

APARTMENT ZERO

screenplay by

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based on an original story by Martin Donovan

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"APARTMENT ZERO"

EXT BUENOS AIRES DAY

The elegant Barrio Norte stands like a beautiful woman drained by too much suffering. There is the air of a radiant aristocratic past in Buenos Aires; unhappily entangled in a dreary middle class present.

In the distance a siren WAILS, quickly growing louder. An ambulance appears, winding its way down the road toward this lonely spot on the edge of town.

Pulling back slowly, more ambulances are revealed, police cars along with them. Grim MEN mill about behind yellow tape, radios SQUAWK officiously.

Something's wrong.

The ambulance crawls up a muddy embankment, heading toward the secured spot. TWO PARAMEDICS get out, tugging a stretcher from the back.

They head toward the other vehicles and a circle of COPS. At the edge of the crowd, a YOUNG COP, very pale, bends over, hands on his knees, trying to hold his stomach.

The Paramedics move past the Young Cop and into the circle.

IN THE CIRCLE,

they stop short, staring at a bloody patch of ground in alarm and revulsion.

PARAMEDIC
(in Spanish)
Where's the rest?

Someone else breaks through on the other side of the circle -- INSPECTOR BENOIT. Benoit's not quite forty, but he looks like he hit that milestone ten years ago and it hit back. Not much shocks Benoit.

This does.

BENOIT
(in Spanish)
Jesus. Is that a man or a woman?

CUT TO:

INT A MOVIE THEATRE PROJECTION BOOTH DAY

A massive take-up reel turns slowly, casting flickering shadows over the face of ADRIAN LEDUC, thirtyish. Adrian is thin, pale, with eyes that will never settle long enough for anyone to look into them.

Adrian is conservatively and fastidiously dressed. He wears a look of old world dignity that conjures up the image of an English City Gent.

Through the projectionist's window, he watches the end of the film, Orson Welles' "Touch of Evil."

The credits end and the lights in the theatre go on, revealing the crowd.

If three people can be called a crowd.

Adrian sighs.

The projectionist, JUAN, in his mid-fifties, shrugs and flips the projector to rewind.

INT THEATRE LOBBY

Adrian emerges from the back room. CLAUDIA, the ticket/counter girl, is packing up her things. She's tall and robust, with a face that is compassionate and hard at the same time -- a face that says she's been through a lot and could probably endure a lot more.

Adrian helps her with her coat.

ADRIAN
Tomorrow. I promise.

CLAUDIA
Don't worry. There's no rush.

They leave the theatre.

EXT STREET EVENING

Adrian and Claudia come out of the theatre and head for her car, a Volkswagen bug parked in front of the newsstand.

ADRIAN
We just have to make it through this dry spell. Once the James Dean retrospective starts next month we'll be fine. He always works miracles.

CLAUDIA

I'm more worried about you than about my paycheck.

ADRIAN

Don't be ridiculous. Worry about the paycheck.

She gets in her car.

CLAUDIA

Why don't you rent the cinema in the mornings -- for conferences and things? The people from my committee are looking for a place to meet.

ADRIAN

Thank you, Claudia, but I'm not that desperate. I'd like to keep the drama in my cinema somewhat above the level of political shouting matches.

CLAUDIA

God, if it wasn't you saying such offensive things, I'd take offense.

She smiles and drives away.

Adrian watches her go and starts off down the sidewalk.

On the newsstand behind him, a newspaper banner screams --

"VICTIMA NUMERO 5!"

-- next to a grisly photo of the crime scene. Adrian pays it no mind.

CUT TO:

EXT ADRIAN'S APARTMENT COMPLEX EVENING

The connected buildings open onto a central area -- the perfect setting for everyone to mind everyone else's business.

ADRIAN arrives and enters through the main archway.

For simplicity, Adrian's fellow tenants are:

LAURA & ALBERTO WERPACHOWSKY -- Number 9, a young married couple
MARGARET MCKINNEY and her widowed sister MARY LOUISE -- Number 8,
English spinsters
VANESSA -- Number 7, a transvestite
CARLOS SANCHEZ-VERNE -- Number 6, a young executive
FRANCISCO PALMA -- Number 5, a retired schoolteacher
EDITH TRENIEV -- the caretaker, in her forties.

But we'll meet them one by one. At the moment, all but Vanessa are gathered downstairs.

They stop talking and look up at Adrian as he comes in.

EDITH

Senor LeDuc!

(she speaks in English
for his benefit)

We're calling the exterminator!

MARY LOUISE

Senor Sanchez-Verne found mice in
his apartment.

CARLOS

Well, traces actually.

MARY LOUISE

The whole building may be infested!

MARGARET

Mohammed's been under the weather
for days now.

MARY LOUISE

Don't bring Mohammed into this now,
dear.

ADRIAN

There are no mice in my apartment.

MARY LOUISE

You can't really be sure of that,
can you? We feel that the exterminator
should do the whole building.

MARGARET

Mice work in mysterious ways.

MARY LOUISE

No dear, that's God.

Alberto Werpachowsky leads his wife Laura away from the group,
ignoring Adrian and speaking loudly and pointedly.

ALBERTO

Our apartment is open for the
exterminator. We haven't found
any mice, but we believe in good
neighborhood relations. Don't we,
Laura?

Laura nods shyly.

Mrs. Treniev beams at his civic-mindedness.

MRS. TRENIEV

Thank you very much. That's exactly what is needed.

Adrian turns his back to them and starts climbing to his apartment at the top of the stairs.

MRS. TRENIEV (cont.)

Senor LeDuc --

Adrian stops and turns.

MRS. TRENIEV (cont.)

Can we count on your cooperation?

ADRIAN

I've just told you. There are no mice in my apartment.

MARY LOUISE

It would be wise to inspect it anyway. You understand. Sometimes the most fastidious of housekeepers can fall victim -- without knowing --

MARGARET

Without knowing --

MARY LOUISE

I've just said that, dear.

ADRIAN

Thank you for the warning. I shall inspect the apartment myself. If there are mice I shall come to terms with them on my own. Good night.

He climbs the stairs. They all watch him go, exchanging glances that give voice to their dislike for him.

The apartments are situated on either side of the stairway, each divided into two units. At the top of the stairs, spanning both sides of the building, is Adrian's apartment.

He stops at his door, which has a metal number zero on it. To the left of the zero is the faded outline of a long lost number one.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian enters. The apartment is large and dark, furnished with heavy, dated furniture.

Movie memorabilia dot the bookshelves and tables, unsigned photos of Hollywood celebrities of the past are mounted in expensive frames and carefully placed like shots of beloved friends of the family.

The face of Montgomery Clift is turned to the door, as if to welcome Adrian home.

Adrian picks up his mail from under the door. He flips through it.

Bills.

Dissatisfied, he tosses the stack on his desk and drops into a chair.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO NIGHT

Late.

ADRIAN, still in shirt and tie but now wearing a cardigan sweater, works at his desk, sorting through the stack of bills, ripping them open with a gold letter opener. A glass of red wine is next to him.

It's quiet. There is only the sound of Adrian's fingers CLICKING on the keyboard of a calculator.

The calculator's green lights wink and pulse, doubling and tripling at every touch.

Adrian continues to add, enraptured by the sheer enormity of his debt.

Still the numbers grow. He pauses after one last figure and clicks the "total" key with finality.

A WOMAN'S SCREAM

echoes from outside the apartment, followed by a tremendous CRASH.

Adrian is startled and knocks over his glass of wine, spilling red all over his bills. He blots it hastily, rises, and goes to the door.

He opens it a crack.

IN THE OPEN AREA,

a WOMAN is bent over the prone figure of a MAN. The Woman's dress is sexy, cut low in back.

The Woman turns when she hears the door open and grins up at Adrian garishly.

WOMAN
(very drunk)
It's only me. Vanessa.

Adrian steps back, pulling his door shut all but a crack.

VANESSA (cont.)
I'm sorry if we --

She giggles and tugs at the Man, trying to drag him upstairs.

There's something odd about Vanessa -- her features are large, almost mannish.

Very mannish, in fact. She is a he.

VANESSA (cont.)
(to Adrian)
Could you give me a hand? I just
need -- I --

He pulls at the Man, whose shoes THUMP as Vanessa drags him up the stairs.

The Man's head CRACKS into one of the railing posts. This strikes Vanessa as very funny and he doubles over, crippled with laughter.

From the top of the stairs, Adrian's door CLICKS shut.

Vanessa looks up.

VANESSA (cont.)
Weirdo.

CUT TO:

EXT AN INSTITUTION DAY

A stately looking place. So sensible it could only be an asylum.

ADRIAN'S VOICE comes over.

ADRIAN
Quiet, tidy, single person. Non-
smoker. Room, private bath. Cooking
facilities. Buenos Aires central.
200 Australes a month.

CUT TO:

INT INSTITUTION

ADRIAN sets down a newspaper and turns to his MOTHER, a dissipated woman of about seventy-five with shining silver hair. At one time, she must have been beautiful. She smokes a cigarette greedily. When she speaks, it is disconnected, vacant.

ADRIAN

I've got nine replies already.

MOTHER

Nine? That's a lot of money, dear.

ADRIAN

(patiently)

Nine people want the room. I'll take just one -- naturally.

He starts to brush her hair.

ADRIAN (cont.)

I'll buy some cheap sheets and towels, some plastic cutlery, that sort of thing. With some careful planning, I won't even have to socialize with whoever it is.

(with a sigh)

It'll be awful, but it won't be for long. I promise, the tenant will go before you get back home.

MOTHER

I have to consult with my travel agent, but I must say I'm appalled at the reports -- apparently it's so hot, I couldn't bear it. Don't tell your father, but I don't intend to go this year.

Adrian stops brushing and backs away from her.

ADRIAN

Mother -- I'll be back on Thursday.

MOTHER

Don't hurry back on my account. You know I'm busy. Call before you come, for God's sakes. Besides, my dear, you must be spending a fortune -- up and down all the time.

(growing louder, agitated)

Can't you settle down for a while, can't you just be quiet?! I don't know what to do with you, I just don't know!

Adrian's looks at her, pained.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO DAY

ADRIAN watches unhappily while an old MAN with a cane WHEEZES and CLUMPS around his apartment. The Man totters back and forth, looking about to keel over at any moment.

Adrian lunges forward, certain the Man is about to fall. He tries to take his arm, but the Man holds him at bay with the cane.

Adrian can't stand it.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO LATER

The apartment is being inspected by an overly made-up WOMAN in her fifties. She has an enormous mouth, sharply rimmed by a bold circle of bright red lipstick.

She talks at Adrian incessantly, hardly pausing to catch her breath. Her words are lost to us under music, we hear only her frequent LAUGHTER, which is shrill and frightening.

Adrian winces.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO LATER

Another WOMAN is in the apartment, this one small and birdlike. She's in her mid-thirties and her eyes dart about rapidly.

She walks through the apartment, touching anything within reach, prying into a small wooden box on the coffee table, poking into a cupboard.

She stops at the framed photographs. Adrian grimaces as she picks one up and runs her hand across the glass, leaving a smear of fingerprints.

WOMAN

What is this? Pewter? Is this
frame pewter?

ADRIAN

I really don't think that's any --

WOMAN

What did you pay for this? Fifty?

Adrian is flabbergasted.

WOMAN (cont.)

Over fifty? It was, wasn't it?
Over a hundred?

Adrian snaps the picture out of her hands and puts it back on the table.

WOMAN (cont.)

Who are these people anyway? Will
I have to meet them?

ADRIAN

Good Lord, no. Thank you very
much.

He whisks her out the door and collapses against it, visibly drained by the invasion.

