

A N G E L     H E A R T

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Screenplay by Alan Parker

Based upon the novel "Falling Angel"

by William Hjortsberg

Working Draft

NOT FOR REPRODUCTION

Property of:

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Union Film Company Ltd  
/Winkast Programming Ltd  
Pinewood Studios,  
Iver Heath,  
Bucks, England

Always there is a black spot  
in our sunshine. It is the  
shadow of ourselves.

Thomas Carlyle

EXT: ALLEY - NEW YORK - 1955 - NIGHT

An alley. A grey path of well-trodden slush. Yesterday's snowstorm lingers like a leftover curse. A trashcan overflows. The CAMERA MOVES IN, we hear a vague familiar tune whistled off. In the shadows a flea-bitten dog noses through the garbage, pausing slightly to chase a hidden cat which scuffles away up a fire escape. The dog continues on its night prowl shaking itself as it walks through a burst of warm steam from a grating. WE FOLLOW the sickly animal until ... a hand fills the FRAME. Frozen. WE PAN ALONG the outstretched arm that leads us to an OLD WOMAN's face. Grey. Destitute. Quite dead. Her eyes stare from empty sockets, mouth wide open, dripping blood from a slit throat. Freshly cut. The dog sniffs at the body and licks at the wet pool of blood. And moves on. Disinterested. The cat on the fire escape stares. FRONT CREDITS OVER. A phone rings.

EXT: STREET - DAY

Cold breath. Fat lips. A round Polish face wrapped in warm earmuffs. SILEY, a news vendor, blows on the ends of his fingers and wipes the cold from his nose with the back of his woolen mitten. We are inside his small shelter looking out. WE SEE in CLOSE UP as he pours a cup of coffee, takes down a pack of Camels and folds a copy of the Daily News. Siley's head fills the screen. Silhouetted. A MAN walks towards us from across the street. HARRY ANGEL clenches his collar with one hand and holds his hat on from the wind with the other.

SILEY

Your phone's been ringing.

Siley hands Harry the paper, cigarettes and coffee mug. Harry flicks open the paper.

Your phone's been ringing.

Harry doesn't look up.

HARRY

Murder

SILEY

I know. I saw the body.

HARRY

The Giants stiffed the Bears  
47-7. What body?

SILEY

In the alley. Old lady. Some crazy near cut her head off. Your phone's been ringing you hear me.

HARRY

I heard you.  
(still reading)

SILEY

You should get yourself a secretary.

HARRY

Can't afford it. Business is bad.

SILEY

You kiddin' me? You can't walk down the street without steppin' over a stiff. The East River's lousy with 'em. There's a lot of Private Dick work out there floatin' around.

Harry shrugs. Sips his coffee.

HARRY

Not for me.

SILEY

Communists. That's the line of work you should be lookin' at. Plenty of work looking for reds ... and bring the cup back.

Harry has gone.

INT: STAIRS - DAY

Harry pushes the door at the base of the walk up to his apartment. His legs pass close to CAMERA as WE PAN UP the steep staircase. A scruffy LADY. Bedraggled hair, worn out, young face: MRS. ZELKIN. She scrubs the floor. A small, grubby CHILD watches.

MRS. ZELKIN

Your phone's been ringing.  
Don't walk on the wet.

HARRY

What's with you washing my floor?

MRS. ZELKIN  
 Blood. I don't want it treadin'  
 upstairs. An old lady dead in  
 the alley and a cat dead on the  
 stairs.

HARRY  
 A dead cat?

MRS. ZELKIN  
 I put it in the trash. It's  
 the devil's work. Or communists  
 more like.

HARRY  
 A cat dropped dead outside my  
 door?

MRS. ZELKIN  
 In the trash.

Harry checks the trash. Finds bloody newspapers but no  
 cat.

HARRY  
 There's no cat here.

Mrs. Zelkin picks up the bucket. The child at her hip.

MRS. ZELKIN  
 Sure there is. I put it there  
 myself.

HARRY  
 Must have run away.

MRS. ZELKIN  
 Not this one, honey. It had  
 its legs cut off.

HARRY  
 What the fuck?

MRS. ZELKIN  
 Four stumps sticking out like a  
 dressed rabbit. No good for  
 runnin'.

CLOSE UP - THE BLOODIED NEWSPAPER

Harry rummages. Still no cat. A phone rings.

INT: HARRY'S OFFICE - DAY  
 CLOSE UP - PHONE

The handset is snatched up CLOSE UP as Harry tears open

the pack of Camels. Taps one out as he speaks. The voice at the other end of the phone is hard to hear.

HARRY

Hello. Yeah, this is Harold  
Angel. Middle initial R. Yup.  
Like in the phone book.

Harry rummages through his draw for a Zippo. WE SEE the untidy contents. The flame flares as Harry flips the Zippo. Tips the Camel into the flame. It glows.

Excuse me?

(he repeats)

Herman Winesap of Winesap and  
McIntosh. I've got it.

CLOSE UP - THE PENCIL

scribbles the name and the word "attorney."

Sure I know what an attorney  
is. Like a lawyer only the  
bills are bigger ... Sure I'll  
hold.

(click)

Asshole.

On Harry's face half lit against the glass window. The camel smoke billows.

Mr. Winesap? Yes, this is Harry  
Angel. Yes I could be free. It  
depends on the job. Would this  
be for your firm?

CLOSE UP - HARRY'S PENCIL

writes "LOUIS CYPHRE."

Is your client a foreign  
gentleman?

The pencil scribbles a question mark as the voice at the other end gives an unhelpful answer.

Can you give me a few more  
details? Sure, I know it.  
It's a long way up but I know  
it -- I'll be there.

CUT TO:

EXT: HARLEM MISSION - DAY  
CLOSE UP -A BLACK WOMAN'S FACE

Pretty. Scared. Pained.

WE SEE a group of black "MOURNERS" smartly dressed who restrain and comfort her as she wails and faints at the curbside.

EXT: HARLEM STREET - DAY

Harry turns the corner on Lennox into 128th Street clenching the collar of his coat as the wind rips into his hair. He looks at the wailing group and turns to the building where they seem to have come from; a dilapidated movie theater, now an improvised "church." A badly painted sign says "THE KINGDOM MISSION." Harry threads his way through the group and leaps the stairs two at a time into the dark interior of the building.

INT: KINGDOM MISSION - DAY

Moving out of the shadow of the corridor Harry sits quietly in a seat at the rear of the small auditorium and takes in the "show." PASTOR JOHN, a black bullet-headed preacher in frock coat, winged collar and ascot tie, bellows to his flock who reply with rhythmic clapping and programmed chants -- egged on by a plump lady in pink robes: MOTHER CELESTE.

PASTOR JOHN	FLOCK
Permit me to be trans-mittable.	Daddy you feel so good
Permit me to be re-incarnatable.	Sweet Daddy
Permit me to be reprod-ucable.	Oh Daddy
His Kingdom is yours today	We thank you Sweet Daddy
Follow me through His gates.	Pastor John
Give up your goods, your coins	We give all our thanks
of this unearthly realm.	For showing us the way.
	We live in His shadow.

Mother Celeste takes the dollars from the outstretched hands and dumps them into a basket.

Harry watches the proceedings with a wry smile. What a racket. A voice off makes him turn his head.

WINESAP  
Mr. Angel?

HARRY  
Yes?

WINESAP  
Herman Winesap.

Harry shakes the stretched out hand. Wet and limp.

WINESAP

Would you come this way, please?

Winesap leads Harry down the dark corridor. A WOMAN carrying a basin passes and opens the door to one side of the corridor. Harry stops to look in. Blood is splattered across the walls. The woman begins to wash it down. A nervous Winesap offers an explanation and then leads Harry onwards.

WINESAP

An unfortunate husband of one of Pastor John's flock took a gun to his head. Most unfortunate.

He leads Harry onwards.

At the Kingdom Mission they see misery in procreation.

HARRY

Is that right?

WINESAP

Hence Pastor John preaches abstinence from sex.

HARRY

That can make a guy sore.

INT: MISSION ROOM - DAY

The windowless room is eccentrically decorated; Harlem contemporary. Under a framed black and white photo of Pastor John sits LOUIS CYPHRE, a large man with a domed suntanned forehead, his long white hair swept back and slick with oil. His black moustache is just a little shorter than Gable's and just a little longer than Hitler's. A pink uncut-moquette armchair hugs his ample form, his large round face is lit by two salmon pink fringed lampshades that flank him on either side. He is elegantly dressed in a white suit, a cluster of blood red roses in his lapel.

WINESAP

Mr. Angel, allow me to introduce my client, Mr. Louis Cyphre.

Winesap's pronunciation is pretentiously French.

HARRY

Hi, Harry Angel.

Cyphre waves a hand for Harry to sit in another armchair at his side. Harry realizes that Cyphre's chair is on a slight dais. Almost regal. Subtle omnipotence.

CYPHRE

I hate to seem impolite, Mr. Angel,  
but do you think I could have some  
identification before we begin.

Harry places his open wallet onto the arm of Cyphre's chair. Cyphre flips through the plastic card holders.

CLOSE UP - GUN PERMIT - DETECTIVE'S LICENSE - ETC.

Harry is mesmerized by Cyphre's hands.

CYPHRE (VO)

I think it best to be cautious  
on such occasions.

EXTREME CLOSE UP - THE MANICURED NAILS

that gleam at the tips of strange tapered fingers. Nero could have had such hands. Or Jack the Ripper.

Winesap sits erect in a hard-back chair in the corner. Harry throws him a smile that meets with no response.

CYPHRE

Johnny Favorite.

HARRY

Pardon me?

CYPHRE

Do you by chance remember the  
name Johnny Favorite?

HARRY

Er yeah, wasn't he a crooner with  
one of them swing bands -- before  
the war.

CYPHRE

That's him. He sang with the  
Spider Simpson orchestra. An  
overnight sensation as the press  
agents like to put it. Personally,  
I loathed the music, the tunes he  
recorded escape me, there were  
several, but he created a near  
riot at the Paramount Theatre long  
before anyone had heard of Mr.  
Sinatra. Do you recall him at  
all, Mr. Angel?

HARRY

Vaguely. He was before my time. I was just out of high school, a rookie cop in Brooklyn.

CYPHRE

I thought I detected a Southern accent?

HARRY

Nope. Pure Brooklyn. Where are you from?

CYPHRE

Oh, all over, Mr. Angel. Let's say I'm a traveller.

Winesap cuts in to avoid anymore small talk.

WINESAP

Johnny Favorite's real name was Johnny Liebling. Originally from Louisiana but his career really took off in Chicago with the Spider Simpson orchestra. He was an acquaintance of Mr. Cyphre.

A MAN brings in a tray with three glasses and a decanter of red wine. The man leaves and Cyphre pours Harry a drink as he speaks.

CYPHRE

Oh, a little more than an acquaintance, Winesap. I was very fond of him. When I first met him he was just a skinny kid straight out of the swamps. Personally I hated that nasty swing music but occasionally Johnny could sound like ... like an angel ...

Cyphre flashes a sickly smile buffed with bank notes. He hands Harry a full glass.

Forgive the bad pun ... He was drafted in '43, North Africa in the Special Entertainment Services ... Tunisia, I believe, I'm not entirely clear. There was an attack, the entire troupe were killed except Johnny -- by some quirk of fate he survived --

(MORE)

CYPHRE (contd)

well, barely, he had severe head and face injuries. I'm not a medical man but he was suffering from some sort of amnesia.

HARRY

Shell shock. I know how it feels.

CYPHRE

Really? Were you in the services, Mr. Angel?

HARRY

For a few months at the start. I was lucky.

CYPHRE

Well Johnny wasn't so lucky, he got shipped home, a virtual zombie.

HARRY

Too bad. But where do I fit in? What is it exactly you want me to do?

CYPHRE

I gave Johnny some help at the start of his career.

HARRY

You were his agent?

CYPHRE

No, I was never his agent, but I was able to use my influence a little on his behalf ... we had a contract ... certain collateral was involved ... to be forfeited in the event of his death.

WINESAP

As you'll appreciate, Mr. Angel, the exact details of the transaction have to remain confidential.

HARRY

Sure. Like a doctor.

WINESAP

Like a doctor.

Cyphre sips his claret. Winesap continues.

WINESAP

Favorite's position was hopeless. Quite simply, he had made a good deal of money since his success and it had been invested wisely. Friends had him transferred to a private hospital upstate. There was some sort of radical psychiatric treatment and Mr. Favorite's ... Mr. Liebling's lawyers had power of attorney to ...

Cyphre puts down his glass and pours some wine.

CYPHRE

... pay the bills. But he stayed a zombie and my contract was never honored.

HARRY

Tough. Do you know the name of these friends?

CYPHRE

No. Forgive my mercenary attitude, Mr. Angel, but my interest in Johnny Favorite is only in ascertaining if he's alive or dead.

WINESAP

Each year my office receives a signed affidavit confirming Johnny Liebling is indeed among the living. This situation has remained unchanged for fifteen years, until this last weekend.

HARRY

What happened?

CYPHRE

Last weekend, quite by chance, I was in the vicinity of the hospital ... just outside Poughkeepsie, and checked for myself ... but was given misleading information ...

HARRY

... the runaround.

CYPHRE

Indeed. I didn't want to cause a scene so I'd like you to ...

EXT: LEAFY LANE - UPSTATE - DAY

An ornate arched wrought iron gate. In large bronze letters in the brickwork: THE EMMA DODDS HARVEST MEMORIAL CLINIC. Harry's car threads along the lane and pulls up outside a once elegant clapboard mansion. Its fading, peeling paint cannot spoil its proud countenance as it sits atop a point overlooking the Hudson River.

