takes it, struggles with it for a while. Mel sticks his head out the kitchen window.

MEL
Flo, where'd you put the butter last night?

FLORENCE
I never laid a finger on your rotten butter.

MEL
(bellowing)
The hell you didn't!

FLORENCE
(still cheerful)
Oh, your ass sucks wind.

Alice gives her a disgusted look, turns her back, and continues to struggle with the catsup bottle.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE - NOON

It is an unusually hectic time. The entire cafe is full, and a few People are standing, waiting for seats. Vera, her cap crooked, her nurse's shoes a white blur, is getting virtually nothing accomplished. Alice looks bothered, but also determined, and is doing well enough. Surprisingly, even Florence looks harassed; two Men at different tables are trying to attract her attention, Mel is calling that an order has been waiting, and she is trying to open a can of coffee with a can-opener that won't cooperate.

MEL

(an edge to his voice)

Flo, I said your B.L.T. is ready and waiting.

FLORENCE

(hating him for the moment)

Right.

MEL

And where in hell's Vera? She's got three orders piled up back here.

Florence glances around, but Vera is nowhere in sight. She goes back to fighting the coffee can, her face grim.

MEL

(continuing; loud)

Flo, I said do you see Vera?

The can-opener slips again, and Florence's face begins to look a little wild. She doesn't answer Mel, but goes on grappling with the coffee can. After three beats:

MEL

(continuing; even louder)

Where the hell is Vera?

FLORENCE

(all control gone, she
literally screams)

She went to shit and the hogs ate her!!

Alice has been standing nearby, loading a tray of food. As Florence says this, Alice slams down the tray, and we think she's about to explode. There is dead SILENCE in the cafe; everyone -- Mel, the customers, Vera (who immediately scurries into a corner), and even David, stops to watch, wondering what Alice's reaction will be. Even Florence realizes she's gone one step too far.

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE

Oh kid, I'm sorry.

Alice doesn't answer. In that moment of decision, she smiles and breaks into laughter. Florence is shocked that she's laughing, and her worried frown turns into an uncertain smile. Alice's laughter grows and grows until she is roaring; great, huge laughs. Little by little, holding the wall with one hand, she lowers herself until she is squatting, one knee on the floor. In the background, the customers, and Mel start laughing too.

ALICE

(still laughing, but
not as hard)

Oh. Oh. That's the worst thing
I've ever heard in my whole life.

FLORENCE

(a half-smile)

Well...

ALICE

(weakly, her laughter
subsiding)

Where did you ever hear such a
thing?

It is the first question Alice has addressed directly to Florence, and she blossoms under it. Florence leans one hand on a wall, casts her eyes up in thought.

FLORENCE

Um, let's see. My daddy said it
sometimes, but I don't know where
he heard it. I think there was a
man...

MEL

(as Vera appears)

All three of you ladies got
customers waiting. Vera, where
you been?

Florence winks at Alice and goes back to the coffee;
Alice, wiping tears out of her eyes, takes her tray and
moves away.

CUT TO:

83 EXT. MUSIC BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Tom and Audrey exit together.

AUDREY
Is today the Ripple day?

TOM
(a bit scared)
No, I can't today.

AUDREY
Wanna steal something, then?

TOM
Steal what?

AUDREY
I don't know. What d'you need?

TOM
Nothing, really.

AUDREY
What d'you want?

TOM
Nothing.
(pause)
Oh, there are some finger picks,
but they're really expensive.

AUDREY
Where are they, at Jenkins' music
store?

TOM
Yeah.

AUDREY
(smiling)
Let's go. darlin'.

CUT TO:

84

INT. MUSIC STORE - AFTERNOON

Audrey and Tom walk into the store. Tom looks guilty as hell, but Audrey saunters around as if she were visiting royalty. They walk by the picks several times, but Audrey won't look at them. Motioning Tom to stand near the picks, she walks a few yards away and, to Tom's amazement, pulls a huge, sprawling pratfall. She lies there moaning as the clerk rushes toward her.

CLERK

Are you hurt?

AUDREY

(fake moan)

My knee, my knee.

CLERK

What happened?

AUDREY

There's a slick spot on your floor.

(girlish, as he
helps her up)I hope this won't ruin my tryout
for cheerleader.

As she gets to her feet, she gives Tom a meaningful look over the clerk's shoulder. Realizing, finally, what's going on, he pockets the picks quickly. The clerk, worried about a law suit, helps Audrey part-way to the door. (Audrey is hobbling horribly)

CLERK

I'm so sorry. Maybe you just
stumbled. Good luck with your
cheerleading.

AUDREY

(simpering)

Thank you, sir.

As she turns to leave, she smoothly palms a small container of guitar picks.

CUT TO:

INT. MEL & RUBY'S RESTAURANT, AFTERNOON

Alice and Florence, sitting at a back table, are taking a break. Their attitudes with each other are totally different than before.

ALICE

... I couldn't find another job singing.
so I took this job.(she shrugs as Florence
looks sympathetic)
So that's it.

(beat)

God, it's good to talk to a woman
again.

FLORENCE
I'll bet you get awful lonesome,
don't you?

ALICE
(considering)
Yes, sometimes. I miss Bea -- the one
I told you about?
(she looks at her watch
and smiles)
It's two-thirty. Bea's glued to the
television watching "All My Children"
right this minute -- she's in love
with somebody named Jeff.

FLORENCE
You want me to fix you up with
somebody? I know lots of guys'd
fall down over you.

ALICE
(friendly but firm)
No. After Albuquerque I'm through
with that for a while.

FLORENCE
You sure? I could fix you up with
Vera's brother.

ALICE
(surprised)
Vera?

FLORENCE
Honey, under that exterior ~~terior~~
beats a sexy brother with a new
Chrysler.

ALICE (small laugh)
No, thanks.
(she pretends to consider)...If it was a Cadillac, maybe.

FLORENCE
Well, if you change your mind...

CUT TO:

86 EXT., STREET IN DOWNTOWN PHOENIX, AFTERNOON

Audrey and Tom exit from a junior-miss dress shop, but
Audrey looks different--she has developed a wildly ripe
bust line. A few yards from the door, Audrey pulls a pink
sweater from the front of her dress, and the two pound
each others' arms and roar.