He closes his eyes, giving up.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

Adrian jumps, startled, then moves away from the door softly, trying not to make any noise.

Another KNOCK.

ADRIAN

(moving his mouth silently)
Go away.

There is a third knock, then the sound of another DOOR OPENING outside in the hallway.

A female VOICE speaks up and whoever was at Adrian's door goes over and begins conversing with the neighbor.

A look of panic crosses Adrian's face. He rushes to the door to stop whatever exchange of confidences is taking place.

INT HALLWAY

Adrian pulls his door open abruptly. LAURA WERPACHOWSKY, the attractive young woman in number 9, stands talking with a man whose back is to us.

ADRIAN

Excuse me?

The man turns.

JACK CARNEY, mid-twenties, dirty blond hair, a clean jaw line and a statuesque form. Jack is, in many ways, Adrian's alter ego -- completely contemporary, energetic, possessed of a radiant magnetism that defies you not to be his friend. His features are clean and strong -- like those of the stars in the silver frames on Adrian's walls.

JACK

I came about the --

He holds up a newspaper folded to the classified section.

ADRIAN

Yes, yes of course. Come in.

Shooting a dirty "mind your own business" look at Laura, Adrian leads Jack into the apartment and closes the door.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

As Jack comes in --

ADRIAN

I must apologize. I have very nosey neighbors.

JACK

Don't worry about it. She's a pretty woman.

Jack looks around the living room and his attention falls on the expensively framed movie star pictures.

ADRIAN

American?

JACK

Yeah.

ADRIAN

California?

JACK

(hesitates)

Hartford, Connecticut.

ADRIAN

Oh! That's where Paul Newman lives, isn't it?

JACK

I don't know. You mean the actor?

ADRIAN

Yes. I'm sure it's Connecticut.

Jack points at the picture of Montgomery Clift.

JACK

Is that Marlon Brando?

ADRIAN

Montgomery Clift.

JACK

I meant Montgomery Clift. Did you know him?

ADRIAN

Not personally -- I have a cinema club.

JACK

Ah -- videos.

ADRIAN

Oh, no. Real movies on a real screen. Videos are killing me. People develop big backsides and blisters on their thumbs from skimming through the "boring parts." I don't even own a television.

JACK

Why not? Afraid you might like it?

Adrian is a bit surprised, then laughs. He is charmed.

ADRIAN

Let me show you the rest of the shack.

They head off into another room.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Have you done any acting?

JACK

Who? Me?

(laughs)

You're kidding me. Where are you from?

They have arrived in the kitchen. Adrian gestures.

ADRIAN

The kitchen. Can't you tell by my accent?

JACK

You sound British.

ADRIAN

Very good.

He heads out. Jack follows. Adrian opens the door to a bedroom and they go in.

ADRIAN (cont.)

This is the room. The bath is through that door.

JACK

Looks good.

ADRIAN

You can use the kitchen and living room whenever you like.

JACK

(thinking)

Okay -- well, I can give you an answer by tonight.

ADRIAN

Is the rent okay? It's negotiable, of course.

JACK

No, it's okay.

ADRIAN

I haven't asked you. What do you do?

JACK

I'm with IBM. Part of their exchange program.

ADRIAN

IBM? That's within walking distance of here.

JACK

Really?

ADRIAN

Oh, yes.

He is looking at Jack pointedly, pressuring him.

Jack fidgets.

JACK

I don't know.

(holds up the newspaper)

My horoscope says "avoid decisions."

ADRIAN

Here, let me see that.

Jack hands him the paper. Adrian thumbs through it.

ADRIAN (cont.)

What are you?

JACK

Gemini.

ADRIAN

Nonsense. You're Aquarius, like James Dean. Here. You see? It says "seize opportunity."

Jack smiles.

JACK

Can I just switch like that? Is that what you want me to do?

ADRIAN

Absolutely. Aquarius. I take full responsibility.

JACK

Deal.

They shake.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX NIGHT

JACK and ADRIAN carry armloads of his things into Adrian's apartment.

LAURA opens her door as Jack goes by. She smiles at him.

CUT TO:

INT JACK'S ROOM

Jack puts a few things away. Adrian appears at the door and goes to a pile of clothes tossed on the bed.

ADRIAN

Are these shirts dirty? Why don't I take them?

JACK

Oh, you don't have to --

ADRIAN

Don't be silly, I'm going down anyway. From now on, just leave your laundry outside the door.

JACK

That's very nice, but --

ADRIAN

(with a shrug)

I do my own. Two shirts or four, what's the difference?

He starts to leave, then stops in the door.

ADRIAN (cont.)

What time do you leave for work in the morning?

JACK

Oh, you know -- nineish.

ADRIAN

Perfect!

He goes out. Jack watches him, bemused.

CUT TO:

INT LAUNDRY ROOM NIGHT

ADRIAN is at the washer. As it fills with suds, he picks up Jack's shirts. He's about to toss them in, then thinks better of it and searches for the label, looking for washing instructions.

He can find no labels, only faded squares where they once were.

He starts to just toss them into the washer, then changes his mind again and runs water in the sink. He rolls up his sleeves to wash them by hand.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO MORNING

The table is impeccably set. ADRIAN is up and about, putting finishing touches on the meal. He tiptoes around, not sure whether or not he should wake up Jack.

JACK comes out of his room. He sees the perfectly set table. Across the room, he sees his shirts, the ones Adrian picked up last night. They've been washed and perfectly pressed and folded.

Jack smiles at Adrian, a bit uncomfortable.

ADRIAN

Just in time. Scrambled eggs?

JACK

Great.

ADRIAN

I don't want you to think I'm a regular Felix Unger. You can spit in your coffee if you like. I don't mind.

Jack sits.

JACK

Who's Felix Unger?

ADRIAN

What? An American who doesn't know "The Odd Couple"?

JACK

Oh, yeah. I'm not very good with names. So how long have you been in Argentina?

ADRIAN

(hesitates)

Can you keep a secret?

JACK

Sure.

ADRIAN

I am Argentinian. Born and bred. We lived in England for sixteen years. My father was a cultural attache.

JACK

So you speak Spanish?

ADRIAN

Of course. But I like everyone to think I don't. Keeps people at a proper distance, don't you think?

JACK

I never thought about it.

ADRIAN

I'm only hoping no one ever tells a very funny joke in Spanish in front of me. I'd give the whole thing away. Like in "Hangmen Also Die." Did you see it?

(with relish)

Do you like movies?

CUT TO:

EXT CINEMA CLUB NIGHT

JACK arrives at the cinema club. ADRIAN is waiting for him. Adrian leads Jack into the auditorium.

They pass CLAUDIA, who sizes up the attractive Jack. Adrian pointedly doesn't introduce him to Claudia.

CUT TO:

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX NIGHT

JACK and ADRIAN return to the building. EDITH TRENIEV is carrying heavy shopping bags. Jack helps her with them while Adrian just passes her by.

Mrs. Treniev sends a grateful look to Jack and a dirty one to Adrian.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO MORNING

Again, the table is set and they eat, but this time the mood is much more relaxed.

JACK

I got one. Henry Fonda, James Cagney and Jack Lemmon.

ADRIAN

That's easy. "Mr. Roberts."

JACK

Shit.

ADRIAN

If you give me the three stars
I'll get it every time. Listen
to this one -- Edward G. Robinson,
Yul Brynner and Vincent Price.

JACK

I give up.

ADRIAN

"The Ten Commandments."

JACK

What?! Edward G. Robinson, the
gangster? I saw it, he wasn't
in it.

Adrian pulls a thick reference book off a shelf and hands it to Jack.

ADRIAN

Look it up if you don't believe
me.

Jack's eyes light up at the reference book.

CUT TO:

EXT CINEMA CLUB NIGHT

CLAUDIA and ADRIAN are in the box office. Jack leaves the cinema, smiling, and gives a thumbs up to Adrian.

Adrian smiles back. Claudia gives him a wondering look.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX NIGHT

JACK comes out of the apartment. In the hallway, LAURA WERPACHOWSKY is saying goodbye to her husband, who has a bag packed.

She and Jack exchange an intense look.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO MORNING

The table is set, but ADRIAN is hurriedly putting on his coat. He knocks on Jack's door. From Jack's room comes the sound of the SHOWER.

ADRIAN

I have to go. Everything's on
the table.

JACK shouts from the shower.

JACK (o.s.)
Wait! I've got one!

ADRIAN
I'm late, and so are you! Doesn't
IBM mind?

JACK
Jon Voight, Anthony Perkins and
Art Garfunkel.

ADRIAN
(without a pause)
"Catch-22." Hurry up.

JACK (o.s.)
Shit!

Adrian starts to leave, then turns back. Although he's in a hurry, he can't resist a quick lesson.

ADRIAN
(in a hurry)
You ruined it with Art Garfunkel.
He's only done three movies. Other
than that, it was excellent. Now
get a move on!

JACK (o.s.)
Thanks!

ADRIAN
I'll see you tonight.

He leaves.

As the front door CLICKS shut, the shower switches off.

Jack emerges from his room, naked, drying himself immodestly with a towel. He goes to the table casually, like someone alone in their own home.

He picks up a croissant, dunks it in some coffee, and bites into it.

He sizes up his surroundings nonchalantly.

Seeing a bowl of fruit, he goes to it and picks up an apple.

Now on the other side of the room, he finds himself next to the door to Adrian's room. He opens it.

IN ADRIAN'S ROOM,

things are pretty much as we'd expect them. The bed is large and plush, the blankets and pillows neatly tucked and folded. Everything is old-fashioned, heavy and comfortable. Across the room from the bed is a large mirrored vanity that has two huge cabinets on either side.

Next to the door is a desk, the one at which Adrian paid his bills the night before. Jack looks over the few things on the desktop, then tries the center drawer.

Locked. Jack turns to the vanity on the other side of the room. He goes to it and opens one of the doors.

Inside is a row of Adrian's suits. All are very similar, grey or blue only, some with a subtle, muted pattern.

Jack closes the door and opens the other side of the vanity. There are shelves and drawers. On the shelves are stacks of neatly pressed shirts -- one stack all white, one stack all blue, a third stack delicately striped.

Jack opens a few of the drawers randomly. In one of them he sees a wad of money. He picks it up, fans it, and puts it back.

He starts to close the door and notices a suitcase on the floor of the vanity. He gives it a tug to see if it's empty.

It's not.

Curious, he takes the suitcase out and sets it on the bed. He opens it.

Inside are various articles of womens' clothing -- some blouses and skirts, a nightgown. Jack regards them, munching his apple contemplatively.

He pokes around. Under the clothes is a plastic box with jewelry in it. He looks through the pieces, then places the box carefully back in the corner of the suitcase.

Jack repacks the suitcase and closes it, putting it back in the closet in the same place he found it.

A small flap of material from one of the blouses hangs out of the suitcase. Jack doesn't notice.

CUT TO:

INT CINEMA CLUB AFTERNOON

ADRIAN is in the box office counting out receipts. CLAUDIA hurries down the sidewalk and into the office.

CLAUDIA

Thanks for covering for me. This one took a long time.

ADRIAN

Have you seen the house? There must be fifty people! And for the early show. Didn't I tell you Dean was a miracle worker?

CLAUDIA

Well, then this is a good time to tell you I have another meeting tomorrow. I know it's --

Adrian raises a hand, silencing her.

ADRIAN

No problem. That's your business.

He leaves the office, a spring in his step. Claudia watches him go, mildly surprised at his attitude.

INT LOBBY

Adrian pokes his head into the theatre. "Rebel Without a Cause" is playing, the "I am involved, we're all involved..." scene.