INT: NURSING HOME HALLWAY - DAY  
CLOSE UP - HARRY'S HAND

pumps the reception bell. A dappled glass window slides across. A pretty but bored face, behind thick glasses too heavy for the cute nose.

NURSE

May I help you?

CLOSE UP - HARRY'S ATTACHE CASE

Well worn but classy. The locks clicked open.

CLOSE - WALLET OPENING

A phoney I.D. The nurse's hand takes it.

CLOSE - HARRY

who put his head close to the hatch.

HARRY

My name is Harry Conroy.  
National Institute of Health.

NURSE

Is there anyone in particular  
you'd like to see, Mr. Conroy?

She experiments with a weak smile.

HARRY

The Institute is conducting  
a survey of incurable trauma  
cases. I understand you have  
a patient here fitting that  
description.

Large eyes behind thick glasses, like fishes in a goldfish bowl.

NURSE

What name?

Cyphre waves his hand.

HARRY  
Check it out. Simple enough.

Cyphre nods.

I get 50 a day plus expenses ...

Harry stands and opens the door. More wailing. More preaching. More dollars.

... I guess you make that in a session.

WINESAP  
This is not Mr. Cyphre's church, Mr. Angel, we are the guests of Pastor John ... a business associate.

INT: MISSION - DAY  
CLOSE UP - WAILING FACE

CLOSE UP - PASTOR JOHN

CLOSE UP - MONEY

being stuffed into basket.

HARRY (VO)  
Business looks good.

CUT TO:

INT: CAR - DAY  
CLOSE UP - RADIO

A mid-50's pop song. Harry's hand switches it off. Abruptly. It's obviously not his kind of music.

HARRY (VO)  
Adenoidal retards.

CLOSE - HARRY DRIVING

Quiet but for the swishing tires. He whistles the tune we heard earlier over the front credits.

EXT: UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAY

Fields. Snow. A Grandma Moses landscape. Harry's dark car glides along the bottom of snow bleached white frame.

FX: The whistled tune. Slow. Eerie. Familiar.

HARRY  
Liebling. Jonathan Liebling.  
Of course all information will  
be treated with the utmost  
confidentiality.

NURSE  
One moment please.

CLOSE UP - WHITE SHOES

squeaking on the shiny clean floor.

Lysol. Harry sniffs and looks at the pretty legs.

HARRY  
Were you working last weekend?  
The nurse is looking through the files.

NURSE  
No. I was at my sister's wedding.

HARRY  
Catch the bouquet?

NURSE  
No such luck.

HARRY  
Nice guy?

NURSE  
Huh?

HARRY  
The husband.

NURSE  
An old guy. Loaded.

A smile. Slight but real. She returns with an open  
manila folder.

We did have a Mr. Liebling, but  
it says here he was transferred.

HARRY  
When?

NURSE  
Years ago. December '45.

She twists the file around and shows it to Harry.

CLOSE UP - LARGE LETTERS .

written across the file: TRANSFER 5/12/45.

HARRY  
Is this recent?

NURSE  
No, it's an old file.

HARRY  
But it's in biro. They weren't  
big on biros in 1945.

She looks closer.

NURSE  
Is that biro?

HARRY  
This Doctor Fowler, is he here  
still?

NURSE  
Just part time. He's old.

HARRY  
Older than your sister's new  
husband?

NURSE  
Even older.

EXT: DINER - EVENING

Pay phone shot through window of diner. Harry looks  
through phone book.

FX: Mid-50's juke box.

INT: DINER - EVENING  
CLOSE UP - FINGER

down columns. Stops. FOWLER, ALBERT DR. 419 Kitteridge  
Street.

EXT: STREET - NIGHT  
CLOSE UP - SIGN

"SALVATION IS WITHIN YOU." Car door slams.

CLOSE - HARRY'S ATTACHE CASE

Harry walks towards Fowler's house opposite.

EXT: FOWLER'S HOUSE - NIGHT  
CLOSE - HARRY'S LEGS

on the steps up to the scruffy wooden veranda.

WIDER - THE HOUSE

A pale green clapboard. Behind the broken railings,  
Harry in the shadows.

CLOSE UP - DOORBELL

Harry's face pressed against the etched glass pane of  
the front door

HIS POV - THE DINGY HALLWAY

He doesn't wait. The veranda wood creaks. The windows  
don't budge.

CLOSE UP - PADLOCK

A jimmy easily pries the screws out of the rotten wood.

INT: FOWLER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Black. The light of Harry's flashlight shows us stacked  
plates, an old range, and an even older fridge.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Harry snaps on the yellow standard lamp. The living  
room. Unused. An inch of dust. Years of neglect.  
Snaps the light off. Black.

INT: BEDROOM - NIGHT

And on again. This time, the light in Fowler's bedroom.  
An iron bed. A plain oak dresser. Harry opens the door.

CLOSE UP - HARRY'S HANDS

checking through the musty clothes.

EXTREME CLOSE UP - HARRY

He sniffs. Mothballs.

On the bedside table a 1930's framed photograph of a  
woman. He opens a drawer. A gun; Webley Mark V.  
Harry snaps it open ... no bullets.

INT: BATHROOM - NIGHT

Harry yanks the chain on the bathroom light above the

bathroom cabinet. In the mirror Harry examines a sterilizer steaming on the washstand. The image moves as Harry opens the cabinet. WE SEE inside. Hypodermics.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Harry opens the fridge. His face lit by the interior light. He moves aside a fat bottle of milk and then WE SEE: Morphine. Twenty 50 cc. bottles. Enough to keep a dozen junkies stoned for a month.

FX: Fowler's car outside. Door slams.

Harry closes the fridge. Darkness.

INT: HALLWAY - NIGHT

Fowler's silhouette at the door. Keys.

INT: KITCHEN - NIGHT

Light goes on, FOWLER passes Harry who holds a morphine bottle. Fowler makes straight for the fridge.

HARRY

About time for your evening fix?

Fowler spins. An old man. Tall, boney face with sunken cheeks, thin blue lips and loser's eyes.

DR. FOWLER

Who are you? How did you get in here?

HARRY

Through the mail slot. I'm a private detective.

FOWLER

Breaking and entering is a serious crime whoever or whatever you are.

HARRY

So call the police.

CLOSE - FOWLER

Watery loser's eyes.

HARRY (VO)

... which you won't do in case they discover the opium den in the ice box there ...

FOWLER

I'm a doctor. I'm perfectly entitled to keep pharmaceuticals at home.

HARRY

We're not talking about a band aid and a tube of unguentine, Doc. How long have you been hooked?

FOWLER

I have rheumatoid arthritis, I employ a mild analgesic to ease the pain.

HARRY

I've seen the works cooking upstairs, pal, and it ain't Mr. Salk's vaccine. That's morphine. You're no joy-popper. There's enough to keep a dozen doopeheads out of it for a month.

FOWLER

What do you want of me?

HARRY

Information about Johnny Liebling.

FOWLER

I vaguely treated a patient of that name many years ago.

HARRY

Look, Doc, I'm not fooling here. I'll call the police myself if I don't get straight answers. They'll get a hell of a kick out of your naline test.

Harry walks behind Fowler and opens old fridge taking out a bottle of milk.

FOWLER

I remember he was an entertainer before the war. Neural case. No chance of recovery. So we transferred him to a V.A. hospital in Albany.

HARRY

The transfer was a fake. Ball-points weren't invented in 1945.

FOWLER

I did that quickly because there was a visitor recently. In fifteen years he never had a visitor.

HARRY

Popular guy.

Harry takes a cup from the draining board and looks at it. Dirty like everything else. He washes it under the tap and pours out a cup-full of milk. He sips.

Where is he now?

FOWLER

I honestly don't know. I haven't seen him since he was a patient during the war.

Harry grabs Fowler, yanks him up, throws him against the fridge and presses the milk bottle close to his face. Almost breaking it.

HARRY

You've got loser's eyes, Doc, and they don't lie so well. I want the truth. Where did he go?

FOWLER

I don't know. Some people came one night many years ago. He got in the car with them and drove away. I never saw him again.

Harry releases his hold on Fowler and walks away swigging the milk from the bottle.

HARRY

Got into a car? I thought this guy was a vegetable.

FOWLER

When he first came he was in a coma but he soon recovered.

Fowler nervously twists a signet ring on his finger. Gold with a five pointed star. He drums his fingers on the table. WE SEE CLOSE.

HARRY

So he was normal?

FOWLER

Hateful word: normal. No meaning  
(MORE)

FOWLER (contd)  
whatsoever. He recovered physically  
but still suffered from acute  
amnesia.

HARRY  
He could play tennis, but he  
couldn't remember the score.  
Is that it?

FOWLER  
Crudely. Yes.

HARRY  
Tell me about these "friends."  
Who were they? What were their  
names?

FOWLER  
It's been years. I've done my  
best to forget it ... I'm sorry ...

Harry once again erupts, dragging Fowler across the room.  
He throws him against the dresser. He tightens his tie  
around his neck.

TIGHT TWO SHOT - THE TWO OF THEM

silhouetted against the yellow light reflected in the  
kitchen cabinet.

HARRY  
You're in a cold sweat, you know  
that, Doc? You can't wait for  
me to leave so you can raid the  
goodies in the ice box ... well  
as soon as we get this all out  
the sooner you can shoot yourself  
to Palookaville, OK?

He throws Fowler out of the room and into the hall.

INT: HALLWAY - NIGHT

Fowler collapses and sobs at the bottom of the stairs.  
Harry climbs and sits three steps above him. He takes  
out his notebook and flips it open.

HARRY  
Let's keep this civilized. One  
more time. The friends ... Who  
were the friends? ...

FOWLER

The gentleman's name was Kelley. Edward Kelley. The young woman I never saw. She stayed in the car.

HARRY

Where were they taking him?

FOWLER

I think down south. The man said, we're taking him home.

HARRY

What was the deal?

FOWLER

Money.

HARRY

How much money?

FOWLER

20,000 dollars.

HARRY

For what?

FOWLER

I was to maintain the pretense that he was still a patient at the hospital.

HARRY

Didn't the administration suspect?

FOWLER

Why should they? I kept the charts up to date and no one asks questions while bills get paid.

HARRY

Tell me about Johnny Lieblich.

FOWLER

What do you want to know?

HARRY

Anything. Habits, hobbies, did he like his eggs over and easy ... color of his eyes ... what did he look like? Let's start there.

FOWLER

I don't know. I have no idea  
what he looked like ...

HARRY

What?

FOWLER

When he came in he'd had extensive  
facial reconstruction. He was  
never out of bandages.

HARRY

Kelley. Tell me more about  
Kelley.

FOWLER

Really, it's so long I have  
only a vague memory.

Harry grabs Fowler by the tie.

HARRY

Don't make me squeeze the truth  
out of you. Why are you shielding  
Kelley?

FOWLER

I'm not. I hardly know him.

HARRY

Your eyes are watering, Doc.  
Give it me all or I'll bust you  
up like a soda cracker and you'll  
be needing some reconstructive  
surgery too.

FOWLER

I can't remember. He was well  
dressed ... a southern accent ...  
I truly can't remember.

Harry drags him up the stairs.

HARRY

OK. That's enough, Doc. You're  
gonna have a lie down while I go  
out and grab a hamburger. A few  
hours of cold turkey should  
refresh your memory.

Fowler is pushed through the door of his bedroom. The  
door slams.

CLOSE UP - A LONG STEMMED KEY

as Harry locks the door.

EXT: STREET - NIGHT

Harry walks past the dilapidated church to his car. Chants from inside. A heated sermon of some obscure denomination in progress. Harry gets into his car. Slams the door.

CUT TO:

INT: DINER - NIGHT  
CLOSE UP - CIGARETTE BUTTS

in an overflowing ashtray.

Harry at the counter, the only customer. CAMERA MOVES IN on him. Slowly. The eerie whistled tune we've heard before. Harry drains the coffee cup and stubs out his cigarette, picks up his hat and leaves.

EXT: DINER - NIGHT

Harry pulls up his collar to face the cold air and runs towards his car. Whistle ends.

INT: FOWLER'S KITCHEN - NIGHT  
CLOSE UP - HARRY'S HANDS

taking out a 50 cc. bottle of morphine.

INT: STAIRS - NIGHT

From the bottom, Harry running up stairs to Fowler's bedroom.

HARRY  
I'm back, Doc ... I've brought  
you a little something ...

CLOSE UP - LONG STEMMED KEY IN THE LOCK

INT: BEDROOM

Harry enters.

HARRY  
I didn't think you'd want a  
shake and a cheeseburger so  
I got you ...

He freezes.

WE SEE Fowler still in his crumpled pin-striped suit, propped against the pillow, he clutches the framed photograph of a woman in his left hand. In his right the Webley Mark V. Blood drips from the socket of his right eye like ruby tears. The remaining eye bulges like a goldfish, pushed out by concussion.

Harry touches the back of Fowler's hand. Ice cold. He picks up the Bible, bullets fall out revealing a hollow interior. Harry looks back at the one-eyed corpse.

HARRY

(softly)

If thine eye offend thee ...

The room is unchanged. Same shoddy order. Harry picks up the bullets with his handkerchief ... and proceeds to wipe the areas he had touched.

CLOSE UP - LONG STEMMED KEY - MILK BOTTLE - MORPHINE BOTTLE - DOOR HANDLE

All wiped clean of Harry's presence.