CUT TO:

Alice is serving David coffee, shaking her head negatively. He has asked her for a date before this, but is making a stronger pitch now. He is a slow, easy, charming man, and Alice is having a little trouble refusing. Tommy sits a few stools away, blowing air through a straw into a large glass of coke so that the liquid bubbles dangerously close to the rim of the glass. He is out of ear-shot; when Alice speaks to him, she raises her voice so he can hear.

DAVID

(a beat)

...then how about Friday night?

ALICE

Sorry, no.

DAVID

New Years?

ALICE

(patient voice)

You seem like a nice man, David,
so listen. I've got troubles --
I've got job troubles, money
troubles,

(She moves her head toward
Tom)

I've got kid troubles. More trouble
I don't need.

(To Tom)

Stop that!

(Looking back at David)

Give me a break, huh? Come on,
have some more coffee

DAVID

I plan to ask again.

ALICE

(Over her shoulder)

Why me, God?

DAVID

What am I doing wrong?

ALICE

It's not that, it's ...

(As Tom blows harder into
the glass, irritated)

Tommy!

DAVID

(Still easy to Alice)

Just give me three minutes, just...

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: (2)

Tommy blows too hard, and the coke belches all over his hand and the counter. He looks up guiltily.

ALICE
Mer-ci-ful God! Why don't you go see
your friend -- what's her name -- Audrey.

TOMMY
(blunt)
She's got the curse.

David reacts a bit negatively.

ALICE
Then go sit in that last booth, and
don't move. Don't even ...
(She casts about)
twitch a finger.

ALICE
(continued; as she walks
away, mumbling, not
meaning it)
...break every bone in his body.

As Tom walks away, David grins at him and gives him a wink. Tom, surprised at the unexpected support, smiles back at him. As he walks toward the back booth, Tom walks sideways, twirling the tops of all the stools, saying "Bored, bored, B-O-R-E-D."

Vera, a hamburger plate in one hand, and a book in the other, walks out of a door. She is looking at the book, Tom at the stools, and they collide. The food isn't spilled, but Vera's screams and gyrations trying to keep the burger and fries on the plate are worse than if it had. A cross Mel looks out of the kitchen, and Alice, through clenched teeth, gives Tom a hissed "Sit! Down!" Tom sits down, subdued, and Vera walks back by the booth, handing him her book.

VERA
(taking pity on him)
You wanna read something good?

TOM
What is it?

VERA
The Bride Screamed Murder

Tommy looks at her amazed.

TOM
(incredulous)
The Bride Screamed Murder??

EXACT SAME SHOT. - NEXT MORNING

Tom sits in the same booth looking out the window. David walks in. Alice sees him, but he ignores her and goes straight to Tom. Then from Alice's POV we see David talk briefly to Tom and then lead him outside. Alice moves so that she can see out the front window. With her, we see David showing Tom a beautiful chestnut gelding in a horse trailer. Even through the window we see that Tom is enthusiastic. Alice's face shows that she knows exactly what David is about: he's getting to her through the boy and she isn't too pleased. Tom bursts back through the door and runs up to her. David is lounging in the background, grinning again, pleased with his success.

TOM

Mom, he's got a fantastic horse out there I can ride -- can I go? He says I can ride it right now!

ALICE

(not happy)

No, I don't think so. No.

TOM

(loud)

Mom! Why not?

(as she turns away,
even louder)

Mom! I'm going CRAZY in here.
Just CRAZY!

Tommy is disturbing the customers; Mel is frowning. Alice looks desperately at Florence for support, but Florence smiles.

FLORENCE

Sure -- let him go.

Alice sighs, and Tom knows it's okay; he streaks out the door as Alice calls out a futile:

ALICE

Be back here by six, you hear me?

But he is gone. David and Alice exchange a look. He's won the first round. He raises a hand for goodbye, smiles at her, and strolls out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAVID'S FARM DAY

In the far distance, we can see David's house and outbuildings. The place is beautiful. We hear the sound of hoofbeats, and Tom and David ride across the scene. David is wearing a hat.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S MOTEL - EVENING

Alice is putting rollers in her hair while Tom lies on the bed, still excited about the day.

TOM

...and there's this, uh, what do you call it -- uh -- hutch! He's got this hutch where he raises rabbits.

ALICE

(dry)

Terrific.

TOM

But the horses are the main thing. God, you should see them.

ALICE

(continues rolling)

I've seen horses.

TOM

No, I mean it. I rode this chestnut one named "Ribbon." And you know what else? Hang on --- he makes his own ice cream.

ALICE

(couldn't be less impressed)

He-makes-his-own-ice-cream.

TOM

Well, it's probably better than that shack you grew up in.

(pause)

He asked us out there for Sunday.

ALICE

Nope.

TOM

I want to.

ALICE

(turning toward him)

What is it with you all of a sudden? Why the nature boy routine?

90 CONTINUED: (2)

TOM
Nothing, I just like it there. It's
something to do.

ALICE
(dismissing it)
Well, Farmer John will just have to
do without us, and that's all there
is to it.

TOM
(definite)
I want to go.

ALICE
(same)
No.

TOM
(loud)
Yes!

ALICE
(equally loud)
No!

CUT TO:

91-95 EXT. DAVID'S FARM - EARLY MORNING

It is the same shot we saw before. In the background, we hear guitar music. Tom rides by alone, wearing David's hat, and the CAMERA pans over to show Alice and David standing by a fence. There follows a series of helicopter shots, expressing freedom and exhilaration.

The following scenes of the farm do not necessarily match the dialogue of David and Alice. They serve primarily to show Alice's thawing toward the farm and David.

DAVID
See, what I plan to do is let
this part of the land lie fallow
for two more years, till it's ready
for heavy crops again.

ALICE
(as if she hadn't heard him;
polite/rude)
H-m-m?

There is a pause.

ALICE
(a bit of curiosity in
her voice)

91-95 CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
Mostly cotton. But I've
got a small herd of beef cattle.
(there is a pause)

ALICE
(her voice warmer,
surprised)
You know, it's beautiful here. Tommy
said it was nice, but...

DAVID
I worked six years to get this place --
six years. It -- uh...
(an emotional point for him, he
covers it with an offhand tone)
It's important to me. I love it.
(a beat)
I've got control, you know what I mean?
(trying to explain)
There's nobody to tell me anything--I
decide.
(a beat)
Six years.

96 EXT. FARM - PORCH - DAY

CUT TO:

There is a shot of Alice, Tommy and David eating.

ALICE
Come on--tell me you're lying. You
didn't really churn this butter your-
self.