CUT TO:

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX DAY

A small group is assembled in the entranceway -- MARY LOUISE and MARGARET McKINNEY, EDITH TRENIEV and LAURA WERPACHOWSKY.

FRANCISCO PALMA, the retired teacher, is climbing a ladder which is propped up against the side of the building.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, be careful, Mr. Palma!

JACK comes down the stairs and looks on curiously.

EDITH

We should call the fire brigade.
Mr. Palma will never make it.

JACK

What's going on?

MARY LOUISE

(to Jack)

It's Mohammed! He's had a nervous breakdown. Look at him.

Jack looks up. A Persian cat is stranded on a ledge high above.

MARY LOUISE (cont.)

He has suicide written all over his little face. Mohammed is very human, you know. Very human. He feels things. He knows, he understands.

(confidentially)

He's driving Margaret to drink.

JACK

Perhaps I could help.

MARY LOUISE

Are you a doctor?

JACK

No.

(extends his hand)

I'm Jack. Jack Carney.

They all grow interested and press forward to meet him.

MARGARET

Are you Australian?

MARY LOUISE

It's none of our business, dear.

MARGARET

It was an innocent question. Anyone can be Australian nowadays.

JACK

I'm American.

MARY LOUISE

(to Margaret)

What did I tell you?

MARGARET

You're the tenant in number zero, aren't you? We saw the advertisement in the Herald.

MARY LOUISE

We were very surprised, I must say. Mr. LeDuc is such a private person.

MARGARET

Very surprised.

MARY LOUISE

But glad. We were glad, weren't we Margaret?

MARGARET

Very glad. Mr. LeDuc doesn't seem to have many friends. We were very glad. And surprised. Did I mention that?

MARY LOUISE

We wanted to invite you for a glass of sherry, but I said to Margaret "Let's wait" -- Mr. LeDuc is such a private person that --

MARGARET

"This new tenant looks like such a nice healthy man," I said to Mary Louise. "Let's invite him for a drink -- he must think we're rude," I said.

MARY LOUISE

Rude? You never said that.

She makes a gesture to Jack, indicating that her sister drinks too much.

MARGARET

I did. The young man has been here for over a month. A month and we haven't invited him for a glass of sherry, we haven't even introduced ourselves.

Mr. Palma, who is still waiting on the ladder, speaks up impatiently.

PALMA

Can somebody please tell me how I'm doing?!

MARGARET

We've got reinforcements, Mr. Palma! You can come down now.

He descends the ladder.

MARY LOUISE

(to Jack)

We'll be so grateful if you can save Mohammed.

MARGARET

He's like a nephew to us.

Jack starts up the ladder. The neighbors watch. He reaches the top of the ladder but it falls short of the ledge where Mohammed roosts.

Jack sees another ledge below it. Finding a handhold, he grabs on and swings out, off the ladder.

A small GASP rises up from below.

He scales the building athletically. From below, Laura watches him keenly. Beads of sweat break out on his forehead and run down his face and muscular neck.

Sexy.

VANESSA arrives and watches, equally entranced.

Jack, with a final stretch, reaches the cat and coaxes it into his arms.

A CHEER rises up from the small crowd as Jack descends the ladder with the cat. He reaches the ground and is given a hero's welcome.

ADRIAN appears in the entranceway. He looks around sharply, quickly sizing up the situation.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, Mr. LeDuc! Mohammed is alive and well, thanks to your charming tenant. Would you come in for a glass of sherry? Both of you? I think a celebration is in order!

MARGARET

Here here!

ADRIAN

I'm sorry. I'm in a hurry.
(testy, to Jack)
Were you on your way in or out?

Jack is a bit surprised by Adrian's attitude.

JACK

I'll be up in a minute.

Adrian storms up the stairs.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian comes in, fuming. He slams the door.

CUT TO:

INT McKINNEYS' APARTMENT

Very English, complete with portraits of the royal family on the walls. JACK and MARY LOUISE are seated in the living room. MARGARET comes in with three glasses on a tray.

MARGARET

The sherry was not in evidence. I had to settle for port.

MARY LOUISE

Port?

MARGARET

You do like port, don't you Mr. Carney?

JACK

Oh, yes, sure. Port is fine.

He smiles. Margaret looks away shyly like a fifteen year old.

JACK (cont.)

(raising his glass)

To Mohammed.

MARGARET

No -- to us.

MARY LOUISE

To you, Mr. Carney. Mohammed had his day. But you risked your life.

MARGARET

To you, Mr. Carney.

They all drink. The two ladies drink their port in one gulp.

MARY LOUISE

We're not used to gallantry anymore.

MARGARET

No, not anymore.

MARY LOUISE

Would you like a refill, Mr. Carney?
Where's the bottle, Margaret?

JACK

I'm fine, thank you.

MARY LOUISE

(to Margaret)

Bring the bottle, dear. Mr. Carney may think we're stingy with the spirits.

MARGARET

It was port, dear.

MARY LOUISE

Don't be contrary, dear. We have a guest.

JACK

I'm fine, honestly.

MARY LOUISE

We're not used to having guests.

MARGARET

No, not any more.

MARY LOUISE

When Senor Alvarez was alive -- well, we were going to be married, that's why we came here. But he died three days before the wedding.

MARGARET

Three weeks, dear.

MARY LOUISE

He was -- he was a gentleman in the purest sense of the word.

MARGARET

The purest.

JACK

How terrible for you.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, yes. I'll never get over it, never.

(to Margaret)

Where's the bottle, dear?

MARGARET

In the kitchen. Empty.

MARY LOUISE

1947. You never saw 1947, did you Mr. Carney? That's when we came, and I became a sort of widow.

JACK

You didn't go back to England? Don't you miss --

MARGARET

Yes, we're both misses, still. Both of us.

JACK

Don't you miss England?

MARY LOUISE

Of course. But what we miss of England isn't in England anymore.

MARGARET

We went back for a visit in 1979.

MARY LOUISE

1978.

MARGARET

We didn't know a soul there. Not anymore.

MARY LOUISE

Senor Alvarez left me some money. That money allows us certain luxuries here that would be unthinkable in England. We're happy here.

MARGARET

Happy here.

(she giggles)

Oh, Mr. Carney -- we're boring you silly.

JACK

No, please go on. We're living next door to each other. I think it's good to get to know one another.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, how true Mr. Carney!

MARGARET

We only wish your friend Mr. LeDuc was of the same persuasion.

MARY LOUISE

Margaret dear, what a shocking thing to say.

MARGARET

I feel I can be direct with Mr. Carney.

JACK

Yes, you can. I think I know what you mean.

MARGARET

We have nothing against Mr. LeDuc. We've been kind to him, haven't we dear?

MARY LOUISE

We tried our best. You know, the way people should.

MARGARET

But he behaves as if we owed him money.

JACK

I don't know how to explain this.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, please don't tell us anything that you think you shouldn't.

(without a pause)

What is it, Mr. Carney?

The two ladies draw closer to Jack, full of expectation.

JACK

I've grown very close to him. I consider him almost a brother. I love him.

MARY LOUISE

Ah, that's nice. It's good for Mr. LeDuc, I'm sure.

MARGARET

He doesn't seem to have many friends.

JACK

His entire life is a bit of a tragedy.

MARY LOUISE

His mother -- is she still in the --

JACK

Yes.

MARGARET

I feel he's going the same way somehow. It may be a family thing.

JACK

No. Adrian is very intelligent. Very sane. Very full of dreams.

MARY LOUISE

You do love him, don't you Mr. Carney?

(to Margaret, overcome by sentiment)

Isn't it nice?

JACK

He's afraid of the world. Afraid to be hurt anymore. Can you blame him?

MARY LOUISE

No. You're right. Poor Mr. LeDuc. But shouldn't he be under some care? Sometimes he behaves in an unspeakable way -- and not everybody is as understanding as we are.

MARGARET

No, not as understanding as we are.

MARY LOUISE

Just the other day I overheard Mrs. Treniev talking to Laura Werpachowsky -- you know, that rather pretty Italian girl married to the Polish fellow -- "There's something definitely wrong with that man," she said. And Laura Werpachowsky nodded.

MARGARET

(informatively)

She was agreeing.

MARY LOUISE

One night very late, Mohammed was under the weather, needed a walk. I got out and saw Mr. LeDuc pacing up and down.

MARGARET

He was thinking.

MARY LOUISE

(to Margaret)

At that time of night?

MARGARET

Now, perhaps with you here Mr. Carney, things will be different.

MARY LOUISE

For us, certainly.

MARGARET

Someone to talk to!

MARY LOUISE

Someone with a recognizable accent.

They giggle.

From offscreen, ADRIAN'S VOICE is heard calling out.

ADRIAN (o.s.)

Jack?

Jack sets down his glass.

JACK

(calling back)

Coming! Well, thank you very much ladies.

MARGARET

Whenever you feel like a chat, please come to see us. Ours is an open home.

MARY LOUISE

We have some back issues of the Sunday Times, if you're interested. We can't afford the subscription anymore, and since the --

(a whisper)

-- Falklands -- we were getting it quite irregularly.

JACK

I pass a stand that has the Times. I'll bring it to you every Sunday.

MARY LOUISE

Oh, Mr. Carney!

JACK

Jack.

ADRIAN (o.s.)

(a real shout)

JACK?!

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

JACK enters and sees ADRIAN pacing. He tries to placate him.

JACK

I was only trying to help.

Adrian turns, visibly upset.

CONTINUED

ADRIAN

(growing increasingly agitated)

I'm not mad at you. You don't know what these people are like. Listen, Jack, you have to promise one thing. The only rule here is "avoid the neighbors." Don't take them into your confidence. Give them nothing. They've been trying to find their way into me, you know, like dirty little worms. Not because they care, not because they like me, but to satisfy their morbid, pointless curiosity. To know my business, to chit chat, to corrode, to invade --

JACK

Okay, Adrian. Okay.

Adrian takes a breath and regains himself.

ADRIAN

(with a laugh, trying to calm down)

You probably think I'm paranoid. Perhaps I am. I don't really have anything specific against them. I don't know them well enough to really despise them. I don't intend to -- it's privacy, you know? Very important. (suddenly self-conscious)
Don't look at me as if I was crazy.

JACK

(giggling)

No, this is my normal way of looking.

ADRIAN

Well, we're all entitled to one or two -- hundred -- idiosyncracies. Now you know one of mine.

JACK

One?

(laughing)

One?!

ADRIAN

What? Have you detected others?

JACK

Adrian, you're a walking idiosyncrasy!

ADRIAN

Me?

Adrian starts to laugh as well.

JACK

Be proud of it. I'm proud to know you.

Jack can't stop laughing. Neither can Adrian.

ADRIAN

What do you mean? Explain!

JACK

I can't. How do you explain an idiosyncrasy? It's just -- there!

ADRIAN

Don't be ridiculous. The sky above is "there." Idiosyncracies don't exist until some asshole spots them!

They are both overtaken by fits of laughter.

CUT TO:

INT AN AUDITORIUM DAY

CLOSE UP of a photograph of a horribly mutilated face, frozen in a grotesque death mask.

The slide is taken away, replaced on the screen by another, similar photograph. Several more follow.

After the slides, the lights are switched on in the meeting hall, which is filled with about a hundred people. CLAUDIA is in the audience.

There is an uncomfortable silence.

There is a table at the front of the room with a row of distinguished looking people. CHRISTIAN SALCEDO stands up and goes to the podium. He is about thirty, dark and intense.

CHRISTIAN

My name is Christian Salcedo. For our guests, we will conduct this meeting in English. For whoever needs it, there are earphones with a simultaneous translation.