INT: HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dark and dingy hallway. Harry wipes the bannister and looks back up the stairs as he gently opens the door. We hear that whistled tune over.

INT: BAR - DAY

Busy working class bar. Everyone seems to be looking up at the football game on the TV set. Harry threads his way through the bar. CONNIE, a pretty, slightly tarty girl, sits sipping a large Manhattan. He pulls up the stool next to her.

CONNIE

It's after eleven, Harry.  
You're late.

HARRY

Yeah, I'm sorry. I had a  
Doctor's appointment.

CONNIE

You sick?

HARRY

No. The Doctor was.  
(to the waiter)  
Whiskey sour, over here, please.

There a loud roar from the bar crowd at the football game. Harry looks up, then calls the waiter.

HARRY

Whiskey sour, over here, please.  
(to Connie)  
Did you get it?

She pushes over a manila envelope. Harry opens it.

CONNIE

If I lose my job I'll come and be your secretary.

HARRY

I couldn't pay what the Times pays ... they'll never miss it. They must be digging out this stuff all the time.

CONNIE

You're kidding, the dyke in our cuttings library's getting suspicious. My boss hasn't researched a story in years.

Harry examines the contents. Photographs and yellowed newspaper cuttings. He flips over an 8x10 glossy.

CLOSE UP - PHOTOGRAPH OF JOHNNY FAVORITE

in a tuxedo. bright hair pomaded into a frozen black wave. His smile a tribute to show biz phoney and Pepsodent.

Harry stares at the picture.

HARRY

Hi, Johnny, where are you?

CONNIE

Can you believe that guy?  
Dumped outside an orphanage and  
all ...

HARRY

You read this?

CONNIE

Sure. You were late and I didn't  
bring a book.

HARRY

So Johnny was an abandoned child.

Connie sips her Manhattan as she interrupts as people do who've read something before you.

CONNIE

Just like in a movie. Found in a box with the date of birth pinned to his blanket. Cute.

HARRY

February 14, 1918. Valentine's Day. Abbeville, Louisiana. His dad was probably a soldier home on leave.

CONNIE

I never knew he was so big. I hardly heard of him and he was pulling in half a million bucks a year before anyone had heard of Sinatra.

Harry flicks over another glossy. A band photo. Black faces. White smiles. Tuxedos, wing collars. Johnny's sole white face sticking out a mile.

HARRY

Orphanage to altar boy to piano player in New Orleans to Chicago singing. By 1938 he was headlining with the Spider Simpson orchestra in New York.

CONNIE

Until he got drafted and wound up dead in the war.

HARRY

Presumed dead. Tunisia.

Harry flicks over another photo. Johnny and a black man holding a guitar.

CONNIE

That guy's called Toots Sweet. Cute name for a guitar player. But wait till you get to the juicy bit about the engagement ...

HARRY

This guy's weird. There he is pulling in all that dough and he's visiting a palm reader in Coney Island.

CONNIE

Madame Zora do you believe it  
... read here, about the rich  
guy's daughter he was engaged  
to. Cruiser?

HARRY

Krusemark. Margaret Krusemark.  
Daughter of Ethan, big time  
Louisiana dough. Brewing, shipping,  
sugar-beet.

CONNIE

Favorite broke off the engagement,  
asshole. After two years.  
There's a picture from the News.  
Broke her heart, dumb shit went  
back down south to Daddy.

Harry stares at the News picture of the distraught  
Margaret Krusemark. WE MOVE IN on Harry's face.

FX: Football in BG.

Connie gets his attention back.

CONNIE

We gonna eat? We gonna fuck?  
Or we gonna play detectives?

CUT TO:

EXT: DOWNTOWN NEW YORK - DAY

Harry rounds the block on the way to his office. He  
stops to talk to Siley, the news vendor, who hands him a  
coffee. Harry sits on a box next to him.

SILEY

You still ain't brought the  
last cup back.

HARRY

You got any upstate papers?  
Like Poughkeepsie?

SILEY

What do people round here want  
with Poughkeepsie news? What  
you looking for?

HARRY

A murder.

Siley takes down one of his city papers.

SILEY  
 Take one of these, they's full  
 of murders. What d'you want?  
 A guy there cut up his wife with  
 a tree saw, kept her in the ice  
 box in fourteen pieces.

HARRY  
 This is a suicide.

SILEY  
 That's what this guy claimed  
 it was.

Harry pushes his cup towards Siley.

HARRY  
 Top me up.

SILEY  
 You know I was thinking about  
 them communists, you know what's  
 wrong with them, they're not God  
 fearin'. A man ain't scared of  
 God ain't got no soul.  
 (crosses himself)

HARRY  
 Siley, d'you know a Harlem preacher  
 called Pastor John?

SILEY  
 Sure I know him. His sister-n-  
 law was all tied up with him.  
 One of his "Celestial Handmaidens,"  
 got baptized along with three  
 hundred others -- the guy used  
 a fire hose to do it.

HARRY  
 A fire hose?

SILEY  
 Can you believe that? They used  
 to march up and down 130th Street  
 before the war in their white robes  
 and all. The Pastor drove behind  
 in an open Dusenbergs wearing a big  
 plumed hat, real looney, and he got  
 loonier -- caused a stink when he  
 brought the old Lafayette Hotel  
 out in Newark -- paid for it in  
 cash, single bills so the story  
 goes. What a racket. Some say  
 (MORE)

SILEY (contd)  
it ain't God he's prayin' to  
these days. It could be worse.

HARRY  
It could?

SILEY  
At least he ain't a communist.

Harry folds up his paper and leaves.

HARRY  
Thanks for the coffee.

SILEY  
Oh, the big guy's waiting for  
you in the coffee shop.

Harry stops in his tracks.

HARRY  
What?

SILEY  
The big guy in the homburg.  
I told him you didn't get up  
'till noon.

Harry crosses the street to the coffee shop.

INT: OLD ITALIAN COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Checker tablecloths. Bentwood chairs. Cyphre sits in  
the corner sipping from a small white china cup. Harry  
pulls up the Bentwood opposite.

CYPHRE  
Did you see him?

HARRY  
No.

CYPHRE  
Why not?

HARRY  
It would have been difficult.

CYPHRE  
Why?

HARRY  
He wasn't there.

Cyphre shows no reaction. Drains his coffee. Gestures to the counter for more. He takes a hard boiled egg from a small saucer. Cracks it, peels it. Harry continues.

HARRY

It seems he walked out of Emily Harvest Dodd's fifteen years ago wearin' his best suit, a new face and a headache, drove off with a guy called Kelley and a girl. You know this Kelley?

Cyphre shakes his head. Sprinkles salt on his egg.

Kelley paid a bent doctor called Fowler to pinch hit for Johnny all these years -- he's been covering up, like Johnny's still there.

Harry picks up Cyphre's spilled salt and throws it over his left shoulder.

... Seems like your Johnny fixed himself the perfect disappearing act, Mr. Cyphre. That's about it. I'm sorry I couldn't be of more help ...

CYPHRE

I want him found, Mr. Angel.

Two coffees arrive.

HARRY

Why don't you try Missing Persons? Old Johnny's got fifteen years start on you ...

CYPHRE

I will instruct my lawyer to send you a check for five hundred dollars immediately. If you don't want the job, I will engage someone else. Cognac with your coffee?

Harry shakes his head.

HARRY

I got an acid stomach. Five hundred will do fine.

Cyphre breaks off the egg's shell.

CYPHRE

Some primitive religions believe  
the egg is the symbol of the soul.  
(offers Harry an egg)

HARRY

No thanks, I got a thing about  
chickens.

EXTREME CLOSE UP - CYPHRE'S TEETH

snapping into the egg.

CUT TO:

INT: KINGDOM MISSION - DAY

The corridor of the Kingdom Mission. Quiet. Empty.  
Harry looks around. He slowly pushes open the door of  
the room where he saw the splattered blood. Now Tide  
clean.

INT: KINGDOM HALL - DAY

Harry walks into the main hall. On the walls behind the  
armchair pulpit weird markings he hadn't noticed before.  
On the walls, Christian/Satanic paintings. Primitive  
but powerful. Shadows. Echoes.

In the front row, back to us, covered in a black shroud,  
a WOMAN is bent in prayer. She mumbles. She senses his  
presence. She turns. The hood throws a heavy shadow  
over her face. Harry slowly moves forward. Silence.  
Suddenly a hand on his shoulder. Two black HEAVIES.  
Harry twists round and catches a punch in the stomach.  
He gets dragged along the corridor. In the yellow light  
of the corridor he is punched some more, but pushes free  
and runs into Pastor John's anteroom.

INT: ANTEROOM - DAY

Total blackness. Harry kicks at the door. It crashes  
open. Light. Harry's silhouette rushes into the alley  
at the side.

INT: ALLEY - DAY

Harry runs down the alley to the street. He coughs,  
straightens his hat. Watches the crowd.

EXT: 175TH STREET - DAY

A small procession of WOMEN in white robes singing and  
carrying banners proclaiming a certain religious

ambiguity. Pastor John follows in a carrying chair. Dapper. Omnipotent. Behind him a BAND, well-dressed if musically a little lacking.

WE SEE Harry through the marchers. Behind him a street corner POLITICIAN competes with the religious procession. HE wears a sash and has a handful of SUPPORTERS, not entirely convinced.

STREET POLITICIAN

Friends. If elected we promise you a new tomorrow. We'll build a bridge at 125th Street linking Manhattan with New Jersey and the outside world. In twenty-five years there will be new homes, parks, industries, by 1980 Harlem will be an Eldorado of much sought after real estate ...

Harry moves off into the crowd. He doesn't believe him either.

INT: GREENWICH VILLAGE LOFT (ONE)

We hear over a poem being recited. On the floor a naked MODEL has white plaster splashed on her by a crew-cut ARTIST. Another GIRL is praying on a Moslem prayer mat. HARRY waits for her to finish, walks through on his way to the loft adjoining.

HARRY

By the way, Mecca's that way.  
You were praying to Yonkers.

INT: GREENWICH VILLAGE LOFT (TWO) - NIGHT

A baggy sweated 50's TRENDY reads a pretentious poem about the atom bomb and sex. A dozen ACOLYTES sit cross-legged at his feet. Harry walks in at the door and gestures to Connie who tip-toes out.

INT: HARRY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT  
EXTREME CLOSE UP - CONNIE

undressing and being undressed. Hands. Shoes. Suspender belt. Stockings. Bra ... etc. Over this we hear Connie speaking.

CONNIE

I called the union like you said. Three of the Spider Simpson's band are playing in L.A., one's in jail, the rest are dead or off the union books. Only Spider's here in town.

HARRY

Where?

CONNIE

I wrote it all down.

(searches through  
her bag)

The dyke in the cuttings room  
wouldn't let me take any more  
files, right, Spider's in an  
old people's home on 138th Street.

Harry continues to undress her.

HARRY

Shit. Not Harlem again.

CONNIE

And I checked on Margaret Krusemark  
like you said. There wasn't much.  
Dad Ethan owns half of Louisiana,  
met Johnny at a high school prom  
in New Orleans, cute huh, oh yeah  
there's lots on her spells.

HARRY

Spells? Like in eye of a newt  
and toe of a frog?

CONNIE

Yeah, seems she was a bit of  
a crackpot, casting spells at  
society do's and stuff. Didn't  
go down too well with those Ivy  
League stiffos. Oh yeah, she was  
known as the "Witch of Wellesey."  
Did I do good?

HARRY

You did great.

CLOSE UP - HARRY

being undressed by her, as we did with Connie.

HARRY

So what have I got? I got some  
kind of religious looney for a  
client. I got to find Johnny  
golden tonsils. We don't know  
where he is and he probably  
doesn't know who he is. I got  
a geratric band leader in a home  
in Harlem. I got Madame Zora out  
in Coney Island. What else I got?

CLOSE - CONNIE

her face, for the first time.

CONNIE

A hard on.

CUT TO:

EXT: 138TH STREET - DAY

A black KID slides towards us on an improvised slide made on the icy sidewalk. He falls over and slides the last ten feet on his backside.

INT: LINCOLN PRESBYTERIAN HOSPICE FOR THE ELDERLY - DAY

A sign painted on the peeling wall says "JESUS NEVER FAILS." A corridor. Dingy. Harry walks toward us in and out of the shadows.

INT: LARGE ROOM - DAY

Lit from the large windows. The room is almost empty but for a MAN who sits in a chair staring out at the KIDS who play below. Harry walks up to him.

HARRY

... Er ... Mr. Simpson.

The man doesn't look up at him. He stares at the kids.

I'm from Look magazine. I'm doing a piece on forgotten vocalists of the 40's. Like er ... Johnny Favorite. I believe he played with your orchestra?

SPIDER

That prick. What you wanna write about him for?

HARRY

Beats me. It's my editor's idea.

SPIDER

That guy was lower than Joe Louis's jockstrap. He croaked. Bumped off in the war.

HARRY

I heard he was in a hospital upstate.

SPIDER

No, he's dead. I remember hearing  
(MORE)

SPIDER (contd)  
about it and ordering a triple  
Jack Daniels to celebrate,  
sonofabitch.

HARRY  
You didn't like him?

SPIDER  
Last time I saw him was the  
day of Pearl Harbor. The Japs  
shit on the fleet and Johnny shit  
on the Spider Simpson band.

HARRY  
How's that?

SPIDER  
Walked out on us -- we had to  
cancel some pretty heavy bookings  
too. Lost me a lotta dough.  
Never recovered.

HARRY  
I'm sorry. What was he like?