DAVID
There's no trick to churning, you
just turn a handle.

ALICE
God, I hated churning when I was little.
(a beat)
If you say you ground the wheat and
baked this bread, I'm walking home.

97 EXT. FARM - ANOTHER ANGLE - IN SYNC

We hear Alice laughing delightedly

DAVID
(laughing with her)
It's true. True

ALICE

98 INT. DAVID'S BARN - LATE AFTERNOON

David has two or three milk cows, and is in the process of showing Tom how to milk. Alice stands to one side, watching, a pleased look on her face. Tom has a rather proprietary air about David; he is his friend.

TOM
(squirting away)
I love it!

DAVID
I doubt if you'd love it at five-thirty in the morning.

As Tom's cow lifts an unhappy leg and puts it back down:

DAVID
(nice, but a touch of the teacher)
Tom, don't use your fingernails--
she'll knock the milk over.

TOM
O.k.

Tom is putting milk everywhere but in the bucket. He squirts a cat, a wall, the cow's underbelly, and finally, Alice's leg.

ALICE
(as "would you like to go to a
movie tonight?")
Do you want the holy hell knocked out
of yourself?

TOM
(not scared)
All right, all right.

He pinches the cow again, and she raises and lowers her leg, shifting uncomfortably.

DAVID
(more the teacher)
Tom, watch the fingernails.

TOM
(He's stung)
Well, Christ! She's got tits the
size of cucumbers -- what do you
expect?

David again reacts to Tom's language, and shoots Alice an inquiring glance, wondering if she'll reprimand him.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE

(embarrassed, but trying
to joke)

I can't imagine where he got
that mouth.

TOM

Think real hard -- it'll come to
you.

(CUT TO)

99 INT. DAVID'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Alice is drying dishes. In the background we hear David and Tommy singing and playing an up-tempo Hank Williams' song. Tommy has his guitar and is trying to keep up, singing when he knows an occasional phrase. As Alice begins to put away the dishes she opens a cupboard and sees that the shelves have been lined with decorative paper, something a man wouldn't do. She flips the decorative edge with her finger, a thoughtful look on her face. She opens another cupboard and there is a collection of souffle dishes, a whisk, etc. In another cupboard is a set of fine glassware. Alice nods wryly, and goes to the livingroom door. The two stop playing.

DAVID

You want in on this?

ALICE

(an excuse)

No, I can't sing that kind of
music.

DAVID

Try it.

TOM

(impatient)

Come on, let's do it again.

ALICE

(to David)

You cook a lot?

DAVID

(puzzled)

Uh ... sometimes, when I'm hungry.

ALICE

(embarrassed)

You've got a lot of equipment in
there, I just wondered.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
(Understanding it)
Oh. My wife bought those.

ALICE
(As before)
I didn't know you were married.

DAVID
(Off hand)
I'm not -- I was. She divorced me
two years ago.
(Just a fact)
Took the kids and just ... went.

ALICE
I'm sorry I asked.

DAVID
(calm)
Ask away. She wanted this, I wanted that,
she said "No", I said "Yes", she said "No",
I said "yes" loud, she said, "I'm leaving"--
I opened the door for her.

Alice reacts strongly to the callousness of this line.

TOM
Come on! A person could go crazy
waiting.

ALICE
(Not meaning it)
A person could get his face slapped too,
if he's not careful.

DAVID
(To Alice, as he plays
a chord)
Jump in.

Again Alice reacts. Singing is important. She doesn't want
to share an intimate part of her life with him.

ALICE
I can't. Really, I can't.

DAVID
So we'll play something else -- anything.
(As Alice shakes her head;
a solid look between them;
the line works two ways)
I can back you up.

CUT TO:

100 INT. DAVID'S TRUCK - NIGHT

David is driving them home. Alice sits in the middle, with Tom asleep, sprawled half on her. There is a sexual tension between David and Alice. Both feel it, but they do not touch. In fact David shifts the gears carefully, and Alice leans a bit toward Tom when he does. After a few beats

DAVID

(Nice)

I hardly recognize him with his mouth closed.

ALICE

(Shaking her head)

Isn't it the truth? (A beat)
You know what one of his teachers in Ponca City called him? "Motor Mouth."

DAVID

(Off hand)

He's a good kid.

ALICE

Poor baby. He spends half his time at school in the principal's office for talking.

A beat of silence as they are intensely aware of each other.

DAVID

I liked today.

ALICE

So did I.

DAVID

You sound surprised.

ALICE

I was -- a little.

DAVID

(Looking steadily at her)

Let's do it again.

ALICE

(Pleased)

All right. Good!

There is another charged silence as the truck pulls up in front of the motel. David gets out to help her with Tom, and carries him, oddly helpless looking when he's asleep, toward the motel.

CUT TO:

101 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - DAY

Alice looks different, better. Perhaps her hair is a bit different, so we get the idea some time has passed. She is happy, and moves around the cafe with great energy, and has become a good waitress. WE see Florence watching her and finally she hisses at Alice.

FLORENCE

(A come-here jerk of her head)

P-s-s-s-t! Hey, come here.

ALICE

(Walking toward her)

What?

Florence takes her by the arm and leads her to a corner.

FLORENCE

(smile)

O.k., what's going on?

ALICE

(Truly puzzled)

What?

FLORENCE

Don't give me 'What'. I want information. What is it with you and David?

ALICE

(Flustered)

Nothing, really. He likes Tommy is all. Tommy's been out there half the time for the past two weeks.

(As Florence looks at her askance)

Nothing!

FLORENCE

(Shaking her head slowly)

Oh honey, honey. What a rotten poker player you must be. You're the worst liar I ever saw.

ALICE

(Over her shoulder, not mad)

I need a friend like her, right?

CUT TO:

102 EXT. DAVID'S FARM - LATE AFTERNOON

David has a horse tied to an iron stake in the barn lot; he is showing Tom how to shoe a horse.

102 CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID

... and the thing is, you have to keep the hoof pared down -- it's just like cutting your fingernails.

(Tom, not fascinated, is looking around, David gets a bit stern)

Tom, you said you wanted to see how this was done.

TOM

(stung)

I lied.

DAVID

(Letting go of the horse's leg and standing up)

I don't work around here for fun -- it's how I put food in my mouth. It's not a joke to me.

(A beat)

Now, do you want to help out or not -- make up your mind.

TOM

(Crestfallen)

Yeah, I do.

David goes back to work. After a few beats.