He is handed a stack of papers by an USHER.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

I want to say that I'm proud to be a citizen of a country that is finally finding itself, a country that is not frightened, anymore, of getting to the bottom of things -- even when the findings may be quite frightening. When my friend Roberto D'Andrea became the first known victim of this -- beast -- I went to the police with a bit of evidence that may have led to the identification of the killer.

He sends a pointed glance to INSPECTOR BENOIT, who sits in the front row of the audience.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

It was a recorded message Roberto left for me the day he was murdered.

Christian clicks on a tape recorder, which plays through large speakers at the front of the room.

First we hear the familiar sounds of a telephone answering machine.

Then the voice of a MAN comes through in Spanish. Christian translates it to the audience, following the rhythm and intensity of the message.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

Hello Christian -- it's me -- Roberto. I've just seen one of the bastards! Walking, free. You know the one -- the one who never spoke. The one that smiled --

(his voice chokes with emotion)
-- while he was torturing Susana. I'm following him. I'll find out where he goes. I'll call you later.

The telephone cuts out with a CLICK. The room is silent, chilled.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

Although the killer has not struck in over a month, we will not sit back and hope he is satisfied. Four other people were killed after Roberto. Four other people in less than three months and we seem to be as far away from stopping this monster as we've ever been. That's why the committee that I preside over has contracted the services of Dr. Kyotaka Kawabe from the University of Michigan --

He gestures to KAWABE, an Asian man at the table.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

-- to help us conduct an investigation.
This is not in any way a sign of distrust
in our police force.

Again, to Benoit.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

(with growing conviction)
But we can't just dismiss a very strong
link between these killings and the
matters that concern us -- the tortures
and murders that took place in this
country from 1976 to 1979.

CUT TO:

INT PROJECTION BOOTH

ADRIAN watches a film through the window while JUAN runs the
projector. Adrian is upset.

ADRIAN

Stop it, Juan. You see how right
I am about checking the prints?
I won't put up with this any longer.

CUT TO:

INT THE AUDITORIUM

BENOIT is on his feet.

BENOIT

We're not going to dismiss any clues,
any evidence that might lead us to
the murderer or murderers. But we're
not going to transform this police
matter into a political issue.

CHRISTIAN

Inspector Benoit, in a country where
until just the other day a police
matter and a political issue were the
same thing you'll forgive us for not
forgetting.

Scattered APPLAUSE and SHOUTS of agreement come from the crowd.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

We all know that the right to follow orders has been condoned in this country. We all know that there are hundreds of people walking free who have tortured and killed -- not necessarily those who deserved to be killed but those who were killable. They operated secret horror chambers where they spread horror and despair under the unconscionable assumption that they had been given license by the almighty to impart pain and death. We all know this, but we allow them to walk free because THEY WERE JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS!

The crowd erupts.

CUT TO:

INT THEATRE OFFICE

ADRIAN is on the telephone, fuming.

ADRIAN

I think I have a right to be very upset about it! I know what I'm talking about, I've seen this film a dozen times. I will not show it mutilated, do you hear? Of course I know, it's one of the best scenes. Karl Malden is on the phone to his son and Angela Lansbury is trying to get it away from him. It's a sensational piece of acting and I won't show it without it. No. I'm sorry. I expect a refund and some kind of explanation.

CUT TO:

INT THE AUDITORIUM

DR. KAWABE has taken the podium.

CONTINUED

KAWABE

In all but one case, the cause of death in the victims was heart attack. None of the wounds were mortal. The mutilation, the gunshot fired up through the base of the skull all came after death. These are signposts that point to a ritual murder. The subject that concerns us here is not obeying the rules of a sectarian or religious murder, but of a devil within. Except, as I say, in one case. Roberto D'Andrea. And it is this one case that is most illuminating. D'Andrea was physically capable of withstanding torture -- he'd endured it before, in 1979. In his case he did not suffer a coronary and the subject shot him simply to kill him. At that moment the action was no longer ritual or randomly psychotic. In this case alone the murder served a function.

(after a pause)

While Mr. Salcedo's arguments are undoubtedly emotional, this does seem to give them credence.

There are RUMBLINGS in the audience.

Kawabe signals to the projectionist.

Two slides of horribly mutilated faces are projected onto the screen, side by side.

KAWABE (cont.)

Rigor mortis, particularly as it sets into the facial features, usually tells us something about their last minutes of life. Look at these two pictures -- the one on the right is Roberto D'Andrea. The one on the left is Mario Sala, who died after torture in 1977. I'll let you make your own comparison, but I draw your attention to the bullet exit wound above the left eye.

Christian and Benoit exchange a look.

KAWABE (cont.)

The question is -- can someone who got used to controlling other peoples' pain and death suddenly abandon it unharmed? I don't think so.

Again, STIRRINGS in the audience.

KAWABE (cont.)

Next slide.

CUT TO:

INT THEATRE LOBBY NIGHT

ADRIAN waits as a small crowd empties out from the theatre. He wears his coat, holds another over his arm.

JACK emerges from the theatre, carrying a briefcase and dressed better than usual. Adrian helps him put his coat on.

ADRIAN

What did you think?

JACK

Wow. The guy -- the young one who faints at the trial --

ADRIAN

Dean Stockwell. Terrific, isn't he? Did you see "Blue Velvet?"

JACK

No. I saw "National Velvet."

From the ticket booth, CLAUDIA sees them talking. She's still a bit shaky from the upsetting meeting, but she watches Jack, intrigued by him.

JACK (cont.)

When was "Compulsion" made?

ADRIAN

1958.

JACK

So why was it in black and white?

ADRIAN

Because it was a black and white kind of movie. Woody Allen makes movies in black and white even now.

JACK

Yeah, that's true. Thanks, Adrian.

Claudia steps up to them, again trying to be introduced to Jack.

CLAUDIA

Good night, Adrian.

Jack notices her, looks intently into her face as if he sees something. Adrian notices the eye contact.

ADRIAN
(not cooperating)
Good night.

He ushers Jack outside.

EXT THEATRE NIGHT

Jack and Adrian pause on the sidewalk.

Adrian gestures to Jack's briefcase.

ADRIAN
I appreciate your coming right from work.

JACK
My pleasure. What are you showing tomorrow?

ADRIAN
"Lolita."

JACK
Spanish?

ADRIAN
Kubrick.

JACK
Will I like it?

ADRIAN
Oh, God. What a treat.

JACK
I'll see it.
(claps hands)
Okay, now it's my treat. Let's pick up a couple of chicks and have some fun. What do you say?

Adrian's jaw drops.

ADRIAN
What for?

JACK
What do you mean, what for? A quick exchange of bodily fluids.

ADRIAN
What about AIDS?

JACK
(rolls his eyes)
Oh, come on. Don't be like that,
Adrian.

ADRIAN
I think it's very irresponsible of
you and I won't have any part of
it.

JACK
Fine. Okay. I didn't mean to offend
you. But you wanted to know about my
idiosyncracies -- well, here comes
number one. I enjoy mixed company.
You know -- male -- female. Sometimes
it works.

ADRIAN
You're not talking about male and
female. You're talking about casual
copulation. I'm sorry. Not for me.

A long pause.

JACK
Don't you like girls, Adrian?

ADRIAN
No. I hate girls. They don't know
anything, they haven't been anywhere.
I like women. The kind that can't
be "picked up."

A clock starts to CHIME. Jack looks up at it. It's eleven p.m.

JACK
See you later.

He walks away.

Adrian calls after him, surprised and concerned.

ADRIAN
You're not actually going?

JACK
(over his shoulder)
Yes I am.

And he's gone into the night.

Adrian calls out pathetically.

ADRIAN
(as an offering)
I'm sorry!

No answer.

CUT TO:

EXT BUENOS AIRES NIGHT

A shot of the city -- lit up, alive.

CUT TO:

EXT A SQUARE NIGHT

A lightly traveled, irregularly lit public square. The camera is moving, elbowing past people and heading toward a certain corner of the square.

In the corner, a PRETTY YOUNG WOMAN is talking animatedly to her DATE. Arguing, in fact. The Date is implacable, making things worse.

The Girl looks up briefly, into the camera, making brief eye contact.

Her Date stalks off, ending the argument.

The camera comes closer to the Pretty Girl. She looks up and a smile flits across her face.

CUT TO:

INT A PUB

ADRIAN nurses a drink morosely. The place is dark, nearly empty.

BARMAN
(in Spanish)
Closing time, gentlemen!

CUT TO:

INT A BATHROOM

JACK, face dripping, lifts his head from the sink and looks into the mirror. He runs his wet hands through his hair.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX NIGHT

JACK returns to the building, looking tired. As he starts up the stairs LAURA WERPACHOWSKY steps out of her apartment.

She sees Jack and stops.

 LAURA
I'm sorry -- I thought --

Laura looks as if she's been awakened in the middle of an uncomfortable dream. She looks at Jack and feels naked. She makes to move back into her apartment. He holds her eyes.

 LAURA (cont.)
Please -- let me go.

She immediately realizes that Jack isn't stopping her.

Only looking at her.

 LAURA (cont.)
I don't sleep very well when my husband is away. When I heard you come in I thought it was him. I thought perhaps he'd changed his mind, perhaps he's back. But he never changes his mind. He'll be back in a couple of days.

She's making an effort not to cry. She bows her head.

Jack takes her softly by the chin and raises her face.

 JACK
Come on now.

She breaks out in uncontrollable sobbing. He takes her by the shoulder and leads her back into her apartment. At the door, he pauses and throws a sideward look up to Apartment Zero.

INT LAURA'S APARTMENT

She stands across the room, half in darkness, half in golden light from a table lamp.

 LAURA
I know he lies to me. He's seeing someone else. If he leaves me I don't know what I'll do. My whole family is in Italy. I'm all alone here.

JACK

You'll never be alone unless you want to.

She looks at him, believing him, calmer.

LAURA

You must think that I --

JACK

No, I don't think. Have a good night's sleep.

LAURA

Please don't go.

She stops herself, embarrassed by her own straightforwardness.

She looks away.

Outside comes the sound of FOOTSTEPS on the stairs. They climb to the top. Jack turns his head as he hears the door to Apartment Zero open and close. Mildly surprised, he checks his watch.

LAURA (cont.)

Forgive me. I don't know what's the matter with me. I hardly know you.

JACK

If you knew me, you wouldn't talk. Would you confess your sins to your brother, to your father? No. You confess them to a stranger who will absolve you and tell you you'll be alright.

LAURA

Yes. Strangers can be tender and understanding.

JACK

Because it's not up to the stranger to understand but to listen.

LAURA

My father was the perfect stranger. He understood. I don't know how, but he knew -- everything. I saw him only once a year, until the day he died. Then he was gone and I felt -- lost, I felt -- you know how you feel when you don't feel anything? That's how I felt.

A tear rolls down her cheek. Jack steps forward a bit, closer to her to comfort her.

LAURA (cont.)

Alberto, my husband, doesn't have a clue. He thinks I'm moody. And I can't explain it to him. I'm afraid he'll get bored. He may leave and never come back. I know it's stupid, it's so stupid. I'm a grown up, a married woman.

(letting her defenses down completely)

But I want my father back. I want him back. I need --

Jack dries her tears with his finger.

He caresses her face with the back of his hand.

JACK

(almost a whisper)

What does my little girl need?

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO MORNING

The usual breakfast table scenario. ADRIAN looks impatient and a bit worse for wear from last night's activities.

ADRIAN

(calling out)

Jack! Breakfast.

No answer.

ADRIAN (cont.)

(after a moment)

Jack, really!

Still no answer. Adrian goes to Jack's door and knocks, then tries to open it.