SPIDER  
That guy couldn't tell the truth  
without lying.

HARRY  
I understand he was superstitious.

SPIDER  
Fucking weirdo. Always doing  
something strange.

HARRY  
Like what?

SPIDER  
Oh one time I saw him catching  
pigeons up on the roof of our  
hotel -- we were out on the road  
someplace. He was wavin' a big  
net around like some Looney Tunes  
dog catcher. I thought he didn't  
like the hotel food or something,  
but later after the show I dropped  
in and there he was with the damn  
pigeon split open on the table,  
poking the guts with a pencil.

HARRY  
What was all that about?

SPIDER

Said he was predicting the future  
like the priests in ancient Rome.

HARRY

Ancient Rome?

SPIDER

Can you believe that?

(suddenly)

... and he used to wear a great  
big ring on his pinky with Hebrew  
writin' on and he weren't Jewish  
either, weren't even circumcised.  
You know when you get to play with  
someone that long you get to take  
a lot of pisses between sets and  
you notice these things.

Harry smiles.

HARRY

What about his girlfriend?

SPIDER

Evangeline?

CLOSE - HARRY

surprised.

HARRY

Evangeline? I thought he was  
engaged to Margaret Krusemark?

SPIDER

Oh yeah, but Evangeline was his  
real love. 'Course no one knew  
that. She was colored, see, and  
there was no crossin' the line them  
days. She was a fine dinner, great  
lookin' woman.

HARRY

Where is she now?

SPIDER

Down South. He packed her off  
when the shit hit the fan with  
the Krusemark broad -- that witch  
was loonier than him if you ask  
me -- s'posed to be a society girl  
and all that. Would you believe she  
gave him a fucking skull to carry  
around in his suitcase?

HARRY

A human skull?

SPIDER

Once it was, the guy had been  
dead a while.

(smiles)

S'posed to have been from the  
grave of a man who murdered ten  
people. Creepy.

HARRY

What was it for?

SPIDER

Me and the boys used to gag  
that he asked her for head one  
time and that's what she gave  
him.

(laughs)

Used to stare at it for hours,  
said it gave him power.

HARRY

What about his other friends?

SPIDER

Fellah, the only friend Johnny  
Favorite had was Johnny Favorite  
'cept for old bonehead in the  
suitcase.

HARRY

What about Toots Sweet? I saw a  
picture of them together.

SPIDER

The guitar player? Yeah, great,  
truly great. Maybe they was buddies  
from the early days.

HARRY

Where is he now?

SPIDER

He got old. He went home to Algiers.

HARRY

He was African?

SPIDER

Algiers, New Orleans.

HARRY

Oh.

SPIDER

Where all good jazzmen go to die.

HARRY

How about you? Why didn't you go?

SPIDER

I ain't dead yet.

CUT TO:

EXT: CONEY ISLAND BOARDWALK - DAY

Deserted. Shuttered side shows. Old newspapers blown in the wind like tumbleweed.

EXT: STREET - DAY

Summer signs, meaningless in winter. Like a clown without make-up. Shabby. Silent, but for the sounds of distant sea gulls.

EXT: UNDER BOARDWALK - DAY

The winter sun squeezes through the wooden boardwalk. On the sand the discarded debris of many summers. And rats, gnawing at the garbage.

INT: CONEY ISLAND - DAY

A woman lies in bed. Still, naked, clutching to her the white sheets splashed with blood. A fat man stares at her. A round, translucent face. Pale grey eyes filled with fear and frozen in time.

EXT: CONEY ISLAND - DAY

A man lies on the sidewalk clutching his stomach, ripped through with bullet holes. Under him a pool of red, red blood. Two hands come in and pick him up, pool of blood and all. He's made of wax. WE SEE the back of a truck. Three wax figures, gangsters, clutch their bloodied faces. A grizzly arcade gangster tableau, out of place leaning against the removals truck. WORKMEN carry them into a building. Harry walks along, stops, lights a cigarette. Pushes open the door.

INT: CONEY ISLAND ARCADE - DAY

Harry stops at the Fatty Arbuckle tableau. Looks down at the bloody bed sheets. An elderly ARCADE MAN fusses with the folds in the sheets.

HARRY  
I guess they forgot the coke  
bottle.

The elderly arcade man says nothing.

I'm looking for Madame Zora's  
pitch, could you point me in  
that direction?

The elderly arcade man says nothing, keeps fussing with  
the wax model of the woman.

I wouldn't bother. She doesn't  
live.

ARCADE MAN  
No Madame Zora around here.  
Ask Izzy.

HARRY  
Izzy?

ARCADE MAN  
On the beach.

HARRY  
Thanks.

Harry turns, and talks to the staring wax figure of Fatty  
Arbuckle. Sly smile from Harry.

Some party, huh?

EXT: SEA - DAY  
WIDE SHOT

Harry, silhouetted against the sea, walks towards a man  
sitting in a deck chair: IZZY. He is incongruously naked  
from the waist up. Slim, sinewy, oblivious to the cold.  
A plastic nose shield clipped to his glasses.

HARRY  
You Izzy?

Izzy looks up. Nods.

Looks like the last of the sun.

IZZY  
Yup.

HARRY  
The guy in the arcade over  
(MORE)

HARRY (contd)  
there said you might be able to  
help me.

IZZY  
Oh yeah?

HARRY  
I'm looking for a Madame Zora.

IZZY  
Sure I knew her. Friend of the  
wife, before the war.

HARRY  
A fortune teller, right?

IZZY  
And then some. Real creepy.  
I hate those hocus pocus bitches.  
Fuckin' witch. Her and the wife  
got along real well. The wife's  
a Baptist. Here, have a nose  
shield ...

(he hands Harry a  
plastic nose shield)  
I found a whole boxful under the  
boardwalk.

Harry takes it. Looks at it and clips it onto his own  
glasses.

HARRY  
Not much sun in the city right  
now.

IZZY  
Yeah, but it keeps the rain off  
too.

Harry looks at him, not sure if he's serious or putting  
him on.

HARRY  
Ever hear of the name Johnny  
Favorite?

IZZY  
The singer?

HARRY  
Yes, crooner. Visited Madame  
Zora all the time.

IZZY

I heard of him, but I don't know nothin' about him. Ask the wife, she'll know.

(gestures to fat woman in the water)

She's always singing stupid tunes off the radio. She knows all that kind of shit.

HARRY

She likes the water, huh?

IZZY

Nope. Hates it. She's getting a little on the heavy side -- she thinks it's good for her varicose veins.

HARRY

Thanks.

Harry stands up. Brushes the sand off of his knees.

What do you do in the summer?

IZZY

I bite the heads off of rats.

HARRY

What do you do in the winter?

IZZY

Same.

Harry walks towards the water front and calls to the fat lady: BO. He shouts to compete with the duet between the ocean and the sea gulls.

HARRY

Er ... I was just talking to your husband over there ... I was inquiring about Madame Zora.

Bo, holding the dress above her thighs, shouts in reply.

BO

Yeah, I knew her. Before the war. Madame Zora, you say?

HARRY

Yeah. She was a gypsy fortune teller.

BO

She used to have the booth across the boardwalk from me. Oh she weren't no gypsy. She was a debootant. And she was messin' with more than readin' tea leaves.

HARRY

Did you ever see her with a guy called Johnny Favorite?

BO

Oh yeah, he was cute, visited her all the time. She was real stuck on him. The guy with the golden tonsils they called him. I knew all his tunes.

HARRY

Did you ever hear of Margaret Krusemark?

BO

Don't be a gazonie, fellah. Madame Zora was Margaret Krusemark.

CLOSE - HARRY'S FACE

HARRY

Have you any idea where I can find Johnny Favorite?

BO

Nope. Only the cemetery. Do you wanna hear one of his tunes?

Bo doesn't wait for an answer. She sings one of Johnny's old hits. Fortunately, the ocean noise gobbles up most of it. Harry walks back past Izzy and away towards the boardwalk. WE SEE in WIDE SHOT again.

HARRY

Thanks for the nose shield, it might come in handy where I'm going.

IZZY

In Brooklyn?

HARRY

In Louisiana.

IZZY

Nice.

CUT TO:

EXT: NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA - DAY

Blues music over.

Harry gets off the train with his suitcase. He takes his sunglasses from his top pocket, looks up at the hot sun. Clips on one of Izzy's nose shields.

INT: SMALL HOTEL - DAY

Harry unpacks his case.

EXT: MIKE'S AUTO YARD - DAY

Harry gets into an old Chevy. MIKE wipes his hands, takes the rental money.

MIKE

A week, you say?

HARRY

At most.

INT: BAR - DAY

Harry sits thinking. Twisting his drink. Looks at the posters on the wall, advertizing the dozens of different musicians playing in town. Scribbles something in his book.

EXT: STREET - DAY

A sudden tropical downpour. Louisiana rain. Harry takes refuge in a doorway. The streets flood in seconds flat. Harry stares into the giant puddles. He turns to look in the window of the store. Religious items and mildewed herbs crowd the small window. He looks up at the old, hand painted sign: "MAMMY CARTER'S HERB STORE." He pushes open the door.

INT: HERB STORE - DAY

Small. Damp. Crowded with hanging herbs, dead possum and weasel.

HARRY

Hi. I was lookin' for some High John the Conqueror root?

MAMMY

Powdered or hanging?

HARRY

I'm not sure.

MAMMY

Caught in the rain, huh? Two  
roots a dollar twenty.

HARRY

Sure. Yeah, a lady I knew used  
to sell John the Conqueror in  
Harlem -- Evangeline. Ever hear  
of her?

A TOOTHLESS old man climbs on a chair to unhook the roots.

TOOTHLESS

Practically everyone round here's  
called Evangeline, Mister, after  
the poem. You know the poem?

HARRY

Yeah, I know it. This lady  
used to have a store in Harlem.  
Same name as this: Carter.

TOOTHLESS

Everyone uses the name, Mister.  
Like Howard Johnson's. But this  
is the real place.

Harry spots a yellow card pinned amongst many on the  
wall: M. KRUSEMARK - FORTUNE TELLING. He tugs it off  
the wall, unseen by the woman.

HARRY

Proudfoot. Evangeline Proudfoot?

MAMMY

Yeah, I knew her. She used to  
come back here all the time when  
she was in New York.

Man gets down from chair. Smiles, showing his gums and  
a couple of lonely teeth.

TOOTHLESS

This is where they come to warm  
the power up.

HARRY

Where is she now?

MAMMY

She got sick. Died.

Toothless sits back in the armchair.

## TOOTHLESS

Spent her money and went back  
to Holy Shelter swamp. Then  
buried her in Armandville. It  
don't pay to let the soul go  
hungry.

## MAMMY

She was waiting for some fellah.

## HARRY

Just like in the poem.

## MAMMY

Just like in the poem. A dollar  
twenty.

## HARRY

Who was the guy?

## MAMMY

Never told.

## HARRY

Thanks. Thanks a lot.

CLOSE UP - JOHN THE CONQUEROR ROOT

as Harry picks it up.

CUT TO:

EXT: SUGAR CANE FIELDS - DAY

A sea of sugar cane. Harry's car speeds along the road  
in the top of frame. Other roads. Shanty houses. Dogs.  
Washing. Old Mammies with narrow eyes and wide apart  
legs. Beat up cars. White Brahman cattle with weird  
humps. Many poor black faces. Some white.

EXT: SHACK - DAY

Harry's wheel hub is rattling. He stops at an old shack,  
gets out and kicks the cap. The shack has a porch that  
hangs down, torn off in a storm. A group of six grubby  
white KIDS, all sizes, stare at him. The eldest is skinny  
as a bean pole with big ears.

## HARRY

Could you tell me where the  
cemetery is?

## SKINNY KID

Across the bridge.

Staring faces. Suspicious. Grimy. Inbred. One kid points to a narrow track.

HARRY

Thanks. What happened to your porch?

SKINNY KID

Tree fell on it.

HARRY

Recently?

SKINNY KID

No. Long time ago.

Harry gets back in, drives on over a rickety wooden bridge and up a dirt road. A cloud of dust.

EXT: ARMANDVILLE GRAVEYARD - DAY

White tombs, long weeds, the sound of crickets. The grave of Evangeline Proudfoot.

CLOSE - THE LETTERS

punched out on the stone. PAN DOWN, WE SEE a bowl of fruit and a loaf of mildewed bread. An offering to the dead.

CLOSE - HARRY'S FACE

He has on his sunglasses and nose shield. Puzzled.

CLOSE - THE GRAVE MARKINGS

Crosses in chalk. The headstone is at an angle, as are other crosses in the old overgrown cemetery.

Harry hears something. The sound of a child. He steps behind a large tomb. He sees a young mother. Very young. Very beautiful. Mocha colored skin. EPIPHANY. She has a small CHILD with her, also beautiful with the same coloring. She stops at the grave, replaces the mildewed bread with a fresh loaf and sits for a while. The child amuses himself jumping on and off the old headstone.

EPIPHANY

Stop that, have respect for Grandma.  
Come on.

They walk off. Harry follows. He admires her slim body through the white cotton dress. Down a lane, through a fence. A caravan park. Run down. Chickens peck in the

dusty road. She stops at an outside communal wash stand and begins to wash her hair. Harry approaches her taking care to skirt round the chickens.

HARRY  
Miss Proudfoot?

EPIPHANY  
Yes?

The child sees him and begins to scream, running away. Harry snatches off his sunglasses and the offending nose shield.

HARRY  
I'm sorry. A guy gave me this at Coney Island.

EPIPHANY  
It's OK, honey.