TOM

(Cont'd., normal tone)

You sounded just like my Dad, then.

DAVID

How so?

TOM

(No insult intended, off hand)

Oh, I don't know, he always pissed and moaned around the house all the time.

DAVID

(Dead serious, shaking his head)

It's about that language of yours boy.

CUT TO:

David, dressed differently, is mending a fence; a herd of cows have lined up, almost as if to watch. Alice stands nearby watching. David speaks almost as if to himself.

DAVID

(as he works; placid)
You know, I'd rather take a beating
than fix a fence. Seems like I spend
half my time trailing around after
these damned cows.

ALICE

(touching the fence)
Can't you make it electric?

DAVID

(shaking his head as he nails
a staple into the post)
Costs too much--she'll be out again
within the week.

(nods his head in a
direction)

They smell the apples over on Holway's
place, and get wilder 'n a March hare.

(pause; still working)
The only thing stupider than a cow is
a chicken. I'd like to kill every Leghorn
on this place.

(Alice laughs slightly;
he stops, looks at her,
smiles with her)
And turkeys are worse. You know what
young turkeys do when it rains?

DAVID

(continuing; a stupid ex-
pression on his face, he
opens his eyes and mouth,
looks up into the sky)
They open their mouths and drown.

ALICE

(smiling)
They don't either.

DAVID

They do. My grandmother lost two
hundred turkey pullets in one summer
rainstorm.

He pulls his face again, looking into the sky, then goes back
to fixing the fence. Alice is suddenly moved by him. She
walks quickly to him and kisses him. Immediately, David drops
his tools and responds to her. Alice pulls away after a moment.

David and Alice are dressed in robes, drinking coffee at the corner of the kitchen table. Alice's robe, an old one of David's has a large tear at the shoulder seam. There is an intimacy about them now -- it should be clear from their new easiness with each other that they have made love. Alice has one bare foot propped up on David's thigh.

DAVID

(A beat, quiet)

...so after all those years, we got the place and she just turned quieter and quieter -- seemed like she didn't have more 'n a dozen words to say a day at a time.

(Pause)

Then one day --

(He shakes his head, remembering)

God, it was hot(that day)-- one day she started yelling stuff at me. Just turned around from the sink and started screaming.

ALICE

(Her mood matching his)

What'd she say?

DAVID

Nothing -- it didn't make any sense, really. Said she hated the farm, and kept saying over and over that I didn't look at her when I talked to her.

He shakes his head, dismissing the subject, and smiles at her.

DAVID

(Cont'd)

It's your turn now. We've talked about me for a solid hour. How about you?

ALICE

(casting about)

I... let's see. There's nothing to tell.

DAVID

Come on. What're you doing in Tuscon with an eleven year old, and why Mel and Ruby's Cafe?

ALICE

(heaving a sigh)

O.K.

(pause)

For thirteen years I was ... no wait. Let me preface all that.

(pause)

When I was ten--no nine-- when I was nine I lived in Monterey, and there was this movie house three blocks from our house.

(pause)

After the movie, I'd walk home. I'd stand under the trees and I'd sing the songs I heard in the movies.

Alice laughs slightly and leans back on one arm, her face in a self-deprecating smile.

ALICE

(continuing; wry)

I know what you're thinking: "She wanted to be Betty Grable when she grew up."

(looking away from him; serious)

Well in a way it's true When I was nineteen I got a job singing in a pretty good hotel in Monterey. Everything was different then

(a beat; enthusiastic)

David, I can't tell you how beautiful Monterey is.

DAVID

Why did you leave?

ALICE

I got married.
(pause)

Anyway, for a long time I've wanted to go back to Monterey, to sing there again. That's where Tommy and I are headed.

DAVID

(confused)

Well, which is it you want?

ALICE

(confused too)

DAVID
To sing, or to go back to Monterey?

ALICE
(taken back)
Oh. Uh ... both. I want both.

DAVID
You think they're the same?

ALICE
(frowning in concentration)
You see, everything was different then.

David is suddenly touched by her. He reaches out, cups her bare foot in his hand, and kisses the instep. Alice bends over to touch his hair. They kiss again.

CUT TO:

105 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - NOON

The cafe is crowded, and the three waitresses are busy. David and Tom walk quickly into the cafe, both in high good humor. They greet Alice and sit at the counter, making plans to go fishing.

ALICE
(Pleased to see both of them)
Hi. What're you two up to?

TOM
We're going fishing at this spring-fed lake up by ...
(He can't think of the name)

DAVID
... Pittsville, and we need four cheeseburgers to go.

ALICE
Sounds dull.
(As she remembers something funny)
Hey you know what happened this morning?

DAVID
(Pleasant enough, just that he wants what he wants)
Could you snap it on those cheeseburgers? We're behind time.

Alice's smile becomes strained. She walks away to get the order.

EXT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - NOON

David and Tommy exit walking rapidly, waving to Alice. They walk toward David's truck. As they do, David's eye is caught by something under the truck. He bends down and sees a large oil stain on the ground.

DAVID
(sighing)
This thing's leaking oil again. I'll have to take it to Charley's.

TOM
(Very much twelve years old)
Oh, no! Come on -- can't we just put more oil in it for today?

DAVID
(As if Tommy were speaking a foreign language)
What's the matter with you? The truck's leaking oil -- it has to be fixed. We'll go fishing Sunday.

TOM
(Turning away)
Hell's bells!
He exits out of the frame.

CUT TO:

107 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - DAY

Tom is pleading with Alice, as he enters the frame.

TOM
But he promised me!

ALICE
I'll talk to him.

She exits quickly, out of the frame and we:

CUT TO:

108 EXT. CHARLIE'S GARAGE - DAY

David is under his truck, trying to fix the oil leak. Alice walks into the shot.

ALICE
Tommy was really disappointed today!

DAVID

Alice, for Christ's sake, I can't
ruin my truck to take him fishing.

ALICE

I know, but he's only twelve -- it's
hard for him to understand.

DAVID

(grim; almost an order)
Explain it to him.

Alice nods and walks out of the shot.

CUT TO:

109 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL - NIGHT

Alice is explaining to Tom.

TOM

(Still not happy)
Yeah? What'd he say?

ALICE

(Begins to be tired of
being a messenger)
He said for Christ's sake, should
he ruin his truck so you can catch
a fish?

She walks out of the shot.