Locked.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Jack? Are you alright?

He goes into his room and picks up a large ring of keys. Coming back to Jack's door, he tries several of them.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Jack? Can you hear me?

He's beginning to panic. The keys JINGLE as he searches frantically for the right one.

He tosses them down and goes into the kitchen, returning with a hammer and a screwdriver. He's about to wield them on the hinges when JACK'S VOICE comes from the front door.

JACK

Adrian!

Adrian whirls.

ADRIAN

Jack, for heaven's sake! I thought something awful had happened.

JACK

I'm okay.

ADRIAN

God. Next time leave a little note or something.

JACK

Sorry. I hadn't planned on anything happening.

ADRIAN

Well I was worried sick. Come on, have some breakfast.

Jack sits at the table and starts to eat. Adrian watches him for a moment, then speaks.

ADRIAN (cont.)

You're going to be late for work again, you know. I don't quite understand your schedule at IBM.

(pause)

And you need a shave.

(pause)

I won't ask you where you've been. Those bags under your eyes give the whole dirty thing away.

Jack grins and chews.

CUT TO:

EXT POLICE STATION DAY

INSPECTOR BENOIT arrives and is immediately accosted by REPORTERS. They fire questions at him in frenzied Spanish.

He fights his way through them and into the building.

CUT TO:

INT BENOIT'S OFFICE

The already tired looking Benoit comes into his office. Waiting for him in two chairs across from his desk are CHRISTIAN and DR. KAWABE.

Benoit sits at his desk.

BENOIT

Okay. I'm listening. So start
at the beginning.

CUT TO:

INT THE INSTITUTION

ADRIAN visits his MOTHER. She's paler than last time, more frail.

She smokes again.

ADRIAN

You'll like him mother, I'm sure.
He has a James Dean je ne sais
quoi. I've been very lucky.

He goes to comb her hair.

ADRIAN (cont.)

He's getting quite good at the game.
The other day I gave him Alan Ladd,
Bob Cummings and Martha Hayer -- and
he got it! I couldn't believe it.
You couldn't get the grin off his face.

His mother turns to him. She gives him a hard look.

MOTHER

Who are you?

Adrian looks at her, dumbfounded.

MOTHER (cont.)

Take that out of your mouth! Now!
Now! Out of your mouth!

Adrian steps back, shaking.

ADRIAN

What? Mother! Mother!

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET DAY

JACK is walking with a TALL MAN. They speak animatedly, but we don't hear. Jack appears frustrated, the Tall Man attempts to placate him.

As they part, Jack looks up and sees VANESSA go into a small cinema.

Curious, he follows.

CUT TO:

INT CINEMA

JACK parts the curtains and comes into the nearly empty theatre.

He looks over the sparse crowd, trying to find Vanessa. A figure of a woman -- Vanessa -- gets up and moves next to a man a few rows away and in front of Jack.

Jack watches as the heads of Vanessa and the Man move closer together.

He watches.

A few moments go by.

Suddenly the man's VOICE pipes up in a hushed whisper. It quickly becomes vociferous, aggressive towards Vanessa, ranting on in Spanish.

Jack gets up and moves, sitting in the row behind them.

The Man turns to Jack, launching into another tirade.

People around them are irritated, "SHHH"-ing them. The Man storms up the aisle of the theatre, still ranting to people as he goes.

Vanessa hangs his head, ashamed at what happened and that Jack was there to see it.

JACK

Don't say anything. Do you want
to go home?

VANESSA

Yes -- please.

CUT TO:

INT INSTITUTION DAY

ADRIAN is on a telephone in the hallway, apparently waiting on "hold". He's nervous, upset by his mother's outburst.

He speaks to a NURSE, who stands next to him.

NURSE

There's an empty room just across the hall from your mother. Will that be all right for tonight?

ADRIAN

Yes, fine. Please go back to my mother, I'll be in in a moment. I just have to leave a message that I won't be home tonight.

The Nurse leaves.

Adrian turns back to the phone.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Yes? What do you mean, he isn't listed? Of course he's listed. He's an American, part of the -- uh, the exchange program.

Pause.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Yes, I'm sure it's called the exchange program. He told me so himself.

(impatiently)

Carney. Jack Carney.

Long pause.

ADRIAN (cont.)

I see.

He hangs up the phone.

Stunned.

He turns and moves back down the hall, eyes wide, uncomprehending.

The Nurse approaches him with a clipboard.

NURSE

Mr. LeDuc, I just need you to sign these forms in order to stay overnight in the building.

ADRIAN
(distracted)
No, I won't be able to stay after
all. How is my mother?

NURSE
She'll be alright, don't worry.

ADRIAN
I have to tell her.

NURSE
She's taken a tranquilizer and is
asleep. It doesn't matter.

ADRIAN
No, I have to tell her.

INT MOTHER'S ROOM

Adrian's MOTHER is asleep. He comes in and stands at the foot of
her bed.

ADRIAN
He's lying to me, mother. He's
spying on me. What shall I do?
He's not the friend I thought he
was. I don't know who he is and
one of these days he'll go away.
Mother -- mother, tell me what to
do!

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX DAY

JACK comes into the building with VANESSA. EDITH TRENIEV is
talking to the McKINNEY SISTERS in the entryway. They all look
up, taking note of Jack.

MARY LOUISE
Ah! The knight in shining armor!

Vanessa moves discreetly aside.

VANESSA
(quietly, to Jack)
Thank you very much.

She starts up the stairs. Jack watches her go but is immediately
surrounded by the three women. Vanessa passes CARLOS SANCHEZ-
VERNE on the stairs. Sanchez-Verne is tall and dark, very macho.
He's with a stunning looking WOMAN.

MARY LOUISE

Perhaps Jack doesn't know.

(to Jack)

Perhaps you haven't noticed. We didn't notice, for weeks. That woman is -- a man!

MARGARET

Funny thing, nature.

MARY LOUISE

Sad, very sad.

EDITH

If I'd only known -- but they're so clever about it, aren't they?

Carlos and the Woman join the group on their way out. The McKinneys look the girl up and down and exchange a disapproving glance.

CARLOS

Good evening ladies!

(to Jack)

I'm Carlos Sanchez-Verne. I'm in number six. I've heard all about your --

He points up at the ledge.

JACK

Oh, well -- I'm surprised it hasn't been in the papers.

CARLOS

Let's have a drink one of these days. I'm planning to move to the States, you know.

EDITH

Oh really? When?

CARLOS

I'm only thinking about it, Mrs. Treniev. Don't rent my apartment quite yet.

JACK

Sure. Whenever you like. I'm in --

He gestures to Apartment Zero. Carlos raises a hand to stop him.

CARLOS

I know. Just give a knock on my door. I don't want to -- Mr. LeDuc and I -- I mean, you know. Just call me. Oh, I'm sorry, this is a friend. Teresa. Doesn't speak any English.
(to Teresa)
Say hello.

Teresa smiles. They leave.

MARGARET

(conspiratorially)
He's not a very serious person. He's in publicity. He makes quite a bit of money, but --
(whispers)
-- no class.

MARY LOUISE

Vain as a peacock.

MARGARET

Women -- dozens of them. It's very sad, really.

JACK

(turning to go)
Yes, well -- I suppose we're all allowed one or two hundred idiosyncracies.

They laugh, charmed by him.

MARY LOUISE

(conspiratorially)
Everything alright up there?

JACK

Yes. Thank you for caring.

Jack starts up the stairs. He notices the door to number 7, Vanessa's apartment, is ajar. Vanessa stands a few feet inside the apartment, inviting him in with her eyes. Jack stops and looks downstairs. The Women are occupied in conversation and aren't looking.

He goes into Vanessa's apartment and closes the door.

Downstairs, the front door BANGS open again and ADRIAN hurries in.

The Women, startled, look up. He ignores them and races up the stairs to his apartment. They watch him and exchange glances.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian comes in, wild eyed. He goes immediately to his bedroom and checks his bureau to see if his cache of money is still there.

It is. He goes to his desk and, selecting a key off the large ring he carries, opens the center drawer.

He looks through the things in there -- identity card, passport, checkbook, various official looking papers -- and finds them all in order. He leaves the drawer partway open, the keys hanging in the lock.

He goes to the large wooden dresser on the other side of the room and checks there. Everything seeming in order, he starts to close the door but stops short.

He looks at his suitcase and notices the flap of material sticking out. He reaches down and fingers it.

A sick feeling washes across his face.

He goes to the open desk drawer and takes out a second, much larger ring of keys. He bolts out of his room and goes to Jack's door. It's locked.

He tries several keys, then finds the one he wants and opens the door.

He goes into Jack's room.

CUT TO:

INT VANESSA'S APARTMENT

Vanessa's place doesn't fit with the atmosphere of the rest of the building. It's surprisingly austere, with touches here and there of colored cushions and pillows and an occasional vase of flowers.

VANESSA goes to JACK and gives him a little medal on a gold chain.

JACK

What's this?

VANESSA

For you. A way of saying thank you.

JACK

You don't have to --

VANESSA

I want to. People like you don't grow on trees. I'll always want to remember how I met someone like you. You know what that means? It means hope. Hope, my dear. And you know what hope means? It means everything.

(he giggles)

So, my friend, you have given me everything. Just by being you. By being you.

JACK

Why do you put yourself down?

VANESSA

Oh, I don't put -- I am. Down, but happy. Don't worry. No sob stories, I promise. Happy. Down and happy. Acting a great deal. Not like you. You are you -- here, there, anyplace. You can afford the light. God, the light. No flaws, no fear. I belong in the dark. The dark is safe. In the dark I seem real. In the dark, my dear, I've been called things. I've been called beautiful. I've been loved in the dark.

Jack gets up and turns on a light. He points it toward Vanessa.

Vanessa steps back, covering her face. Jack pulls her hands away from her face and with the back of his hand caresses Vanessa's face.

JACK

You are beautiful.

CUT TO:

INT JACK'S ROOM

ADRIAN searches Jack's room. There's not much there -- some clothes, a few books. On top of a tall dresser Adrian finds a thin briefcase.

He tries to open it but it's locked. He puts it back.

He finds a backpack under the bed. The large section is empty but in a small zippered pocket in the front he finds a handful of photographs.

Most of them are ordinary -- a few of girls, one of a couple that must be Jack's parents. Adrian thumbs through them quickly.

Abruptly he stops at a picture of four men dressed in army fatigues posing on a beach. Each one has a rifle. They're clowning, looking more like teenagers playing soldier than the real thing.

Jack is one of them.

He looks different. His hair is much darker, shorter as well.

Adrian's eyes go wide and he stares at the rifle in Jack's hands, fixating on it, zeroing in on that part of the photograph with intense concentration --

BANG!

A door closes downstairs and footsteps start up the steps.

Adrian, panicky, scrambles to put the photos back in order and into the backpack. He puts the pack under the bed and runs out of the room.

He fumbles with the key ring, trying again to find the right one to lock the door.

The FEET on the stairs are closer now. Still Adrian searches for the key, but his hands are shaking now, making it nearly impossible.

Adrian hears JACK'S VOICE outside, greeting a neighbor.

Adrian gives up on the key ring and leaves the door closed but unlocked. He races across the room and drops into a chair as the door to the apartment opens and JACK comes in.

Jack sees Adrian in the chair, sitting casually but panting.

JACK

(smiles nervously)

Adrian! What time is it? You're back early.

ADRIAN

My mother isn't well.

JACK

Oh, I'm sorry.

ADRIAN

She'll be alright.

JACK

Good. Hey, I've got a killer for you. Harrison Ford, Robert Duvall and Teri Garr.