She calls to the child who hides behind a trailer.

HARRY  
I was hoping to speak with your mother.

EPIPHANY  
You're a little late for that.

She continues washing her hair. Harry looks at her breasts down the top of her blouse.

Did you know her?

HARRY  
No, we never met. I was hoping she might answer some questions for me.

EPIPHANY  
What are you, some kind of cop?

Harry can't mislead her. She's too pretty and her topaz eyes too honest.

HARRY  
My name's Harry Angel. I'm a private detective ... er.

EPIPHANY  
Epiphany.

HARRY  
Your mother left you a beautiful name.

EPIPHANY

And not much else.

HARRY

Actually, I'm looking for a friend of your mom's called Johnny Favorite.

Epiphany straightens her wet hair dangling on her bare shoulders.

EPIPHANY

I met all of Mama's friends. I never met anyone called Favorite.

Harry dances round a chicken at his feet. Epiphany smiles.

HARRY

I got a thing about chickens. Your mom and Johnny were friends in New York before the war.

EPIPHANY

She never told me. My mama had a lot of guys. She liked men.

HARRY

How about Toots Sweet, he was a friend of Favorite's. You know him?

Epiphany doesn't look up.

EPIPHANY

Nope.

HARRY

Pretty good guitar player they tell me. I'm going to try and catch his act tonight ...

He scribbles into a notebook and tears off the page.

... I'm staying at this hotel, you can call me there if you remember anything. You're very pretty, Epiphany. Your name suits you.

He turns and walks away. Epiphany calls after him.

EPIPHANY

What you after him for, Johnny Favorite?

HARRY  
I'm not after him. I'm just  
paid to find where he is.

EPIPHANY  
He could be six feet under.

Harry shrugs.

HARRY  
Then I'll buy a shovel.

He puts the sunglasses and plastic nose shield on. The  
kid screams in the distance. Harry snatches it off again.  
Epiphany laughs.

EXT/INT: M. KRUSEMARK'S APARTMENT - DAY  
CLOSE UP - FINGER ON BELL

FX: Cough.

Bell pushes again.

CLOSE UP - HARRY'S BROGUES

tapping impatiently. We hear over but STAY TIGHT. The  
door opens.

M. KRUSEMARK  
Mr. Angel. So sorry to keep you  
waiting.

WE FOLLOW. WE STAY on legs and examine the room with the  
dialogue over. Exotic knick-knacks everywhere. An Aztec  
dagger shaped like a bird on the wall.

HARRY  
Beautiful room.

M. KRUSEMARK  
Yes, I've been very happy here.

HARRY  
I haven't had my fortune done  
before -- will it take long?

M. KRUSEMARK  
I'll just take the details now.  
It usually takes me a couple of  
days to do your chart. Tea?

HARRY  
Please.

M. KRUSEMARK  
Darjeeling, jasmine or oolong?

HARRY  
Oolong.

M. KRUSEMARK  
Not many people like oolong.

HARRY  
To tell you the truth, I've never  
heard of it. But nothing ventured,  
(shrugs)  
nothing gained.

CLOSE - PORTRAIT OF ELDERLY MAN

that hangs on the wall.

HARRY  
Good looking man.

M. KRUSEMARK  
My father. He hates it.

HARRY  
Looks like the hero in one of  
those old pirate movies.

M. KRUSEMARK  
When I was in college the girls  
in my dorm thought he was Clark  
Gable.

She returns with tea.

HARRY  
My brother knew a girl named  
Krusemark when he was at Princeton.  
She went to Wellesley, told him  
his fortune at a prom.

M. KRUSEMARK  
That would have been my sister  
Margaret. We're twins. I'm the  
white witch, she was the black  
one.  
(smiles)  
Cream or sugar?

HARRY  
Straight up. Was? Your sister.  
You said was.

M. KRUSEMARK  
 She's dead. Now, Mr. Angel,  
 I'll need to know your date of  
 birth.

HARRY  
 February 14, 1918. A Valentine  
 baby.

M. KRUSEMARK  
 (startled)  
 How curious. I used to know a  
 boy born on that exact same day.

HARRY  
 You know how it was. All those  
 soldiers home on leave. Maybe  
 I could borrow this friend of  
 yours' chart, save some time.

M. KRUSEMARK  
 I don't think so. Each person  
 is different, and I don't think  
 you'd want his chart. Place of  
 birth, please.

HARRY  
 Brooklyn, New York. He was a  
 jerk your friend?

M. KRUSEMARK  
 No. He had similar signs to  
 you. For instance he found it  
 inconceivable that he was so gifted  
 at hurting others. Would that be  
 you?

HARRY  
 Maybe. I never thought about it.  
 What happened to your friend?

M. KRUSEMARK  
 (shrugs)  
 We lost touch. Now, Mr. Angel,  
 I'm going to need your fiancée's  
 exact place and date of birth for  
 me to compare your latitudes and  
 longitudes.

Harry stares at the pentacle hanging from her neck. The  
 same upside down five pointed star as on Fowler's hand.  
 WE INTERCUT the dead doctor's face. The blood dry on  
 his cheek. BACK TO Harry. M. Krusemark's voice fades  
 as we hear the eerie tune we've heard before.

M. KRUSEMARK (VO)  
 It would also help if I could  
 have your exact hour of birth.  
 I notice already that your sun  
 is in trine with Jupiter ... etc.

INT: FOWLER'S ROOM - NIGHT  
 CLOSE - FOWLER'S FACE

-- dead, white. WE PAN DOWN TO his hands that clutch the framed photograph of the dead wife. White fingers. WE INTERCUT the CLOSE UP of Fowler drumming his fingers on the kitchen table. The large gold ring on his pinky. WE CUT BACK TO the dead white fingers. No ring. Music over.

CUT TO:

EXT: M. KRUSEMARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Harry leaves. Dodges into an alleyway/courtyard, two houses away. A dog barks. In the same frame WE SEE M. Krusemark's door. In a moment she appears and hurries along the sidewalk passing Harry in the alley. Music over.

EXT: STREETCAR - DAY

Harry follows, watches her get on the old green streetcar.

INT: STREETCAR - DAY

M. Krusemark from behind, sitting in front on the crowded streetcar.

EXT: STREETCAR - DAY

The streetcar passes by CAMERA. Cars and PEDESTRIANS wait as it clatters along on its iron rails. Two black KIDS who have hitched a ride, jump off at speed.

EXT: STREETCAR - DAY

A good neighborhood. Victorian clapboards. Large, ornate, Louisiana eccentric.

INT/EXT: STREETCAR - DAY

M. Krusemark gets off and, as she does, WE SEE Harry behind a group of people. He'd also got on the streetcar. He jumps off and crosses the street, watches her go into a large Louisiana Grand Folly clapboard. A black BUTLER answers the door.

EXT: MUSEUM - DAY

Harry slips into the house he's standing outside.  
 "LABICHE MUSEUM." A tubby, over made-up lady greets him  
 with a strong southern accent that hurts: MISS EUNICE.

MISS EUNICE

Welcome to the Museum Labiche,  
 sir. I'm Eunice Thibodeux, and  
 how can I be of assistance to  
 you?

HARRY

Oh, good, this is the Labiche?  
 I mistakenly went into the  
 house opposite.

EUNICE

No, that's Ethan Krusemark's  
 residence, sir. A fine house  
 built in 1872 ...

HARRY

Oh, the Krusemarks-- well I'll  
 be ... my brother was at college  
 with the twins.

EUNICE

Twins?

HARRY

Doesn't he have twin daughters,  
 I seem to recall?

EUNICE

Oh no. Mr. Krusemark has just  
 the one daughter, Margaret.  
 Now would you like the unassisted  
 tour, sir, that's fifty cents,  
 or if you'd like me to show you  
 around it's seventy-five cents ...

HARRY

I'll take the fifty cents.

Harry stares through the window at the house across the  
 street. Eunice drones on in the background.

EUNICE (VO)

In which case let me call your  
 attention to the wallpaper in the  
 drawing room, it was printed  
 during a paper shortage on the  
 reverse of old copies of the  
Delta Chronicle -- in the kitchen

(MORE)

EUNICE (VO contd)  
of special interest are the money  
posts ... etc.

INT: RED ROOSTER CLUB - NIGHT

Crowded. Smokey. Wonderful blues guitar. TOOTS SWEET plays. The guitar truly cries and sings. His face contorting with ecstasy and pain as he slides the bottle neck up and down the strings.

Applause. Toots makes for the bar. Harry sits on the stool next to him.

HARRY  
That was wonderful playing,  
Mr. Sweet.

TOOTS  
Toots, son. Thank you.

HARRY  
Can I buy you a drink?

TOOTS  
No, I get mine on the house.

BARTENDER hands him tall glass.

There she is or there they is.  
Two Sisters Cocktail. I don't  
know what's in it, but it takes  
the place of six Stingers.

HARRY  
I once saw you play in New York  
... oh before the war ... in  
Dickie Wells' Bar.

TOOTS  
Yeah?

HARRY  
You were singing with a crooner  
called Johnny Favorite.

TOOTS  
Yeah, I vaguely remember playing  
with that guy once.

HARRY  
You were buddies, weren't you?

TOOTS  
Son, he made a record of one of  
(MORE)

TOOTS (contd)

my songs once, that don't make us buddies. Hey, are you a dick or a book writer?

HARRY

A journalist. I'm doing a piece on Johnny and the Spider Simpson orchestra.

TOOTS

I remember Spider. Used to play the drums like two jack rabbits fucking. I gotta go, son, just time for a piss and a spit and back to work. Try one of them Two Sisters. Then you can make the whole thing up. That's what you newspaper people usually do, don't you?

Harry puts out his cigarette, follows Toots to the john.

INT: JOHN - NIGHT

Dank. Small. Gloomy. One upright urinal. One stall. Toots waits his turn. A black MAN in a jacket three siezes too big for him uses the urinal. Toots sees Harry.

TOOTS

You again. You can't even take a piss ...

HARRY

Tell me, Toots, did you know about Johnny Favorite and Evangeline Proudfoot ...

TOOTS

Look, I'm too big to go hidin' under beds. I don't know nothin'. Two Sisters Cocktails, that's the only broads I'm interested in these days ... Fuck!

He has taken his place at the urinal and has seen something left behind. Harry pulls his shoulders back. WE SEE a dead chicken's foot with a ribbon around it. Toots grabs it.

CLOSE UP - CHICKEN'S FOOT

Harry grabs him by the lapel.

HARRY  
What was that?

TOOTS  
Nothin'. Mind your business.

HARRY  
What's going on, Toots?

TOOTS  
I ain't talking no more.

HARRY  
Who's after you? What does  
Johnny Favorite have to do with  
it?

The door pushes open. The man in the big jacket grabs Harry. Toots leaves. Harry is thrown into the corridor and roughed up. Big Jacket holds the chicken foot in Harry's face pinning him to the wall. The lizard-like foot sticks up Harry's nostrils.

BIG JACKET  
If you don't get the hell out  
of here, an' I mean clean out  
onto the sidewalk, yo' gonna wish  
yo' lily white ass never was born.

HARRY  
Please, I've got this thing about  
chickens ...

CUT TO:

EXT: NEW ORLEANS STREET - NIGHT  
CLOSE UP - EMPTY PACK OF CAMELS

screwed up. It drops to the floor, followed by the contents of an ashtray. WE SEE Harry in his car, across the street from the Red Rooster. PEOPLE leave. He sees Toots scuffling out and along the road. Harry fires the engine and follows him from a distance.

EXT: NEW ORLEANS STREET - NIGHT

Toots vanishes into his house -- a shabby, dilapidated Orleans clapboard. He leaves the door open. Harry lights another cigarette. Toots returns with a plaid bag and jumps into a beat up old Ford. Harry follows.

EXT: ROADS THROUGH BAYOUS - NIGHT

Music over. Harry follows as Toots takes him deep into the leafy, swampy bayous that surround New Orleans.

Toots pulls off the road. WE hear drums. Harry stops his car and walks the rest of the way.

EXT: BAYOU - NIGHT

Five candles flicker on saucers. THREE DRUMMERS. A lean, grey-haired MAN beats on a conga drum with a bare hand and a wooden mallet. A GIRL in white dress. Bare-foot. FIFTEEN ONLOOKERS sway from side to side. Gourd rattles. Iron clappers. Toots with maracas. Wild. The girl tosses flour, marking out designs on the floor around a pit dug in the ground. She turns into the light. It's Epiphany Proudfoot. All dance. Frenzied, crazed shadows. Demonic heartbeat of the drums. A WOMAN writhes on the floor like a snake, her tongue darting in and out. Epiphany's dress clings to her wet body. She reaches into a basket, pulls out a chicken, its blood red comb vivid in the moonlight. She rubs it against her breast as she dances. She takes a razor and deftly cuts the rooster's throat. Drains the blood. The rooster screams. Its wings thrash wildly. Legs twitch. Blood spurts. Into the pit. Dead. Offerings are poured onto it. Coins, dried corn, cookies. A WOMAN pours a bottle of Coca-Cola onto the dead chicken. Harry goes back to his car and reverses out into the road and is away. After all, he had a thing about chickens.

EXT: TOOTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Toots' old Ford pulls up, and he jumps out.

INT: STAIRWAY - TOOTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Toots puffs up the stairs. Puts down his plaid bag and opens the door. Harry grabs him from behind. A flash of metal. Toots with an open razor. He slashes Harry's hand. Harry catches the old man's brittle arm and snaps it back. The razor drops to the floor and Harry kicks it to the wall. Another foot into the old man's crotch. He crumples into a heap. The religious ornaments and junk clatter on the table behind and crash around him. Harry slides the ottoman across to him and yanks Toots onto it. He picks up the razor, wraps his bleeding hand in his handkerchief.