CUT TO:

110 INT. ALICE'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alice walks into the shot, just having walked away from
Tom. She sits down on the edge of the tub. She breathes
out a huge rush of air, tired of the whole thing.

ALICE

(A beat; yelling out to
Tom)
Anyway, cheer up. Tomorrow you'll
be twelve -- all grown. You can
do whatever you want to -- go fishing,
get married ...

Tom gives her the raspberry.

CUT TO:

111

INT. DAVID S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Alice has fixed a birthday dinner for Tom. There are half eaten pieces of cake and cups of coffee strewn around the room. Strips of crepe paper have been looped across door frames and from lamp fixtures. The scene opens with a shot of Tom dressed in Cowboy boots from David and all expensive western style suede shirt from his mother. To top this off, he again has on David's hat, miles too big for him. He is looking drily at himself in a closet door with a mirrored inside. Tom is half pleased with the gifts, but half knows that, for him, they're wrong.

TOM

(as he eyes himself in the mirror;
slow, drawn out)
Oh, my God.

We hear David and Alice laughing with him, and the CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal that he is preening for them. Enjoying having their full attention, he launches into a truly dreadful John Wayne imitation:

TOM'

Look her, pardner, this is my territory
so move along. What's that? Yuh say yuh
won't? Then reach for your guns, varmit.

Alice and David laugh and throw "Terrible, terrible" over their shoulders as they sit on the sofa, pick up their coffee and begin to talk. Tom is left with nothing to do, basically, and is feeling a bit jealous of their talking. He walks aimlessly around the room, repeating "Look here, Pardner," over and over again in varying degrees of volume and imitating John Wayne's walk. Finally, David and Alice, both irritated simultaneously, speak a sharp "Tommy!"

CUT TO:

112

SAME SCENE, LATER

Alice is carrying dishes into the kitchen as David teaches Tom how to play the Hank Williams song we've heard earlier. Everybody is a little tired and irritated.

TOM

(as he hits a sour chord)
Damn!

DAVID

(a bit over-patient)
I told you three times--it goes
from D to A...

TOM

(imitating his tone)
I told you three times--A hurts
my hand.

112 CONTINUED: (2)

DAVID
(grim)
Try it like this--watch.

TOM
(a bit louder)
Look, I have these twelve year old
hands. I can't do that.

ALICE
(over her shoulder)
My life's not working out.

DAVID
(to Tom)
Not if you don't try, you can't.
Try it.

TOM
Let me put it this way.
(pause, definite)
No.

ALICE
(over the shoulder)
Trust me, it's not working out.

Tom gets up and walks to the record player.

DAVID
(steel)
Come here. I want you to try this
chord again.

ALICE
(trying to keep peace)
DAVID.

Tom drops the needle on the record, and the loud, senseless lyrics of T-Rex's "The Slider" are screamed to a violent heat. David instantly becomes more annoyed, and Alice more flustered.

ALICE
(To Tom, same as above)
Tommy.

DAVID
(To Tom, loud)
Turn that off!

Tom doesn't, and David, furious, walks to the record player. In taking the needle arm off the record, he runs it back and forth, ruining it; the volume is still up as he does this, and it makes an unearthly noise. David grabs the record and violently tosses it in a corner of the room.

TOM
(furious)
Damn you!

ALICE
(too shocked at what the party's
become to curse)
Oh, my!

DAVID
(to Tom; hard)
When are you going to understand I
hate that mouth of yours?

TOM
(same)
When are you going to understand ~~thm~~
I hate that shitkicking music of yours.
(as David reacts to the word)
Shitkicking! Shitkicking!

As he says the last "shitkicking," Tom throws an empty present box at David, who is four or five feet away. The box hits him in the forehead, not hurting him. Before he thinks, David slaps Tommy full in the face, knocking him sideways two full steps. Tommy, furious, embarrassed, starts to run out of the house. Alice tries to stop him -- really tries--but he jerks away from her and is out the door. Alice is furious with both of them. She turns to David:

ALICE
That was pretty.

DAVID
(nasty)
Oh, come on! You saw it -- he
was begging for it.

ALICE
(One hand over her heart
mocking what he said in
the truck)
(He's a good kid, Alice. He's only
twelve years old, and he's been
dragged all over hell's half acre
this summer, what do you expect?)

DAVID
I expect him to do what I say
while he's in my house.
(More insistent)
This is my place! Mine. What
goes on outside it I don't care.

The hints we've seen before of David's authoritarian manner have become clearer; Alice looks at him in a new way.

112 CONTINUED: (4)

ALICE

(thoughtful)

You know, you sound just like Tommy--
you're as spoiled as he is. 'I want
what I want, and I want it now.'
Ridiculous.

(a beat)

You criticize him constantly.

DAVID

(absolute)

In here, people do what I say. I
make the rules in here. You're not
tied to a chair -- you don't like 'm
leave.

ALICE

(out of her mouth before
she thinks)

And you wonder why your wife left.

HOLD on the two of them staring at each other at an impasse;
there's nothing left to say.

CUT TO:

113 EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Alice stops the car by a Mexican-like graveyard, and leans over
opening the passenger door. Tom is sullenly walking along the
side of the road.

ALICE

What're you going to do, dummy--walk
forty miles?

Tom gets in, and the car pulls away.

CUT TO:

114 INT. THE STATION-WAGON - EVENING

Alice and Tom are on the outskirts of Tucson -- perhaps a
little more than a mile away from the motel.

TOM

(anything but happy)

You dragged me away from Ponca City and never
even asked me if I wanted to start school with
my friends. You promised me we'd be in Monterey
on my birthday -- you told me how I'd like it
there. You said we would get to Monterey and
everything would be okay.

ALICE

(tired)

We'll get there.

114 CONTINUED (2)

TOM

Said the waitress in Phoenix.

ALICE

Who do you think you are?

(Stronger)

Just who in the hell do you think you are?

(Not so sure)

We'll get to Monterey. Everything'll be fine.

TOM

Sure, and then what? If you can find a job, and if it pays more than fifty bucks a week, and if you don't get involved with another maniac.

ALICE

(turning to him quiet but frightening)

You open that mouth of yours once more tonight and I swear to God I'll get a hammer and nail it shut.

Tom, to defy her, opens his mouth -- stretches it as wide as it will stretch.

ALICE

(con'td.)

I mean it Tommy, I'm going to throw you out and you can walk the last mile.

Incredibly, he stretches his mouth even wider.