ADRIAN
(not even thinking)
"The Conversation."

JACK
Shit!

ADRIAN
Jack -- you're not going to --
suddenly go away, are you?

JACK
What do you mean?

ADRIAN
I mean -- I've sort of got used
to having you here. I like you
to be here.

JACK
I like it too Adrian. What's
the matter?

ADRIAN
I think I'm being open with you.

JACK
You are.

ADRIAN
If I get on your nerves, you can
tell me, you know.

JACK
Don't be stupid.

ADRIAN
I know I'm not the best kind of
mate. I just can't do certain
things.

JACK
You don't have to tell me that.

ADRIAN
I want to. Things must be clear
between us. We have to get rid
of the debris.

JACK
What debris? What are you talking
about?

Adrian waits, watching Jack, then breaks.

ADRIAN

Forget it. It's me. We're all allowed one or two hundred idiosyncracies, remember? I'm kind of wobbly. To see my mother fading away -- I can't bear it.

JACK

Adrian --

ADRIAN

I have to look at you and be sure.
If that --

He points at Jack's face.

ADRIAN (cont.)

-- is a mask, take it off now or keep it on forever. If you want to keep secrets, God knows you're entitled, but don't try to confuse me. You'll only -- confuse me.

JACK

(soberly)

What do you want to know?

A pause.

ADRIAN

Who are you?

A longer pause.

JACK

Whoever you want me to be.

ADRIAN

I'm serious, Jack. I'm terrified. I don't want to talk to have to talk to the walls all over again.

JACK

Don't worry, kid. I'm here.

Jack lays a hand on Adrian's shoulder. Adrian looks at him in silence.

JACK (cont.)

Let's go out. There's nothing to be afraid of.

ADRIAN
Say that again.

JACK
What?

ADRIAN
There's nothing to be afraid of.

JACK
There's nothing to be afraid of.

ADRIAN
You really mean that.

JACK
(charming as hell)
You betcha.

Adrian looks at him, suddenly feeling sort of elated.

ADRIAN
Where do you want to go?

JACK
I don't know. Out.

ADRIAN
Okay. Yes. Good. Out.

Adrian goes into his room, Jack goes into his.

Jack opens the door to his room. He stops midway, looking down at the knob curiously, noticing that it was unlocked. He doesn't panic, but goes straight to the locked briefcase and checks to make sure it's still secured.

It is.

He leaves the room and goes to Adrian's door.

He knocks.

ADRIAN (o.s.)
Come in.

Jack opens the door. Adrian is putting on a jacket.

JACK
Oh, Adrian.

ADRIAN
What?

JACK
Do me a favor, okay?

He goes to Adrian and reaches up to his neck. He loosens Adrian's tie.

JACK (cont.)
Don't you have a pair of jeans?

ADRIAN
No. Just let me be.

JACK
It makes you look --

ADRIAN
It doesn't matter. I know I'm
40 years too late for everything,
but that's the way it is.

As Adrian talks, Jack looks across the room and sees Adrian's desk drawer hanging open, the ring of keys sticking out of the lock.

ADRIAN (cont.)
You take Chuck Norris. I'll stick
to Errol Flynn, if you don't mind.

JACK
They'll think you're my father.

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET NIGHT

ADRIAN and JACK walk down the street.

JACK
Let's go to a disco.

ADRIAN
Are you crazy? All that smoke and
noise perforating your ears.

JACK
What do you want to do? Go to
a movie, right?

ADRIAN
Of course not. It's too late.

JACK
Come on, we're in the Paris of
South America. Don't tell me that
two young, good looking guys can't
find anything to do.

CUT TO:

INT CAFE CONCERT NIGHT

A small, intimate theatre bar where a very dramatic looking SINGER sings a tango. The trendy audience seems casual but enraptured with the performance.

Jack is far too casually dressed and gets a few looks. He and Adrian stand in the back while the singer finishes.

She concludes and they sit at a small table.

Across the room, CARLOS SANCHEZ-VERNE is in the audience with another incredible looking WOMAN.

Carlos sees Jack and waves at him. Jack waves back.

ADRIAN
(surprised)
Someone you know?

JACK
Yeah, it's Carlos.

Adrian looks.

ADRIAN
Carlos? Carlos?
(placing the name)
Oh, Carlos. Since when do you --

JACK
They're polite, they talk to me. What can I do?

ADRIAN
Why should you care? Do what I do -- good morning, good night, and that's it.

JACK
They're harmless.

ADRIAN
Hah!

Carlos has stood up and is approaching the table. As he draws near, he sees Adrian is with Jack and he hesitates. It's too late to turn back, though, and he comes up to the table.

CARLOS
Good evening! Did you enjoy the show?

Adrian nods and half ignores him.

JACK
We just got here.

CARLOS
Ah, too bad.

Jack nods his head at Adrian and winks to Carlos as if to say "pay no attention."

CARLOS
Well -- see you around.

JACK
Sure.

CARLOS
(to Adrian)
Good bye.

Adrian nods. Carlos leaves.

JACK
That was so childish.

ADRIAN
Believe me, I know what I'm doing.
Next thing it's "can I borrow some
sugar," then it's "can I use your
phone mine's out of order" and before
you know it we're all living together
like one big happy ugly family.

JACK
Carlos seems very nice.

ADRIAN
He doesn't know who Geraldine Page
is.

JACK
Oh come on. Are you really going around
asking people if they know who Geraldine
Page is before you make up your mind
about them?

ADRIAN
No. That's not what I said. When
Geraldine Page died we had a tribute
at the Club. Sanchez-Verne had just
moved in, so I gave him a chance and
he blew it. "Who's Geraldine Page?"
I knew I couldn't talk to him any
further.

JACK

You make it pretty difficult for yourself, don't you? It's going to take a while before you bump into the two or three others like you.

ADRIAN

Are you calling me a freak?

JACK

Put away the claws. I'm calling you special.

ADRIAN

Special? Special?

(he laughs)

You should be a politician. God. "Special"!

JACK

Well? Am I right or not? If you were a bit more tolerant of other people's ignorance you wouldn't be living alone.

ADRIAN

Who's living alone? Where do you live? What are you, an optical illusion?

JACK

I don't count.

ADRIAN

Why not?

JACK

I'm special too.

A pause.

ADRIAN

All right, all right. I'll go over there and invite him for a drink. Will that make you happy?

JACK

I am happy.

Across the room, Carlos gets up and heads for the bathroom. Jack notices.

JACK (cont.)
Order me a screwdriver, will you?
I have to go to the john.

INT BATHROOM

Carlos is standing at the urinal. Jack comes in and sees him.

JACK
Hey!

Jack steps up and uses the urinal next to him. Carlos turns and looks straight into Jack's face.

CARLOS
I'm sorry to ask, but what's the problem with your friend? He acts as if I'd taken away his girl or something.

JACK
That's the way he is.
(pause)
Who's the girl?

CARLOS
(macho)
Not bad, eh? Unfortunately, I don't seem to be her type.

JACK
She must be crazy.

Carlos looks at him in silence. Someone else comes into the bathroom. Carlos looks away and zips up. He goes to wash his hands and looks at Jack through the mirror.

JACK (cont.)
Have a drink later?

CARLOS
Why not? I'll take her back and be at home in an hour or two.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX NIGHT

JACK and ADRIAN are returning, going up the stairs. Jack has managed to get Adrian slightly drunk.

As they pass number 6, Jack notices the door ajar.

They get to the top and go into their apartment.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Jack and Adrian come in. Adrian is in a great mood.

 ADRIAN
It was a good idea. It was fun.
Good night.

 JACK
Do you need help?

 ADRIAN
I can hold my liquor, thank you
very much. What do you think?

Jack walks to Adrian's bedroom and stands by the door. He looks over at the desk drawer, which is now closed and locked.

Adrian holds the keys in his hand.

 ADRIAN (cont.)
Good night.

He closes his door.

Jack leaves the apartment.

CUT TO:

INT CARLOS' APARTMENT

Dark, masculine. Carlos has taken off his jacket. Jack looks around.

 CARLOS
Does he know you're here?

 JACK
Nobody knows.

 CARLOS
What do you want to drink?

 JACK
Whatever you're having. She didn't
change her mind?

CARLOS

(as he goes to get the
drinks)

She's playing hard to get. That's
her problem.

He returns with two dark glasses of beer.

He gives one to Jack. They CLINK glasses and drink. There is a
long pause.

CARLOS (cont.)

You have a double, did you know
that?

JACK

A double?

CARLOS

Tony Blakely. We went to boarding
school together. American -- like
you. I haven't seen him since --
(chuckles)

Strange. We were real close. Both
fanatics of rugby. He was something
on the field, a natural athlete. You
know, one of those perfect bodies.
Girls wet their pants every time he
showed up. I kind of miss him. I
mean, he was -- I don't miss him like
one would miss -- but I wouldn't
mind if he was here tonight with me.
(correcting himself)

With us.

JACK

Why don't you contact him?

CARLOS

I tried. I wrote to him. He lives,
or used to live in Florida somewhere.
But he never replied. Perhaps he
never got the letters. Strange.

JACK

What?

CARLOS

No, I mean, here I am, talking about
Tony. I haven't seen him in twelve,
thirteen years. But I remember him.

Carlos laughs, but it is a forced, phony laugh.

CARLOS (cont.)

I suppose a shrink could do a lot with that. An unfulfilled fantasy. I mean -- an adolescent fantasy.

JACK

Those are the best. And the most difficult to get rid of.

CARLOS

Do you have any?

JACK

Unfulfilled? No.

A pause.

CARLOS

Do you want another drink?

JACK

I'm fine.

CARLOS

I was an asshole. He was much older than me that way. We were the same age, but he wasn't afraid. I was an asshole.

JACK

Sometimes you have to wonder. If you could go back -- would you be an asshole again?

CARLOS

Who knows?

JACK

(breaking the mood)
Do I really look like him?

CARLOS

(still in it)
You must think that I --

Jack gets up.

JACK

No. I don't think.

Jack walks over to a mirror on the other side of the room.

JACK (cont.)

Hey! Come look at this.

Carlos gets up and joins him at the mirror. Jack points at the mirror and puts an arm around Carlos' shoulder.

JACK (cont.)
Carlos and Tony.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO MORNING

JACK, not dressed yet, eats his breakfast. ADRIAN has finished and watches him intently, looking for something, not knowing what.

ADRIAN
Well, I guess I'll be leaving.

JACK
Okay.

Adrian gets up and puts his coat on.

ADRIAN
Shouldn't you be going too?

JACK
Yep.

He keeps eating.

ADRIAN
Come on -- we'll walk together
part of the way.

JACK
You go ahead.

ADRIAN
Oh, come on. Let's go.

JACK
I'm eating, Adrian. I'll go when
I'm finished.

Adrian sighs.

ADRIAN
I'll see you tonight then.

JACK
Right.

Adrian goes to the door, pauses for one last look back, then leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX MORNING

Adrian comes out of the building. Across the street, a taxi cab is parked, the DRIVER reading a paper. Adrian heads for it.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX

Jack comes out of the apartment and locks the door.

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX

Jack comes out of the building and starts down the sidewalk.

ACROSS THE STREET,

Adrian sees him and taps the Driver on the shoulder.

 ADRIAN
 Okay. Follow him.

The Driver looks at Jack, then turns and looks back at Adrian.

 DRIVER
 Why?

 ADRIAN
 What do you mean, why? Just follow
 him.

 DRIVER
 Is this political?

 ADRIAN
 What? Just go, he's turning the
 corner!

The Driver folds his arms.

 DRIVER
 Not until you tell me why.