HARRY

End of bullshit time, pal. I  
got a good look at you and young  
Epiphany doing your hot shoe  
number with the chicken. I  
ain't up on this voodoo shit.  
I'm from Brooklyn.

TOOTS

We ain't all Baptists down here,  
sonny.

HARRY

How does the Proudfoot kid  
fit in?

TOOTS

She's a Mambo, priestess, like  
her mom. Has been since she  
was thirteen.

Harry opens and closes the razor.

HARRY

When was the last time you saw  
Johnny Favorite at one of these  
chicken snuffings. He was running  
around with Mom Mambo, wasn't he?

TOOTS

I tell you, I ain't seen him  
since before the war.

HARRY

What about the chicken foot in  
the john. The one with the  
bow tie on.

TOOTS

Means I got a big mouth.

HARRY

Not big enough, Toots ...

He pushes back Toots top lid with the closed razor.  
WE SEE the inverted gold star.

... why do you wear that star  
in your tooth like that.

TOOTS

So's people know I'm a nigger.

Harry scribbles in his notebook. Tears off a page.

HARRY

Call me at the hotel if you  
hear anything. You might need  
a little more help next time  
you get a special delivery  
chicken's foot. Although,  
speaking personally, any dead  
chicken's fine by me.

EXT: STREET - HARRY'S HOTEL - NIGHT

Harry walks in the rain. He sees an OLD LADY with the black hood. The image we have seen before. Harry runs after her. An empty alleyway. Puddles. Rain sweeps across the FRAME.

INT/EXT: DREAM

Harry has a nightmare.

INT: HARRY'S HOTEL - DAY

Harry wakes with a start. TWO MEN opposite him. Seated. Baggy suits. Tight smiles. Policemen. LIEUTENANT STERNE and SERGEANT DEIMOS who goes through Harry's case and jacket pockets.

HARRY

Only cops and bad news don't knock.

STERNE

Only private dicks sleep so late. Some dream you were having.

HARRY

Yeah, I went to Mandalay again.

Sterne hands him a page from his own notebook.

STERNE

That your name?

HARRY

Yeah.

STERNE

That your hotel?

Harry answering what is obvious.

HARRY

You're in it, aren't you.

STERNE

Your handwriting?

Harry nods.

Perhaps you could tell us why a dead guitar player had it in his hand.

Harry has gone to the wash basin. Throws water on his face.

HARRY  
Dead? Toots Sweet?

STERNE  
Yeah, Toots Sweet. Except this one weren't so quick, this one took time.

Harry  
How'd he die?

Sterne takes Harry's pack of Camels from his jacket pocket and lights one up.

STERNE  
Technically? Asphyxiation by own genitalia.

HARRY  
And not so technically?

STERNE  
Someone cut his dick off, stuffed it in his mouth and choked him to death.

HARRY  
Fuck.

STERNE  
Then they took to redecoratin' his apartment with the poor jerk's blood. So when did you see him, Angel?

HARRY  
I interviewed him about eleven.

STERNE  
In what connection?

HARRY  
A case I'm working on.

STERNE  
Which is?

HARRY  
A missing person.

STERNE  
Who?

HARRY

A guy who took a walk a dozen years ago. I saw Toots in an old photograph with him.

STERNE

So who's the party you're looking for?

HARRY

I'm sorry. "Right of privacy." I'm working for a New York lawyer.

Deimos has his address book, amongst his papers.

STERNE

Name?

HARRY

Winesap. If you want the address ask Tess Trueheart there, it's in the book he's holding. It's under "W."

Deimos flicks the pages.

DEIMOS

Walsh, Williams ... you know Ted Williams, the baseball player? ...

Harry nods.

... Herman Winesap.

Deimos scribbles down the number. Sterne gets up to leave.

HARRY

Is that it?

STERNE

That's it.

(yawns)

You and your "right of privacy" can go eat lunch.

Harry holds the door for Deimos, as he exits.

HARRY

(to Deimos)

It's Wednesday. "Anything can happen day" ... Mickey Mouse Club.

DEIMOS

Don't watch it.

STERNE

(from the veranda)

Maybe we'll call, but don't hold  
your breath. Just another dead  
jigaboo. No one gives a shit.

He closes the door.

CUT TO:

EXT: STREET - NEW ORLEANS - DAY  
CLOSE UP - A NASTY PIT BULL TERRIER

Dribbling. Breathing heavily. Harry comes out of the long archway from the courtyard of his hotel. He lights up, senses being watched. Across the street, a pale-face CAJUN leans out of the window of a parked pick-up truck. The vicious pit bull sits in the back. The driver pretends not to look at Harry, but his buddy is less discreet. Harry crosses the street. The truck follows at a purr.

INT: WHARF WAREHOUSE - DAY

Harry slips into the open warehouse. Runs to the end where the sunlight streams in at the other end.

EXT: WHARF FRONT - DAY

On the wharf black WORKERS pile out of wooden boats. Scabs brought in from further down the Mississippi. UNION OFFICIALS heckle. Harry sees the men from the truck. Dog on leash. Harry mingles with the workers, his white face sticking out like a beacon. He leaps down onto a wooden boat, walks through and leaps onto another, and another, until he reaches the other wharf and away down an alley. The men with the dog are lost amongst the crowd of workers. Temporarily given the slip.

INT: BAR - DAY

The pretty BARTENDER pushes a plate of oysters towards Harry. Behind them a sax and piano duet together.

HARRY

Thanks. What's your name?

BLANCHE

Blanche.

HARRY

Dubois?

BLANCHE

No. O'Driscoll.

Harry holds up the shells and sucks down the oysters as he speaks.

HARRY

Jeez, there are more Irish in this town than in Brooklyn. I guess because the bars stay open longer.

BLANCHE

That and they needed the Irish to dig the canals. We were cheaper than blacks.

HARRY

Yeah? How come?

BLANCHE

If they lost a slave with yellow fever it cost them money to replace. If the Irish guy died they just dumped him in Lake Pontchartrain and slipped in a new one from County Clare.

HARRY

Price of freedom. Have you got a phone here?

BLANCHE

By the john. You want another Two Sisters?

HARRY

Yeah.

Harry slips a dime into the phone box and dials Margaret Krusemark's number. The sax player goes by and Harry slips a dollar into the basket.

SAX PLAYER

Thanks, mister. You wanna tune?

The phone rings and rings. She's obviously out.

HARRY

Yeah, I got a tune.

CUT TO:

INT: MARGARET KRUSEMARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Eerie music. Familiar. Harry opens Margaret Krusemark's door with a skeleton key. The large bunch jangles as he tries to find the right one. He walks inside. The assembled paraphernalia of years of obsession with the occult ... and Margaret Krusemark herself, lying spread out on the coffee table under the potted palms, her flimsy blouse pulled apart showing her small, white breasts. Blood seeps from a long, jagged incision across the chest. On the floor under the coffee table the Aztec sacrificial knife. On the wall, the clock chimes the hour. Harry picks up an ether-soaked rag. Sniffs it.

INT: BEDROOM - DAY

The unmade bed. Rumpled sheets, stained with sex. In the bathroom more nicknacks, herbs, vials and an alabaster urn among the dandruff shampoos. Harry reaches behind the Kleenex box. A human hand. Dark and shrivelled.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

Back in the living room Harry thumbs through the pages on Margaret's desk. He picks up the chart with his name on the top and stuffs it into his pocket. He thumbs through the calendar, "Harry Angel 1:30." Tears off the page and turns around. There on the shiny table by the window, sitting on the blood-stained lace, is Margaret Krusemark's heart. Harry's own heartbeat thumps as loud as a base drum. The FX echo in the room. Still louder as the CAMERA SLOWLY MOVES IN to the lump of bloody muscle. Harry gingerly takes out the crumpled piece of paper that the heart sits on.

CLOSE UP - BLOOD-STAINED SYMBOLS MARKINGS

and a place name. He stuffs it in his pocket and runs down the stairs.

INT: BAR - DAY

Harry at a bar. Knocks back a large Scotch. Wipes his brow, asks for another. Downs it.

EXT: STREET - DAY

Harry walks fast along the sidewalk and into the garage. He slams the door of his Chevy, reverses and pulls away. The pick-up truck with the two Cajuns is parked further down the street. It follows.

EXT: RIVER - DAY

A GROUP OF CHURCHGOERS attend a baptism by the river. A PREACHER performs the ritual mid-stream up to his waist in water. WE PAN UP and SEE Harry's car speed over the viaduct.

INT: CAR - DAY

Harry sees the pick-up in his mirror.

EXT: RIVERSIDE - DAY

Harry's Chevy pulls over to some beat-up wooden shacks by the bayou. TWO FISHERMEN rake oysters. Harry gets out of his car, watches for a while. The pick-up truck stops and the two men get out, as does the pit bull. Harry strolls to the back of the shack. He walks along a narrow gangplank over the mud. The pit bull leaps at him from the other end of the plank. Sinks his teeth into Harry's thigh. Harry grabs an oyster rake and stuffs the end of it into the animal's mouth and boots it away from him. The Cajun is behind him and whacks him across the back with a pick handle. The other Cajun boots him in the stomach. Harry catches his leg but gets kicked back in the mud. The Cajun pulls off the dog and holds it by the collar. Its slobbering chops inches from Harry's face.

CAJUN

Poke your nose in anymore, mister,  
and dawg here will bite your  
fucking face clean off.

Another kick. Harry rolls over in the mud.

EXT: SUGAR BEET FIELDS - DAY

An old bus pulls up by the side of a dusty road. A GROUP OF BLACK WOMEN FIELDWORKERS get off. Epiphany amongst them. WE FOLLOW her and she leads us to Harry, who sits by the side of the road, jacket and shirt off. His undershirt and rolled up trousers are covered in dried mud.

HARRY

Hi.

EPIPHANY

What happened to you?

HARRY

A dog bit me.

They walk along.

EPIPHANY

What do you want?

HARRY

A laundry.

She has walked on. Harry walks a yard or two behind, limping slightly, nursing his bitten leg. They speak as they walk.

... Couple of things I don't understand, you see, I saw you and Toots Sweet boogieing with the cockrel the other night ... quite a party.

EPIPHANY

What's your problem, it's a free country.

HARRY

Not for chickens.

EPIPHANY

Oh yeah, you got a thing about chickens. I remember.

HARRY

Toots is dead, Epiphany ...

EPIPHANY

I know. I read it in the papers.

HARRY

... And you set him up.

EPIPHANY

I didn't.

HARRY

You were the only one who knew I was seeing Toots. It was you who sent the gift-wrapped chicken foot, wasn't it?

EPIPHANY

He had a big mouth.

HARRY

Yeah, just as well judging by what the cops found in it. Quite a cute religion you got.

EPIPHANY

Obeah doesn't nail a man to the cross or have holy wars or ...

HARRY

Yeah, yeah, OK. I know, you gotta kill the chicken to make the soup.

EPIPHANY

We don't go around murdering people, Mr. Angel. What about your Johnny Favorite.

HARRY

Oh, you remember him after all.

EPIPHANY

He was my father.

They have gone into the trailer site. An old ramshackle hut has at least TEN KIDS draped over it. A large black woman, MINCIE, goes inside to fetch Epiphany's child. Harry faces her.

HARRY

If you're holding out on me, now could be a good time to tell.

EPIPHANY

Nothing to tell. He didn't come back from the war. Momma waited. Momma died. Sad and simple. Hi, honey ...

She has taken her child in her arms from the lady, Mincie.

Thanks, Mincie. Hi, honey.  
You missed your momma ... ?

They walk to Epiphany's trailer. Harry picks up a balled piece of paper and brushes off the mud from his trousers.

HARRY

There's too many dead bodies floating around, Epiphany ... even for Louisiana. I'd tell your old man to look out for you ... you do have a husband?

EPIPHANY

No. No husband.

HARRY

Epiphany, you got pretty eyes.  
Truly pretty. The kind of eyes  
that show just what you're  
thinking. And right now you're  
scared.

EPIPHANY

I'll manage.

HARRY

If you need me ...  
(shrugs)

EPIPHANY

I'll call you if I hear anything.

HARRY

Call me if you don't.

She smiles and goes into her trailer. He walks away and unravels the screwed up piece of paper he'd been using to brush the mud from his trousers. The piece of paper is a fly bill. It advertises a religious meeting. There, in the center of the page, is a photo of Louis Cyphre.

CUT TO:

INT: HARRY'S HOTEL

Harry in the lobby of his small hotel. The old, black CONCIERGE gives him a scribbled message.

INT: LAFAYETTE CATHEDRAL - DAY

Stained glass windows. The CHOIR practices. WE FOLLOW Harry down the aisle. Louis Cyphre generously fills OUR FRAME. Harry sits in the pew next to him. Down at the altar a dress rehearsal for some religious service. WE INTERCUT this with our dialogue.

CYPHRE

I'm so glad you could come.

HARRY

I didn't know you were in town.

CYPHRE

I have a speaking engagement in Baton Rouge, I thought it would be an opportune time to catch up with your progress.

HARRY

Progress ain't good. I found out a lot of stuff but so far no Johnny Favorite.

CYPHRE

How unfortunate.

HARRY

All I got is a belly full of hocus pocus and three stiffs.

CYPHRE

Stiffs.

HARRY

Dead bodies. Murders.

CYPHRE

Murders.