QUICK CUT TO

115 EXT. THE STREET A FEW BLOCKS FROM MOTEL EVENING

Alice's car swerves violently to the curb, screeches to a halt, and Tommy, with a bit of help from Alice, exits quickly from the car; he stands there shocked, as Alice roars away.

DISSOLVE TO:

116 INT. AUDREY'S HOUSE _ NIGHT

Tom has decided to take Audrey up on her ripple offer, and they are both on their way to getting high. Audrey is dressed in the same clothes she's worn in early scene

AUDREY

(sipping wine)

Yeah, my dad was a bastard, all right. He used to make me bend over while he whip me with his belt.

(reflectively)

You know, I still think about walking up to him and saying

(his voice)

'All right, Harry, bend over -- you're gonna get the belt for that'.

TOM

(a bit slurred)

Mine was a bastard too. Or I guess he was. I don't know.

AUDREY

You gonna start school here next year?

TOM

(down)

I don't know. We're supposed to go to Monterey. My mom said we would ...

AUDREY

Monterey -- boy are you lucky to get away from Tuscon. The school here is weird, let me tell you. Mr. Emmet, the science teacher wears a hairnet. Scary.

CUT TO:

117 INT. AUDREY'S HOUSE - ANOTHER ANGLE - LATER

Both Audrey and Tom are potted. Audrey, who has had more experience with Ripple, is better off than Tom, who's thick tongued and moves and talks with the sodden carefulness of the very drunk.

TOM

(drunk, depressed)

I don't feel wonderful.

AUDREY

You wanna watch TV? There's a movie on called 'Aaron Slick From Pumpkin Crick'. Do you believe that?

TOM

No.

117 CONTINUED (2)

Audrey looks at him, sees that he is really down. She quickly puts on a sweater, tosses him his coat, and walks to stand by the front door. Tom looks at her.

AUDREY
(Rubbing her hands together broadly, smiling wickedly)

Come on, honey. Let's do something!

CUT TO:

118 INT. ALICE'S CAR - LATE NIGHT

Alice is driving through the streets of Tucson looking for Tom. She is half-worried, half-furious, and as she drives, she mutters a worried "Where is he," and a few seconds later, "Damn it."

CUT TO:

119 EXT. MOTEL - LATE NIGHT

Alice exits from the motel; Tommy's clearly not there. She gets back into her car, and drives past Mel and Ruby's Cafe which is closed, of course, but which has a lighted clock in the window reading 2:40 A.M. By this time, Alice is on the verge of tears, but it should be clear that rage is a part of the tears.

CUT TO:

120 EXT. TUCSON STREET - LATE NIGHT

Alice's car rolls slowly by the camera; WE see her head turning as she looks for Tom.

CUT TO:

121 EXT. TUCSON OUTSKIRTS - LATER

Alice's car pulls up and drives off the highway, stopping in an empty field.

CUT TO:

122 INT. ALICE'S CAR

Alice begins to cry in earnest -- worry, frustration, rage all come together. She cries for just a few seconds, then lifts her head and screams a furious scream, at the same time hitting the window of the driver's door a really terrific blow with the side of her fist.

CUT TO:

123 EXT. FIELD - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

CUT TO:

MOTEL, LATER

the phone, hating what she's about to do. She lifts and dials David. We hear his filtered voice.

DAVID
(just awake)
Hello?

ALICE
It's Alice. Listen, I hate to bother you, but I don't know what to do. Tommy hasn't come home and it's almost three--I'm out of my mind.

DAVID
(cold)
Did you call the police?

ALICE
Yes, but they just said they'd keep an eye out for him.
(a pause as David doesn't respond)
I don't even know that Audrey's last name--it's Pillston or something, but I can't find it in the phone book.

DAVID
(after a long pause;
distant)
I'm sure they'll find him. He's probably just trying to scare you.

Frigid enough that Alice is embarrassed, and hangs "goodbye" in a hopeless voice. Just as the receiver clicks, the phone shrills. Alice jumps, then answers it.

ALICE
Hello?
(pause; relieved)
Yes, yes, I am. I'll be there.

CUT TO:

E COURT, 3:30 A.M.

As down a hall, the camera REGISTERS on a door sign

reading "Juvenile Court, Section 61," and Alice walks in that door. Inside there is an officer, Audrey, Audrey's Mother, MRS. PRINSON, and, in a small room off to one side, visible through a windowed door, Tommy. He has been sick, and is wearing a policeman's sweatshirt. He looks scared and ill. Mrs. Prinson is gathering Audrey's things, preparing to leave, as she talks to another officer. Contrary to our expectations, she is a rather nice looking woman, though a bit overdressed for three thirty in the morning.

ALICE

(to officer at desk)

I'm Mrs. Hyatt. Probably you hear this all the time, but he's never done anything like this before--never.

OFFICER

Well, the store's decided not to press charges, so we just gave him a talking to.

ALICE

Thank God.

OFFICER

He's over there--

ALICE

(seeing him)

What's he got on?

OFFICER

He was a little sick.

(Alice looks puzzled)

Had a little too much wine

Alice shakes her head and sighs. Audrey is undismayed by the whole situation; she smiles and calls to Alice in a friendly voice:

AUDREY

Hey, are you the singin' waitress?

Alice staggers a bit, but replies:

ALICE

I'm Tommy's mother.

Audrey walks over to Alice, who stands by the desk as the officer fills out forms releasing Tommy.

AUDREY
I've been wantin' to meet you.

ALICE
(dredging up a smile)
It's nice to meet you, Audrey.
(Alice blames Audrey
in her mind)
How did all this happen?

AUDREY
(dismissing it)
Ah, it was nothin'. Big mistake.

MRS. PRINSON
(calling; not in a
good mood)
Doris. Get your sweater.

AUDREY
I gotta go. Ramada Rose is upset.
Tell Tommy I said 'bye.

MRS. PRINSON
(peremptory)
Doris!

Audrey turns away, and Alice stares wonderingly at the switch in names. As Audrey and her mother leave, Alice and Mrs. Prinson glance at each other, each of them thinking the other's child has gotten hers in trouble.

AUDREY
(big exit; Mae West)
'Bye, boys.

CUT TO:

126 ANOTHER ANGLE, JUVENILE HALL, NIGHT

Alice walks toward Tom, who catches sight of her through the door and looks worried. In her hand she carries, as if it were a dead rat, the damp brown paper bag containing Tom's stained shirt.