Adrian rolls his eyes in desperation. He gives the driver some money and climbs out of the cab, hurrying after Jack.

EXT A STREET DAY

From a discreet distance, Adrian follows Jack down the sidewalk.

Jack turns onto a smaller street. Adrian follows.

EXT SMALLER STREET DAY

It quickly becomes an alley. Adrian finds it more difficult to be inconspicuous and has to duck into several doorways.

Jack is walking briskly, taking turns onto obscure streets, behaving as though he knows the route very well.

Adrian stays with him.

Suddenly Jack walks between two buildings which open onto --

A LARGE BOULEVARD.

Adrian looks up and sees an enormous, modern glass box building on the other side of the boulevard. A sign in the plaza in front of the building has only three letters:

IBM

Jack hurries across the street to the building.

Adrian watches, dumbfounded, as Jack goes through a revolving door and disappears behind smoked windows.

Adrian heads off down the street in the other direction, more confused than ever.

INT IBM BUILDING

Jack stares out the smoked glass windows as Adrian walks away.

A SECURITY GUARD approaches him.

GUARD
(in English)
Can I help you?

JACK
You already did.

CUT TO:

INT CINEMA

ADRIAN is walking across the lobby, pursued by CLAUDIA. He's agitated.

ADRIAN
No, Claudia. I don't want anything
to do with your political activities.
And you should keep away from this too.

CLAUDIA

I don't understand how you can be so indifferent. We're talking about human lives.

ADRIAN

This is pointless. I'm not saying anything.

He goes into the office. She follows.

CLAUDIA

That's impossible. One can be detached up to a point, but eventually you're saying something by saying nothing. Sooner or later the situation will involve you -- sometimes because of your indifference.

ADRIAN

What are they doing to you, Claudia? You're becoming a fanatic.

CLAUDIA

You don't know how sad this makes me feel.

ADRIAN

Oh come on, don't overdo it. You know I'm not a politically minded person, that's all.

CLAUDIA

But you are. That's what I'm saying. When you say "leave me alone, I don't want to know," you're taking a political stand. A pretty dangerous one. Besides, Adrian, this isn't politics as you see it, there is a link between the murders and --

ADRIAN

Listen to yourself! What do you think I can possibly do about it?

CLAUDIA

The group needs to have a cinema for tomorrow morning. We have some important documentary films that -- well, I told them that you -- oh forget it. You'll be paid for the cinema, you don't even have to be here. You won't have to think, if that's what you want.

ADRIAN

Don't get nasty. What time?

CLAUDIA

From ten till noon.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT CINEMA LOBBY

CLAUDIA and ADRIAN are in the lobby, showing people into the auditorium.

CHRISTIAN and DR. KAWABE arrive, followed by INSPECTOR BENOIT and some of his people. They all pass through the lobby and into the auditorium.

Adrian hangs back.

CLAUDIA

Are you staying? You should see this.

ADRIAN

Jack is picking me up. It's his free day, we have plans.

Claudia gives him a look and goes into the auditorium.

Adrian walks casually up to the door of the auditorium and half opens it.

IN THE AUDITORIUM

Christian is standing in front of the screen addressing the crowd of about a hundred.

CONTINUED

CHRISTIAN

In these films we will see Argentinians being trained in South Africa. There is evidence that there was an exchange between the Argentinian death squads and the South Africans. We have reason to believe that we had foreign elements -- call them mercenaries or whatever you like -- working alongside the death squads here in --

Benoit gets to his feet.

BENOIT

All right, let's stop it right there. Do you have documented evidence of all this? I want the truth just as much as you, so let's not waste time with gossip.

CHRISTIAN

(to Claudia)

Can we have the -- ?

Claudia makes a sign toward the projection booth. The lights dim.

A sort of home-movie-looking film is projected onto the screen.

MEN in uniform are riding in a truck, bouncing around on crates. There is an abrupt cut and they are eating out of metal plates and drinking from canteens in the middle of a field.

Another cut and the screen shows the image of a beach.

CHRISTIAN

We're in South Africa.

BENOIT

Who says? That could be Mar del Plata or anywhere in Brazil.

CHRISTIAN

South Africa. The film was smuggled out through Lesotho last week. More is coming in a few days.

Several YOUNG MEN in fatigues appear in front of the camera, holding rifles. They wave to the camera and pose, very macho young men.

Adrian looks up at the screen suddenly, caught up in the image, frozen by an awful thought.

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

We've identified three of these men
as Argentinians.

(to Benoit)

Have they been interrogated? Are they
in jail?

In back, Adrian is still captivated, staring at the image that is so like the picture in Jack's room. His gaze zeroes in on the automatic rifle in the hands of one of the Young Men, he stares at it, unblinking, horrified and fascinated, his gaze becomes more and more intense, moving in closer and closer to the moving image of the weapon in the Young Man's hands --

CHRISTIAN (cont.)

This is the direction we should be
moving in! This is what --

Adrian is overcome and he whirls around to leave.

-- JACK --

stands right behind him, smiling.

JACK

Ready to go?

Adrian is dumbfounded and unable to respond, so he turns back to the screen, transfixed, trying to think of what on earth he should do.

The Men on the beach jokingly point their rifles at one another, clowning around -- and then the film is over. The lights come back up slowly.

Adrian turns around.

Jack is gone.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO NIGHT

ADRIAN returns to the apartment quietly, almost silently. In the other room, JACK can be heard on the telephone. His voice is urgent, dissatisfied --

-- and he's speaking perfect Spanish.

JACK

(in Spanish)

No, I'm not going to wait another
day. Don't worry, I'll take care
of that, you just take care of
what you promised.

From downstairs, SHOUTS are heard.

Adrian closes the door to the apartment with a BANG.

Jack hangs up and turns to Adrian, smiling like an actor.

Throughout the building, doors can be heard OPENING and SLAMMING.

The voice of MARY LOUISE calls Jack's name urgently.

JACK
What's going on?

ADRIAN
You're asking me? They seem
to be calling you.

Jack walks to the door. Adrian doesn't move.

JACK
And what's the matter with you?

Jack opens the door.

IN THE HALLWAY,

all the neighbors are gathered at the foot of the stairs. As one,
they turn their heads to Jack.

MARY LOUISE
Oh Jack, dear boy -- Mr. Palma!
Quickly!

FRANCISCO PALMA, the retired teacher, lies at the foot of the
stairs, having an epileptic attack. Jack runs downstairs.

He gets down on his knees in front of Mr. Palma. Palma is
convulsing wildly, eyes rolled back in his head, foam at his
mouth.

Jack grabs him by the shoulders, faces him from a few inches away
and SHOUTS --

JACK
STOP!!

Immediately, Palma's body goes limp. The convulsions stop and he
lapses into unconsciousness.

CARLOS SANCHEZ-VERNE goes to Jack's assistance, putting a hand on
his shoulder and giving him an intense look.

JACK (cont.)
(quietly)
Call an ambulance, Carlos.

Jack puts his fingers into Mr. Palma's mouth and expertly pulls his tongue back to avoid Palma swallowing it.

The McKINNEYS and EDITH TRENIEV watch, mesmerized.

VANESSA goes to Jack.

VANESSA
Can I help?

JACK
Bring a pillow and a blanket.

EDITH TRENIEV
I'll do that.

VANESSA
I'll do it. Jack asked me.

JACK
(to Vanessa)
It doesn't matter. Help me to
keep his head up.

Mrs. Treniev brings the pillow and blanket. LAURA comes near to help.

She leans in close to Jack and whispers in his ear.

LAURA
My husband is back, but only
until Monday. I need to talk.

Carlos returns and tries to get close to Jack.

CARLOS
They'll be here in a moment.
Everything's under control.
(whispers in Jack's other
ear)
Will you have a minute later on?

Palma, dazed, regains consciousness.

Everyone turns and there is a general "Ahh!" as Palma comes to.

They all press forward and congratulate Jack, sort of forgetting about Palma.

In the distance, the SIREN of the ambulance can be heard. Jack looks up as the neighbors fuss to fight over him.

Jack looks up to the top of the stairs.

From the door of Apartment Zero, ADRIAN glares down at him.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Jack comes in. Adrian is seated in a chair, fingering his ring of keys nervously.

JACK

Adrian -- I'll be away this weekend.

Adrian looks at him in silence. He sighs and sets his keys on the coffee table. Jack notices.

JACK (cont.)

I'll be back on Monday.

ADRIAN

You won't come back.

JACK

Of course I will.

ADRIAN

I don't care who you are. Jack, you can trust me. I'm starting to decipher those shadows on your face. You don't have to tell me anything -- just don't go away.

JACK

Adrian, I'm only going for the weekend.

ADRIAN

Where? Where?

JACK

(growing agitated)
I have to sort out a few things.

Jack goes into his room.

Adrian follows.

INT JACK'S ROOM

Jack grabs an armload of clothes, hauls his back pack out from under the bed.

ADRIAN

What can I do, Jack? Can I help?

JACK

You're getting on my nerves, Adrian.
You're acting like a jealous,
suspicious wife.

He goes out of the room with the back pack and armload of clothes.

Adrian follows him into the living room again.

INT LIVING ROOM

Jack drops his clothes on the coffee table, directly and deliberately on top of Adrian's keys.

ADRIAN

I just want you to know you can
confide in me.

JACK

Confide what? What's on your
mind? What do you think I need?

Jack goes to Adrian, stands close.

JACK (cont.)

Tell me, Adrian. Who do you
think I am?

A pause. Adrian looks him in the eye.

ADRIAN

My friend.

JACK

That's right.

Jack goes to the coffee table and sweeps his clothes into his back pack. There is a quiet JINGLE as Adrian's keys are swept in along with them.

CUT TO:

INT ADRIAN'S ROOM NIGHT

ADRIAN is in bed, asleep. The door to his room opens slowly.

JACK's figure stands silhouetted in the door frame. Jack creeps in softly, stands at the end of the bed looking at Adrian.

He goes over to Adrian's desk. Taking the keys from his pocket, he unlocks the center drawer and opens it. He takes Adrian's passport out of the drawer and slips it into his pocket.

He relocks the desk.

As he turns the key, the lock CLICKS loudly.

In bed, Adrian's eyes snap open.

He doesn't move.

The figure of Jack draws close to Adrian, soon towering over him.

Adrian closes his eyes again.

Jack bends down and puts a folded piece of paper on Adrian's bedside table.

He leaves the room.

As soon as Jack is gone, Adrian sits up and opens the note. He turns on a light.

The note reads:

"I'm on your side.
See you Monday."

Adrian gets up and goes into the living room. Jack is gone.

Adrian goes quickly to Jack's room. His things are still there, but the thin briefcase is gone.

The phone RINGS shrilly, stirring Adrian from his reverie.

He answers it.

ADRIAN
Hello? Yes.
 (pause)
Oh -- God.

CUT TO:

EXT BUENOS AIRES AIRPORT DAWN

Cars, buses, planes.

CUT TO:

INT A BATHROOM

JACK and the TALL MAN seen with him earlier wash their hands at a sink. The Tall Man hands Jack an envelope filled with money.

There is a FLUSH and another man comes out of one of the toilets.
He hands Jack a passport. Jack looks at it -- Adrian's name,
Jack's picture.

TALL MAN
(to Jack)
We won't see each other again.

JACK
I promise.

CUT TO:

INT THE INSTITUTION DAY

ADRIAN runs down a corridor, flanked by NURSES and a DOCTOR.

CUT TO:

INT AIRPORT

JACK puts the thin briefcase that he kept in his room into a small locker, turns the key and pockets it.

He walks down a corridor toward the immigration control. He waits in the short line.