HARRY

Fowler, Johnny's doctor, bumped himself off and an old voodoo pal called Toots Sweet got choked to death with a part of the body meant for pissing with.

CYPHRE

This is a church, Mr. Angel.

HARRY

There's religion all over this case and I don't get it. It's ugly.

CYPHRE

They say there's just enough religion in the world to make men hate one another, Mr. Angel, but not enough to make them love.

HARRY

They do? Well, there sure wasn't a lot of love around Johnny Favorite. He was a weirdo, alright. Cutting up pigeons and shit, what's more I'm a murder suspect. The police found my name and address in Toots Sweet's hand.

CYPHRE

Winesap told me. You must be careful, Mr. Angel. And the third? You said there were three murders?

HARRY

I checked out Johnny's society girlfriend Margaret Krusemark. You know her?

CYPHRE

Vaguely.

HARRY

She was doing my chart. I gave her Johnny's birthdate, February 14th, except someone got to her and took their own Valentine's card -- split her open and cut her heart out.

CYPHRE

How awful. And the chart?

HARRY

I got it back. Funny. I guess she couldn't predict the future for herself.

CYPHRE

The future isn't what it used to be, Mr. Angel. And your conclusions?

HARRY

I haven't any. Except that our Johnny is bumping off everyone he knew. I'll let you know what else I get.

(looks at altar  
service)

These churches give me the creeps.

CYPHRE

Are you an atheist, Mr. Angel?

HARRY

Sure. I'm from Brooklyn.

CUT TO:

EXT: HOTEL COURTYARD - NIGHT

Harry walks through the covered arcway into the back

courtyard of his hotel and climbs the wooden stairs. He senses someone in the shadows. He gets out his .38 and slowly walks along the veranda. There, huddled in his doorway is Epiphany, fast asleep. He touches her on the shoulder. She wakes.

HARRY

Frightened eyes never lie.

EPIPHANY

They left the sign of Balbarith  
on my door.

HARRY

Balbarith? I don't have that  
name in my notebook.

EPIPHANY

The devil.

HARRY

Graffiti everywhere these days.

EPIPHANY

In blood.

HARRY

Another chicken bites the dust.  
I shouldn't think that would  
have bothered you.

INT: HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

He opens his door. They go in.

CLOSE UP - HARRY SLIDES ACROSS THE BRASS BOLT.

HARRY

Where's your kid?

EPIPHANY

With Mincie. She's got 14 of  
her own, he's safe there.

HARRY

You're welcome to stay here --  
or I could get you a room.

EPIPHANY

I feel safer here.

Harry pulls the cork on a fifth of Jack Daniels.

HARRY

Sit down. Drink? You're getting one anyway.

He pours two stiff ones. They drink. A moment.

I've been trying to figure out what your mom saw in Johnny Favorite.

EPIPHANY

(shrugs)

She never talked about him.

HARRY

The guy's a looney.

EPIPHANY

She sure missed him.

HARRY

Who could be attracted to a guy who chops up pigeons?

EPIPHANY

You know how it is. It's always the bad-ass who makes a girl's heart beat faster.

HARRY

Can you think of anything she said about him?

EPIPHANY

Just two things.

HARRY

What was that?

EPIPHANY

Mama was a good woman; her spirit was pure. She once told me Johnny Favorite was as close to true evil as she ever wanted to come.

HARRY

What was the other thing?

EPIPHANY

That he was a terrific lover.

Harry pours another drink.

HARRY  
How old are you?

EPIPHANY  
Seventeen.

HARRY  
Kind of young to have a kid.

EPIPHANY  
Old enough.

HARRY  
Where's the father?

EPIPHANY  
I never knew him.

HARRY  
I'm sorry.

EPIPHANY  
It was at Bambouché. The spirits  
possess you. It's called  
chevalier. Mounted by the Gods.

HARRY  
And the gods got you pregnant.

EPIPHANY  
Yes.

HARRY  
I'm sorry.

EPIPHANY  
Don't keep saying sorry. It was  
the best fuck I ever had.

Epiphany gets up and fiddles with the dial on the old  
radio. A Jerry Falwell-type speaker provides the back-  
ground. She picks up the bloodied piece of paper Harry  
found under Margaret Krusemark's heart.

What's this?

HARRY  
You tell me, I only speak  
American.

EPIPHANY  
It's not Obeah, it's devil  
worship.

HARRY

All the same to me.

EPIPHANY

Oh no, it's not the same at all.  
This is heavy duty stuff ...  
this is an invitation to a  
black mass. Someone's partying  
tonight at the Atchafalaya Salt  
Mine. Where did you get it?

CLOSE - HARRY

HARRY

It was a sort of Valentine.

Epiphany fiddles with the radio dial once more; she finds  
a Latin station.

EPIPHANY

You wanna dance?

HARRY

Here?

EPIPHANY

Here.

He gets up.

HARRY

I don't know, I got bitten by  
a dog this morning.

EPIPHANY

You won't feel a thing.

HARRY

Promise no chickens.

EPIPHANY

Promise.

They dance. Closely.

HARRY

Where were you born?

EPIPHANY

Harlem. Women's Hospital on  
110th Street, but I only remember  
being down here. Mom being sick.  
Whatever he had, Johnny Favorite,  
he sure stole her heart away.

CLOSE - HARRY

for a moment. They continue to dance.

EPIPHANY

How about you?

HARRY

Brooklyn. I think. I'm not too clear about stuff before the war. Just a blur.

EPIPHANY

How's that?

HARRY

I got hit in the face a week after Pearl Harbor. Didn't even make the papers.

EPIPHANY

Shame.  
(laughs)

HARRY

Oh yeah. You see this boiled potato?

(he waggles his nose)  
Not mine. Some army doctor invented it.

EPIPHANY

Snuzzle Durante fan, obviously.

HARRY

Know what it's made of?

EPIPHANY

Potatoes?

HARRY

Wax.

EPIPHANY

What, like candles?

HARRY

One time I stayed with a friend out on the Jersey shore one August. I fell asleep on the beach. It practically melted.

Epiphany laughs.

HARRY

God's truth, I had nose all  
over my trunks.

They laugh. They kiss. They sit on the end of the bed, silent. Harry's hand moves to the top of Epiphany's leg, and slowly pulls up her wrinkled skirt. He runs his hand along her bare thigh and stocking top and reaches inside her panties. Still silence but for the FX of the radio. They kiss again, gently. Harry runs his finger across her nipples, through the cotton dress. They stare at one another. Harry's nose is hot enough to melt.

Epiphany's dress falls to the ground. And her panties. And Harry's pants. Wearing her stockings and garter belt, Epiphany arches into a backbend with the ease of a yoga master. They make love. As fluid as a flight of birds.

CLOSE - THEIR BODIES

We hear:

HARRY (VO)

You do this in public?

EPIPHANY (VO)

It's better with drums.

HARRY (VO)

Maybe I'll hum along.

EPIPHANY (VO)

Sex is how we speak to the gods.

HARRY (VO)

I hope they're listening.

EPIPHANY (VO)

They'll journey with us.

HARRY (VO)

Oh? Where we going?

EPIPHANY (VO)

Never Never Land. Second to  
the right and straight on till  
morning.

HARRY

What's that, the Koran?

EPIPHANY  
No. Peter Pan.

CUT TO:

INT: HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Epiphany's naked cinnamon body, curled up, asleep. WE PAN OVER it to SEE Harry dressing. He picks up his things. IN CLOSE UP WE SEE him take out the crumpled piece of paper he found wrapped around Margaret's heart.

EXT: ATCHAFALAYA SWAMP - NIGHT

Harry's car speeds through the flooded swamp roads like a speed boat. The swamp at night. Steamy. Creepy. Harry stops his car, walks to the side of the water. Across on the other bank. Parked cars. Lights out. He climbs on a flat bottomed boat, one of many moored at the side. He punts across. Climbs the bank, muddies his trousers once more. Harry walks across what looks like snow. He touches it to his lips. Salt. He enters the large entrance to the mine.

INT: SALT MINE - NIGHT

The carved irregular interior of the salt mine. Flickering light, constantly changing shadows. Naked bodies. Various sexual couplings. A screaming baby. A flashing knife. ETHAN KRUSEMARK. Blood splatters across the absorbent white walls of salt.

INT/EXT: NIGHTMARE

The reality and madness merge into Harry's nightmare.

INT: HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Harry awakes. He has Epiphany by the throat. He is straddled across her body. She is screaming.

HARRY

Oh my God, are you alright?

EPIPHANY

Are you crazy?

She pulls away. Terrified.

HARRY

I was having a dream. I'm sorry.  
I'm sorry. I'll get you some  
water.

Harry walks to the bathroom. Epiphany calls after him.

EPIPHANY

You treat all your girlfriends  
like that?

INT: HOTEL BATHROOM - DAY

Harry throws water on his face. Looks at his reflection in the mirror. Bloodshot eyes. Epiphany rambles on. WE SLOWLY MOVE IN ON the mirror. We mix in the eerie tune we've heard before.

EPIPHANY (VO)

Some Boko's put a powerful wanga  
on you. Looks like a hex. You  
know, a spell ... that Johnny  
Favorite was a devil worshipper.  
Sure stole my Mama's heart away...  
Heart away ...  
Heart away ...

Eerie music builds. Harry punches the mirror. His image splits into a spider web as the glass shatters. We hear knocking on the glass panes of the hotel door. Harry turns with a start.

EXT: VERANDA - DAY  
CLOSE UP - KNUCKLES RAPPING ON THE GLASS

Harry opens the door.

HARRY

Oh. I should have recognized  
the knock.

Sterne sees Epiphany's black back, lying in the bed.

STERNE

At least this time you gotta  
reason for sleeping late. You  
wanna step outside.

Harry has a towel around his middle and goes back in to quickly pull on his shirt and pants.

EXT: HOTEL VERANDA - DAY

Sterne leans against the wooden railing. The door is ajar. He speaks loud enough for Epiphany to hear.

STERNE

Down here, Angel, we don't mix  
with the jigaboos. The coloreds  
keep to themselves.

Harry appears. He has blood on his pants.

HARRY  
I'm not from down here.

STERNE  
You cut yourself.

HARRY  
A dog bit me.

STERNE  
(to Deimos)  
Go get some coffee. Someone called Margaret Krusemark figure in your missing person case?

HARRY  
No. Why?

STERNE  
She's dead. That nigger guitar player of yours don't matter a shit -- he was into voodoo and they 86 one another two a week. But this Krusemark dame came from a Louisiana money family. White money.

HARRY  
So two people get bumped off in the same week. So what's the connection?

STERNE  
Similar circumstances.

HARRY  
Like what? Did she get her dick cut off too?

STERNE  
No. Some fucker cut her heart out, neat as a butcher on Decatur Street.

The coffee arrives. They sit at a small table on the veranda.

HARRY  
Mine's a missing person case, not murder. Why you telling me?

STERNE

I wanna know the name of the party you're looking for.

HARRY

(shakes head)

I told you, talk to the lawyers I gave you.

STERNE

I did and the fancy mouthpiece gave me the same big city shit as you.

HARRY

Then it looks like you and Effie Klinker should fuck off and leave me alone.

Sterne grabs Harry. Spills coffee over him and the table.

STERNE

This ain't jigaboo town asswipe. You play jumprope with Louisiana law and I'll stuff your big city smarts right up your New York ass ...

Lets Harry go. Harry wipes the coffee spilled on his shirt.

... This Krusemark broad was into stargazing, black magic and shit and it scares the fuck out of me ... nothing worse for a cop than people who kill for nutso reasons ... Sorry, I seem to have made a mess.

He stands up, puts on his hat.

... Get your nigger in there to clean it up.

Walks off. Harry walks back into the room.

INT: HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Harry puts on his tie and jacket and walks slowly towards the bathroom and the sound of Epiphany singing. He pushes open the door. She is singing the tune we have heard before. Eery. Familiar.

EP1PHANY

You're not getting in?

HARRY  
I gotta go. What was that tune  
you were singing?

EPIPHANY  
Don't you know it? It was one  
of Johnny Favorite's ... My mom  
used to sing it all the time.

Harry stares at himself in the cracked mirror.

You OK?

HARRY  
Yeah ... will you be OK here?

EPIPHANY  
Sure.

HARRY  
You got beautiful eyes.

EPIPHANY  
You got a beautiful nose.

HARRY  
Liar.

Harry walks to the door.

EPIPHANY  
Will it be alright if I fetch  
my kid over?

HARRY  
Sure.

He closes the door behind him.

EXT: ETHAN KRUSEMARK'S COURTYARD - DAY

A beautiful bougainvillea fills the FRAME. WE PAN DOWN TO SEE Harry alone at a table waiting in Ethan Krusemark's elegant courtyard. A black, shiny-headed WAITER appears. He has a winged collar and white gloves.

BUTLER  
Mr. Angel. I assure you Mr.  
Krusemark is not at home.

HARRY  
That's what the other guy said.-  
I'm not moving till someone tells  
me where he is.

BUTLER

He's at Jettaville ... the horse racing. Mr. Krusemark has horses.

HARRY

Not big on mourning down here, huh?

Picks up his hat and leaves. Passes the massive bougainvillea.

Nice plant.

CUT TO:

EXT: NEW ORLEANS STREETS - DAY

Harry walks to his garage. Stops. Walks across the street to the green pick-up. In the back the pit bull on a leash stretches but can't reach him. Harry opens truck door, pulls out the Cajun a little way and slams the door on him. A head butt. Blood. The other Cajun runs for it into the nearest alleyway. Harry follows. Darkness.