CUT TO:

127 INT. ALICE'S CAR, NIGHT

Alice and Tom ride in silence toward the motel.

CUT TO:

128 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL - MORNING

It's a beautiful, sunny morning as the alarm RINGS. Alice turns it off; it's awakened Tommy, and she tells him to go back to sleep. She thinks for a moment, then deliberately lies back down again, putting her arm protectively around the boy.

QUICK FADE OUT

SLOW FADE IN

129 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL ROOM - EXACT SAME SHOT

The phone rings; Alice answers, says hello. Then:

ALICE

No. Give me a little while.
I'll be in.

She hangs up the phone and sits on the bed, staring at the white wall.

CUT TO:

130 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL

Shot of another part of the room; shot of the window; of Alice looking at the ceiling, the light reflected, and

QUICK FADE OUT TO:

131 INT. ALICE'S MOTEL

POV - from the ceiling. Alice is still sitting by the phone. Tommy turns over in his sleep and falls off the bed; she asks him if he's okay, and when he says yes, that he is but doesn't want to be moved, she puts a pillow under his head, and WE

QUICK FADE OUT TO:

132 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE, DAY

Again the cafe is busy. The lunch hour is approaching and customers are everywhere. Florence and Vera rush around, but Alice is not her usual, efficient self. From the look on her face it is obvious something is wrong. Florence walks by, then comes back.

FLORENCE

Isn't David coming in today?

ALICE

I don't think so.

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE
(worried)
You wanna' talk about it?

ALICE
No.

Alice starts to cry in plain view of everyone. Florence is shocked for a second, then takes charge immediately. She takes the plate Alice has in her hand away, puts it on a counter.

FLORENCE
Okay, okay, come on.

She leads a weeping Alice through the cafe, back to the Ladies Room, customers staring all the while.

CUT TO:

133 INT. LADIES ROOM - DAY

The bathroom is small and empty. Florence stands guard by the door, while Alice leans against a sink.

FLORENCE
Okay, okay Alice. Now let me have it.

Alice says something unintelligible, through sobbing; what she says is muffled as she cries.

FLORENCE
(continuing)
What? Alice, what's the matter?

ALICE
Everything!

FLORENCE
Is it David?

ALICE
(through tears, angry)
To the hell with David!

FLORENCE
(understanding)
Uh-huh. Okay, sugar. What then, the kid?

ALICE
No, I don't know. It's everything, I mean. Everything's just so screwed up.
(a beat)
This morning I woke up, and I just didn't want to get up. I never felt so rotten in my whole life.

133 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE (Cont.)

I planned in being in Monterey over a week ago.

(a beat)

Monterey, hell -- I didn't even make it to California.

FLORENCE

So what's holding you here?

ALICE

I don't know. When I left home, I said okay: I want to go to Monterey and I want to be a singer. And that's what I'm gonna do. And I started out, and somehow I just thought I'd do it.

FLORENCE

(trying again to make sense)

So how come you're here?

ALICE

Well, 'cuz it didn't work. I don't know, life is really hard.

(a beat)

I mean it's harder than I thought.

FLORENCE

Well, life's hard for everybody walkin' on this earth. But that don't mean you can't smile. Just 'cuz you know there ain't no Santa Claus, don't mean you can't enjoy Christmas better than anybody else.

CUT TO:

134 INT. CAFE - DAY - PARALLEL TIME

Vera, who realizes something is wrong, and is trying to help out, is rushing around like a mad woman, covering the entire cafe by herself.

CUT TO:

135 INT. LADIES ROOM

ALICE

It's really disgusting, you know, I was bragging to Bea one time, and I said I didn't need men, and now this is the first time in my life that I've been without a man, and I'm falling apart. I was so scared of...of Donald, you know, and I was always trying to please him, and --

FLORENCE
You were scared of him?

ALICE
Yeah, and now I'm without him and I'm more scared that I ever was before. It's like I always felt he was taking care of me, you know, and now I don't know what to do.

FLORENCE
Well, that's real nice that you had someone to take care of you.

ALICE
But he didn't! I just felt like he did, just 'cus he was there, I mean. I don't know how to be without a man.

A WOMAN enters the door and steps in, wanting to use the bathroom.

FLORENCE
Sorry, it's full up.

WOMAN
What?

FLORENCE
It's busy in here.

WOMAN
But I just want to use the ---

FLORENCE
(snappish)
Didn't you hear me?

WOMAN
(bristling a bit)
It's not in use.

FLORENCE
(low, dangerous;
her old self)
You want a crack across the mouth, lady?

The woman, scurries out, frightened.

FLORENCE
(continuing)
Listen, Alice, I want to tell you something. Now you know, I got problems, too; I didn't exactly have my heart set on this

(CONTINUED)

FLORENCE (Cont.)

job, either. I mean, I got a daughter, and she needs about \$4000 worth of dental work, and honey, I haven't got the money. I got a man, and my old man, he hasn't talked to me since the day Kennedy got shot.

ALICE

Why, did he think you had something to do with it?

FLORENCE

(laughs; then)

I don't know what he thought. I wish I could get into that man's head.

(a beat)

Alice, honey, I think you're going shock you know? I mean even if a man's bad, honey -- my old booger is not too good, but he's there. And you just went through a death and all, and that's not easy.

ALICE

I just don't know what to do.

FLORENCE

Sugar, I want to see you smile; you got a thing going for you, why my golly -- look at that face, look at that body! Why, honey, you can sing!

ALICE

Well, I don't know about that, you never heard me sing.

Alice and Florence both laugh.

FLORENCE

Honey, if you know what it is in life that you want, you just jump in there and let the devil take the hindmost.

ALICE

But that's what I was trying to do! I know you're right, I just get so...I mean Tommy's not happy, I promised him I'd get him to Monterey, I promised him all these things, and David, I'm so mad, I tell you, I could just kill him, I really could!

FLORENCE

Sounds to me like you love him.

(CONTINUED)

135

CONTINUED (4)

ALICE

Oh.

(sobs)

I do!

At this point Mel appears at the doorway.

MEL

Flo? Alice? What's going on?

FLORENCE

Beat it, Mel, we'll be back.

MEL

Vera's going crazy out here.

FLORENCE

Give us a minute.

(as Mel starts to come
through door)

Mel, you come through that door and there's
going to be a three-legged race to the
undertaker.

(beat)

You wanna' get through the day with just
Vera?

Mel goes away, muttering.

ALICE

(crying, furious)

But I don't want to love him. I don't
ever want to love a man again, I really
don't. I think they all stink.

FLORENCE

Oh, honey, don't say that. There's only
two people on this earth, a man and a
woman.

Alice giggles.

ALICE

But I mean it's my life, it's my life,
you know? It's not some man's life that
I help him out with, you know--

FLORENCE

No, ma'am, you gotta live for yourself.

ALICE

I want it all.

(a beat)

I'd just like to run down the street
yelling "the hell with everybody!"

(she shakes her head)

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED (5)

ALICE (Cont.)
That sounds awful.

FLORENCE
(nodding)
Sure does.

ALICE
But I don't give a damn.

FLORENCE
So what do you want most?

ALICE
If I know that, I wouldn't be back here
crying in the toilet, now, would I?

FLORENCE
You know something? It's going to
work out. I know what you need; you
need a "Rattlesnake Cocktail".

ALICE
What's a "Rattlesnake Cocktail"?

FLORENCE
Well, honey, that's just like a "Harvey
Wallbanger"! That's going to put the
old bite right back in you! What do you
say?

Alice nods, and rises, smiling.

CUT TO:

135A INT. CAFE - THAT EVENING

Alice takes two plates of food to an ordinary-looking couple
in their mid-fifties. She gives the woman a large salad and
the man a steak. As she puts the plates down:

ALICE
Let's see. You had the steak and you get
the salad.

WOMAN
(looking at her husband's steak)
Oh, that looks a little underdone.

MAN
(pleasant enough)
It's okay.

(CONTINUED)

135A CONTINUED (2)

WOMAN

That's red juice coming out of it, Ted.

MAN

I ordered medium--it's fine.

ALICE

I'll be glad to have it put back on the fire for a while.

MAN

No, really, it's fine.

WOMAN

Honey, just cut into it and see--you can't eat it like that.

The man takes a bite and still mild, says:

MAN

For heaven's sake, Helen. It's all right.

WOMAN

(to Alice; woman-to-woman)

Why don't you just cook it a little longer for him? He really likes it a little more well-done.

CUT TO:

136 OMITTED.

137 INT. MEL AND RUBY'S CAFE - DAY

There are customers, but the place is not crowded. Alice and Florence are toward the back of the cafe, seeing to an occasional customer's wants; Vera's on a break; Mel lounges against the ice case, reading a paper. We feel that some time -- a week, ten days -- has passed. David enters the cafe uncertainly and seats himself; Florence and Alice react.

ALICE

(whispering to Florence)

Take my station.

(as Florence shakes her head calmly)

Please!

Florence shakes her head again, not mean, simply wanting Alice to work out her own problems. Alice hesitates, then walks toward David. As she reaches him, she is not angry, not even cool, really -- simply in control of herself.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED (2)

ALICE
(her pad ready)
What would you like?

DAVID
(serious)
I'd like to see you again. I'd like
you and Tommy to come out to the place.
(a beat)
Or we could do whatever you want to do.

Alice's first inclination is simply not to answer. David goes
a bit further.

DAVID
(continuing)
I don't know what to say -- except it's
got to be different. It's got to be.

Alice still doesn't answer; her face is doubtful. David says
something hard for him.

DAVID
(continuing)
Please.

Mel taps the counter bell and calls to Alice that she has an
order ready. She looks at David and walks away without replying.
Insulted, he rises and turns to leave, reaching the door of the
cafe; then he turns, angry. Alice is at the other end of the
cafe.

DAVID
(loud)
Damn it, I said please.

Patrons' heads turn to stare. Alice turns around, a plate of
food in one hand, a coffee pot in the other. She is shocked,
but David's comment infuriates her.

ALICE
(equally loud)
My life -- and I'm supposed to give it
away on a please? Just because you say
please, I'm supposed to turn into Dale
Evans?

DAVID
(louder)
What's the matter with you? I never
said that!

ALICE
(a bit louder, too)
You didn't have to say it.

(CONTINUED)

137 ' CONTINUED (3)

DAVID

(moving a step toward
her; loud)

Look -- I want Tommy and you with me.
What do you want?

ALICE

Well, I sure as hell don't want to sit
around and watch the two of you fight
for the next ten years.

DAVID

That's between Tommy and me. We'll
work it out. What do you want?

ALICE

(determined; the little
Alice who said, "if anybody
doesn't like it, they can...")

I want to sing. I am a singer. Whatever
else I do, that's got to be a part of it.

DAVID

How good are you?

ALICE

(loud; semi-belligerent)

I-don't-know!

DAVID

Well, if you don't know, is it worth all
this hassle?

ALICE

Yes!

(a beat; emphatic)

Yes!

(even surer)

Yes!

Every eye in the place is rivetted on them as they argue.
Suddenly, Vera comes out of the back room, absolutely unaware
of what's been going on. Holding a tray of dishes, she walks
rapidly through the silent cafe, not noticing that anything is
wrong. She says a mild, pleasant, "Felt like fall was coming
this morning, didn't it?" to Mel, and then disappears into the
kitchen. As soon as she is through the door, as if this were
some sort of signal, Alice and David start in again.

DAVID

(nodding)

And what about Monterey? Is that a part
of it, too?

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED (4)

ALICE
You don't understand.

DAVID
Explain it to me.

ALICE
I was happy when I lived in Monterey...

DAVID
(cutting her off)
You're not a little girl anymore. You can be happy here!

ALICE
(almost crying)
You don't understand. I was stopped once before, and I'm not going to be stopped again.

DAVID
Who's stopping you? Sing for God's sake, sing!
(a beat; loudly)
I told you before, whatever you do, I'll back you up!

ALICE
(loud)
You have to understand what I just said!

DAVID
(loudly; moving toward her)
I do. All right!

Alice is still loud, too, but her next words have a slightly puzzled tone; she doesn't know if either of them has won, or quite what they are agreeing to, but she feels as if she's asserted her independence.

ALICE
All right!

At this point, there is a pause. While all the other customers still stare, one man (STEVE) applauds in a slow bored fashion.

MAN
All right. Can I have some more coffee now?

There is a buzz of conversation as the other customers start to discuss what's happened. Alice and David just stand there -- somewhat dazed, facing each other.

138 AN UNIDENTIFIED LOCATION

Not necessarily a bar, not identifiably David's living room, in which we see a CLOSE SHOT of Alice's hands playing "You'll Never Know" on the piano.

THE END