INT: STABLES - DAY

Maybe twenty scruffy carriage ponies, too old to work in the middle of the day, are crowded into quaint but crumbling wooden stalls. Harry slowly walks amongst them. A shot rings out as Harry chases the Cajun along the narrow gangways. The horses go berserk, rearing and whinnying with fear. The Cajun fires again at Harry, who drops behind an old nag. The Cajun shoots again and the nag crumples in a dead heap on top of Harry. He tries to pull his legs from under the horse but he's firmly held by the carcass. He can't move his arms to get at his gun. The green truck screeches in reverse into the entrance of the stable. The Cajun with a bloody face climbs out pulling down the pit bull. Harry desperately tries to wriggle free. The Cajun unclips the leash from the snarling, slobbering dog's collar. The dog bounds off in Harry's direction.

CLOSE - HARRY

wriggling free (or trying to)

CLOSE - THE DOG

The horses go berserk. One kicks out with its hind legs and crashes a hoof against the dog's head as it passes, sending it rolling over in a heap. There is a most

terrible yelp from the dog. Harry finally manages to pull free and crawls under the legs of the horses to a door. Kicks it open. A chicken coop. Chickens are perched everywhere.

HARRY

Oh shit.

He runs through. Kicks at the far door into a yard and then the street. A car nearly runs him over. As it screeches past WE

CUT TO:

EXT: RACE MEET - DAY

A healthy quarter horse rears up on its hind legs. Two other horses leave the starting gate and race along two straight bush tracks marked out by rough wooden poles. CAJUNS, MEN and WOMEN, lean on the poles cheering on their bets. ANOTHER GROUP OF PEOPLE watch muskrats being skinned. (The record is three in one minute, two seconds.) In a corner, behind three trucks parked close together, a GROUP OF MEN prepare two roosters for battle. In WIDE SHOT WE SEE the two bush horse tracks converge into the distance. The horses leap from their start gate and throw up a cloud, thundering towards us. At the bottom of the FRAME Harry is shown to a well-dressed man, ETHAN KRUSEMARK, who leans on the pole. The cloud of dust from the horses gets closer as they speak.

KRUSEMARK

What do you want, Mr.  
(looks at card)  
Angel ...

HARRY

I guessed you already knew that.

KRUSEMARK

Why should I?

HARRY

Two of your morons with a matching poodle have been after my balls for days. I'm looking for Johnny Favorite.

KRUSEMARK

As far as I know, that dance band scumbag is dead.

HARRY

That dance band scumbag maybe killed your daughter.

KRUSEMARK  
Who's employing you?

The horses thunder closer.

HARRY  
Can't say.

KRUSEMARK  
I'll pay.

HARRY  
So do they. Fifteen years ago  
you and your daughter snatched  
Favorite from a nut hatch in  
Poughkeepsie. You paid a junky  
doctor called Fowler twenty-five  
grand to pretend our Johnny was  
still a turnip head, and he did  
a pretty good job ... until a  
week ago. You used the name  
Edward Kelly ...

The horses thunder by throwing up a cloud of dust.  
Through the dust WE SEE them walk away from us. Harry  
limps from his accident.

CLOSE - THEIR BACKS

KRUSEMARK  
Mr. Angel, let's walk over here  
... it's a little private and  
you can sample our gumbo.

HARRY  
No thanks, I got an acid stomach.  
Cajun cooking kills me.

KRUSEMARK  
Then a little gin. It's local  
from Louisiana moss. I can  
recommend it. I own the mill.

They walk up the steps of a rickety building. Not grand  
at all. A WOMAN on the veranda has a table of drinks  
in front of her.

Bring us two gins, will you.

INT: OLD WOODEN BUILDING - DAY

The room is a little delapidated. Krusemark is a little  
out of place in his well-cut clothes. An enormous  
cauldron, four feet wide, bubbles in the corner. In it

crawfish and chicken, etc., boil away. Krusemark stirs it as he passes.

KRUSEMARK

A pity about your stomach. You'd have enjoyed our gumbo.

They settle in a back room at a small table by the window. The lady follows them in and puts down the gins on the worn plastic tablecloth.

I was Edward Kelly. It was me who paid Fowler the twenty-five G's.

HARRY

Did he know you? Favorite.

KRUSEMARK

No, he acted like a sleepwalker, he just stared out of the window and watched the lights go by.

HARRY

Where did you take him?

KRUSEMARK

Times Square. It was New Year's Eve, 1943. We dropped him in the crowd and he walked out of our lives forever. Or so we thought.

HARRY

You're telling me you paid twenty-five grand for a guy and you lost him in a crowd?

KRUSEMARK

I did it for my daughter. It was some sort of hocus pocus her and Johnny were fooling around with. My daughter was obsessed.

HARRY

I found a mummified hand in her room.

Krusemark pours two more gins.

KRUSEMARK

The Hand of Glory. It's supposed to be able to open any lock. It  
(MORE)

KRUSEMARK (contd)  
 was the right hand of a convicted  
 murderer cut off while his neck  
 was still in the noose. Or so  
 Margaret believed.

HARRY  
 Black magic.

KRUSEMARK  
 Black, white, what difference  
 does it make? Margaret was  
 always ...

HARRY  
 Evil.

KRUSEMARK  
 Evil is a dunghill, Mr. Angel.  
 Everyone gets on his own and  
 speaks about someone else's.  
 Margaret wasn't evil, but she  
 was a strange kid. She was  
 into Tarot cards before she  
 could read.

HARRY  
 Who got her started?

KRUSEMARK  
 Oh, some maid ... a governess,  
 who knows?

HARRY  
 (shouting)  
 Some maid. Some governess.  
 Everything you say is a crock of  
 shit. You're the one who hooked  
 her. You're the devil worshipper.

KRUSEMARK  
 The Prince of Darkness protects  
 the powerful ...

HARRY  
 (shouting)  
 It's a crock of shit.

KRUSEMARK  
 It's true. I can't help it if  
 you don't believe.

HARRY  
 And what do you believe in,  
 Krusemark? Slitting babies'

HARRY (contd)  
throats? You're filth. A  
looney cocksucker ...

He gets out his .38.

... give it me straight else  
I'll swear I'll save this state  
an execution.

KRUSEMARK  
I introduced Johnny Favorite  
to my daughter. He was very  
powerful. I once watched him  
conjure up Lucifuge in my living  
room. He was in it much deeper  
than me -- he made a pact with  
Satan. He sold his soul.

HARRY  
You expect me to swallow that?

KRUSEMARK  
Swallow it, spit it out. I don't  
give a damn.

HARRY  
Crock of shit!

KRUSEMARK  
He sold his soul for stardom.

HARRY  
Stardom. Are you kidding me?

KRUSEMARK  
It happens all the time.

KRUSEMARK	HARRY
Lord Satan rose from the	Crock of shit!
depths. It was magnificent.	Crock of shit!
But he thought he could	No! No! CROCK OF SHIT!
outwit the Prince of	
Darkness.	

Harry slaps the old man over the head with the .38. The  
old man craddles his face in his hands. Blood on his  
fingers.

KRUSEMARK  
All that I'm telling you is true.  
Johnny sold his soul and when he  
made it big he tried to duck out  
of it.

HARRY  
Eternity's a long time.

KRUSEMARK  
Johnny came across an obscure rite in an ancient manuscript -- he had quite a library. He needed a victim. Someone his own age.

HARRY  
Why?

KRUSEMARK  
To steal their soul. Johnny picked up a young soldier.

HARRY  
Who?

KRUSEMARK  
Just a soldier, out celebrating New Year's Eve. They took him back to Johnny's apartment at the Waldorf and the ceremony took place.

HARRY  
Which was?

KRUSEMARK  
The boy was bound naked on a rubber mat -- there were complicated incantations and stuff in Latin, the works. A pentacle was branded on his chest. Margaret handed Johnny a virgin dagger and he sliced the boy clean open and ate his heart. He cut it out so quickly it was still beating when he woofed it down. Maybe he had gained possession of the guy's soul -- he still looked like Johnny to me.

HARRY  
Who was the boy?

KRUSEMARK  
(shrugs)  
Johnny's plan was to drop out and resurface as the soldier. Joke was, he got drafted before  
(MORE)

KRUSEMARK (contd)

Johnny could work things out and then he got injured and was shipped home not even knowing who he was.

HARRY

(screaming)

Who was the boy?

Slaps Krusemark again.

KRUSEMARK

Only Johnny and Margaret knew. She sealed his dog tags in a vase.

Harry goes from the room to the open toilet. Harry throws up.

KRUSEMARK (VO)

It was Margaret's idea to lose him in Times Square. It was the last place he would have remembered before it happened ...

The CAMERA MOVES INTO Krusemark's frightened face. WE CUT BACK TO Harry who looks at his reflection in the dirty windows. A black shadow passes his distraught image. A door slams. Harry turns around. He rushes to the door. Can't move it. He's very weak. Dragging his injured leg, he runs out onto the veranda and runs around the wooden building, knocking over the lady with the gin table. Krusemark isn't in the small room. Harry finds him in the larger room, up to his waist in the boiling gumbo. He yanks him out. Drowned. The flesh on his face scalded to a deep purple.

EXT: WOODEN BUILDING - DAY

Harry runs down the rickety stairs as best he can. He pushes through the crowds watching the muskrat contest. Up on the dais WE SEE in CLOSE UP as another muskrat has its skin ripped off.

CUT TO:

EXT: STREET - DAY

Rain. Flash floods. Harry's Chevy plows through the streets like a motor boat throwing up huge walls of water onto the sidewalk. He stops outside Margaret Krusemark's house.

INT: MARGARET KRUSEMARK'S - DAY

He climbs the stairs, gun in hand and quickly manages to unslip the lock. Inside. On the floor, chalked-out, taped-up police markings of where Margaret Krusemark's body had previously been. Harry frantically searches for the vase amongst the nicknacks. Glass ornaments crash to the ground as do a pile of dusty 78's.

CLOSE UP - HIS GUN

drops amongst the records. He tries the bathroom; the dandruff shampoos; the herb bottles ... the white alabaster sealed vase. He takes it carefully into his trembling hands and, after a moment, smashes it down into the heavy china sink.

CLOSE UP - SHINY METAL

amongst the white shards: a set of army dog tags catch the light as he picks them up.

CLOSE - HARRY

CLOSE - HIS FINGER

running across the embossed name.

EXTREME CLOSE UP - DOG TAGS

WE SEE very clearly: ANGEL, HAROLD R.

Harry's heartbeat pounds fast and loud. So loud it hurts his ears and he cups them with his hands. Louder and louder his heart beats until silence. As silent as the grave. Harry backs into the living room. Still silent. In the corner sits Louis Cyphre. He startles us.

CYPHRE

Alas, how terrible is wisdom  
when it brings no profit to the  
wise.

HARRY

Louis Cyphre. Even your name's  
a dime store joke.

CYPHRE

Mephistopheles is such a mouthful  
in Manhattan, Johnny.

HARRY

Posing as the devil might have  
fobled a superstitious guitar

(MORE)

HARRY (contd)  
 player and that witch and her  
 nutty old man, but not me,  
 Cyphre. You killed them, and  
 you're pinning it on me. I  
 know who I am.

CYPHRE  
 You've been living on borrowed  
 time and another man's memories.

HARRY  
 You're crazy. I know who I am.

CYPHRE  
 If I had cloven hoofs and a  
 pointed tail would you be more  
 convinced?

Cyphre gets up and quietly picks up the gun without  
 fuss. He also picks up an old 78 record and places it  
 on the record player in the corner. Harry goes into the  
 bathroom and throws water on his face. He looks into  
 the bathroom cabinet mirror.

CYPHRE  
 That's it, take a good look,  
 Johnny. However cleverly you  
 sneak up on a mirror, your  
 reflection always looks you  
 straight in the eye.

HARRY  
 I know who I am!

CLOSE UP - RECORD

An old Johnny Favorite hit of 1940. Harry stares at his  
 face. He touches his joke nose. The music gets louder.  
 Harry screams.

I KNOW WHO I AM!

Harry returns to the living room. No Cyphre. No gun.  
 No dog tags. He vaults down the stairs, four at a time.

EXT: STREETS - DAY

Rain. No car. He begins to run. He pulls up his collar  
 as the tropical rain lashes into his face. The Johnny  
 Favorite song still plays from the open upstairs window.  
 WE PAN DOWN and SEE the lonely figure of Johnny running  
 off into the distance. until he disappears from our view  
 into the grey sheets of rain.

INT/EXT: HOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

SEEN FROM ABOVE, Harry walks into his courtyard and climbs the wooden stairs. His door is open. He walks in.

INT: HOTEL ROOM - DAY

On the bed, Epiphany's naked brown body. Harry's dog tags are all that she wears. A bloodied sheet covers her middle. Sterne stands in the corner.

STERNE

Why'd you come back?

A child whimpers in the bathroom. Deimos comforts him.

HARRY

I live here.

Sterne walks over to the body and turns over the dog tags.

STERNE

Who is she? She ain't Angel,  
Harold R.

HARRY

My daughter.

STERNE

Bullshit. Who is she?

HARRY

Epiphany Proudfoot. She's been  
staying here a couple of days.

STERNE

Long enough to kill her, right?  
Unless that's not your gun up  
her snatch.

Deimos comes out of the bathroom with Epiphany's kid in his arms. The child screams as he points at Harry. On the kid's face the image of Louis Cyphre.

STERNE

You'll burn for this, Angel.

HARRY

I know. In hell.

THE END.