After a moment, he is waved forward. He presents his passport.

An OFFICER thumbs through the passport officiously. Jack shuffles his feet, waiting. A bead of sweat rolls down his nose. He wipes it off.

The Officer flips back and forth through the passport, looking for something. Finally he shoves it back at Jack.

OFFICER
(in Spanish)
It hasn't been validated.

JACK
(in Spanish)
What?

OFFICER
Since your last return.

Jack looks at him, uncomprehending.

OFFICER (cont.)
(patiently)
You have to have it re-validated
by the police after every entry.

Jack grabs the passport and flips through it, panicky.

OFFICER (cont.)

You must know that by now, Mr.
LeDuc.

JACK

Yes. Of course I do. I -- I'll
do it right away.

Jack looks up. Several GUARDS stand between him and the gate.

He turns and goes back the way he came.

CUT TO:

INT INSTITUTION DAY

ADRIAN stands in his mother's room. The drapes are drawn. It's
dim, almost dark.

His MOTHER lies on her bed.

Dead.

She's fully dressed, lying on top of the sheets, her hands folded
across her chest.

Adrian stares, consumed by emotion.

CUT TO:

INT AIRPORT DAY

JACK takes the briefcase back out of the locker he'd checked it
in. He is furious. He walks through the airport aimlessly,
beside himself with frustration.

As he walks, he makes eye contact with a handsome YOUNG MAN,
dressed in conservative business clothes, who is leaving the
airport.

Jack, immediately returning to his old self, grins at the Young
Man, who grins back.

CUT TO:

INT A MEETING ROOM

A slide is projected onto a screen -- several men in military
attire.

CLAUDIA, CHRISTIAN, DR. KAWABE and INSPECTOR BENOIT look on. This
is a smaller meeting, not a big assembly like the others.

Another slide. They work patiently, making notes on each of the men, looking for any traces of familiarity.

CUT TO:

INT A HOTEL ROOM

JACK is in the hotel room, feverishly trying to glue his picture onto a new passport.

Through the mirror, we see the naked body of the YOUNG MAN he made eye contact with in the airport.

The Young Man is dead, we can dimly see that his body has been mutilated -- it must have been, judging from the blood-soaked sheets that he lies on.

Jack's hands shake as he works with the passport. In his frenzied state he's made a horrible mess of the job, smearing glue everywhere, ruining the document.

CUT TO:

INT MEETING ROOM

Another slide, more young men in army uniforms carrying weapons.

There is another person at the meeting, a middle-aged man who is the CONTACT from South Africa.

CONTACT

All of these men operated here in Argentina.

Claudia looks at the slide on the screen. In the picture, she sees a profile, half hidden behind another man -- it's Jack.

Or it may be.

His hair is different, he's not quite the same.

Claudia stares at the man in profile, wondering, unable to place it.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX DAY

ADRIAN returns to the apartment building, quite distraught. He starts up the stairs, stumbling a bit, already quite drunk.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian enters and takes a bottle of booze from a cupboard. His hands are shaking and he has difficulty getting the cap off.

He slaps at the bottle, still with no result, then picks it up and sends it CRASHING into a wall, HOWLING in rage and frustration.

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX

The CRASH and Adrian's CRIES echo through the building.

CUT TO:

INT MEETING HALL

CLAUDIA signals the CONTACT.

CLAUDIA

Hold on a minute. Who's that?

She points at Jack's face.

The contact looks, checks some notes.

CONTACT

His name is Michael Weller. A South African. Dead.

CLAUDIA

Dead?

CONTACT

Identified by his papers and a ring. He, like other foreign elements, was passed off as a subversive rather than part of the military operation. A corpse is a corpse, and it was easier for the government that way. If he was a subversive, there could be a million explanations why he was here. If he was part of the Armed Forces -- there were none.

CHRISTIAN

Why, Claudia?

CLAUDIA

No, nothing. I thought -- I don't know.

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET NIGHT

It's night, people are out, the city is just coming alive.

JACK walks the streets -- or rather stalks the streets -- alone, panicky, a predatory animal looking for a way out.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO NIGHT

The place is in chaos. ADRIAN is sitting on the floor, several empty bottles of liquor around him. He's going through old family albums.

He tries to pour himself another drink but the bottle is empty.

He tosses it away and in doing so he knocks over the picture of Montgomery Clift. Very drunk, he CRIES OUT and picks it up off the floor.

ADRIAN

(a shout)

I didn't mean it! I'm sorry!

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX

As the SHOUTS echo through the building, the McKINNEYS open their door in night dresses and look up towards Apartment Zero.

MARY LOUISE rings EDITH TRENIEV's bell.

No reply.

Mrs. Treniev appears at MR. PALMA's door dressed in a nightgown.

The McKinneys are taken aback.

MRS. TRENIEV

What is it, ladies? Don't look so shocked, I'm not having that much fun. Mr. Palma is not a well man.

MARY LOUISE

Something is happening in Jack's apartment.

MRS. TRENIEV

(shrugs)

I know. It's Saturday night. People are entitled to have a quarrel after midnight on a Saturday night. There's nothing I can do.

Another big CRASH comes from Apartment Zero.

The three women look up.

From number 7, VANESSA opens her door, looks up at the apartment, then down at the women.

VANESSA

What's going on?

The McKinneys and Mrs. Treniev look at Vanessa and go back to their apartments wordlessly.

CUT TO:

INT CLAUDIA'S ROOM NIGHT

CLAUDIA lies in bed with a light on, smoking a cigarette.

Thinking.

Trying to place the face.

CUT TO:

EXT BUENOS AIRES

Morning.

CUT TO:

INT CARLOS' APARTMENT MORNING

CARLOS SANCHEZ-VERNE, in his bathrobe, flicks on his television.

A NEWS ANNOUNCER speaks in Spanish, announcing the latest victim of the murderer. Behind the Announcer are photographs of the blood-soaked bed and the hotel room where Jack's victim was found.

The Announcer introduces DR. KAWABE, who speaks in English.

CUT TO:

INT VANESSA'S APARTMENT

Vanessa, in a robe and big fuzzy slippers, watches Kawabe, fascinated.

He begins.

CONTINUED

KAWABE

When a situation reaches this stage -- when a killer for whatever reasons is able to strike again and again and elude the police -- it is essential that the populace involve itself.

CUT TO:

INT THE MCKINNEYS' APARTMENT

The MCKINNEY SISTERS watch Kawabe, transfixed.

KAWABE (cont.)

Of course, I'm not talking about any kind of vigilante activity, just simple awareness. Or rather heightened awareness. It is our problem, the killer is one of us, and we must find him.

CUT TO:

INT THE WERPACHOWSKYS' APARTMENT

LAURA and ALBERTO are in bed. Laura is watching the television, Alberto is still asleep.

KAWABE (cont.)

To have escaped detection so long he -- or she -- must be living and functioning within our system freely.

CUT TO:

INT PALMA'S APARTMENT

MR. PALMA and MRS. TRENIEV watch Kawabe.

KAWABE (cont.)

I want to stress that we're not looking for any particular face here -- there is no recognizable "look" to the killer. He could be anyone -- perhaps even someone you like. Someone in your family, someone you work with -- maybe even your most trusted neighbor.

Mr. Palma and Mrs. Treniev turn and look at each other.

Then, ashen, they turn their heads and look up --

-- in the direction of --

-- Apartment Zero.

CUT TO:

INT WERPACHOWSKYS' APARTMENT

LAURA, shaky, turns her head up toward Apartment Zero.

CUT TO:

INT THE MCKINNEYS' APARTMENT

Terribly worried, the SISTERS turn their gaze up to Apartment Zero.

CUT TO:

INT VANESSA'S APARTMENT

Her face creased with fear, she turns and looks up at Apartment Zero.

CUT TO:

INT CARLOS' APARTMENT

He turns his head towards Apartment Zero, a look of rage on his face.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT BUILDING

The MCKINNEYS come out of their apartment and go to ring Mrs. Treniev's bell. MR. PALMA opens the door of his apartment.

MARY LOUISE

Have you seen Jack?

PALMA

No, I haven't.

MRS. TRENIEV appears from Mr. Palma's apartment.

MRS. TRENIEV

Did you see the Chinaman on television?

MARGARET

Japanese, actually.

MARY LOUISE

Shouldn't we -- ? I mean, have you seen Jack? Isn't it odd?

MRS. TRENIEV

Odd, Miss McKinney? You're giving me the chills.

MARGARET

He always brings us the Sunday paper.

MARY LOUISE

Always, without fail.

MARGARET

And this morning -- nothing.

MRS. TRENIEV

He may have overslept.

MARY LOUISE

Since Friday night?

MRS. TRENIEV

What are you saying?

MARY LOUISE

Well, isn't it odd? The shouts -- last night.

MARGARET

That voice from up there -- we couldn't sleep a wink.

MARY LOUISE

Shouldn't we ask the others? Perhaps someone saw him go out. I'll ask Mrs. Werpachowsky.

MARGARET

I'll ask Mr. Sanchez-Verne.

The two women climb the stairs. Mary Louise rings the bell of number 9 while Margaret calls on number 6.

LAURA and CARLOS come down with the sisters.

VANESSA opens her door.

VANESSA

Is something wrong?

CARLOS

Have you seen Jack Carney, the American in number --

VANESSA

I know who Jack Carney is. No,
I haven't. Why? Oh my God, no! I
heard the noises last night but then
I thought -- how silly of me! Mr.
LeDuc may be strange, but --

ALBERTO WERPACHOWSKY appears at the door of his apartment. He's
obviously not quite awake yet.

ALBERTO

Laura! What's going on?

As one, they all turn to him and "SHHH!"

Laura makes a sign to her husband to come downstairs.

He does.

LAURA

Remember the shouts last night?
We think that something may have
happened to Jack!

ALBERTO

Who the hell is Jack?

MRS. TRENIEV

He saved Mr. Palma's life!

MARGARET

And Mohammed's.

MARY LOUISE

Mrs. Treniev, you should call the police!

MRS. TRENIEV

Me? Why me? I don't have any evidence.

MARY LOUISE

The Japanese on TV said that we have
to involve ourselves.

MRS. TRENIEV

You believe everything the Japanese
say? Go ahead, involve yourself, I'm
not going to stop you. But remember,
you could be making a terrible mistake.
I say we wait.

VANESSA

I'm not sure I understand. Are you
suggesting that Mr. LeDuc --

MARY LOUISE & MARGARET

SHHHHH!

VANESSA

But it's absurd!

MARY LOUISE

Absurd? My dear, the victim was so disfigured they couldn't identify him. All they know is that he was male, blonde haired, and around 26 years old.

She raises her eyebrows as if to say "sound familiar?"

LAURA

Oh my God!

VANESSA

Let's not get carried away, please. It can't be. The victim was found in a hotel miles from here.

MARGARET

Oh, but that's the simplest thing in the world. He could have killed him here, cut him into little pieces, and moved him to the hotel.

LAURA

Oh my God!

CARLOS

We're wasting time. One of us should go up there. I could knock at the door myself. Or maybe two of us. You know, show a little unity. Just knock at the door and ask for Jack.

MARY LOUISE

That's not good enough. He'll tell you he's not in.

ALBERTO

(too loud)

Maybe he's not in!

They all turn to him again -- "SHHHHHH!!"

MARY LOUISE

(with finality)

He always brings the Sunday paper to us -- always.

MARGARET

And if he couldn't come he would have called. He's that kind of person. He would have called.

MARY LOUISE

Unless --

LAURA

Oh my God!

MARY LOUISE

Exactly. We haven't seen him since --

MARGARET

-- Friday. When Mr. Palma almost passed away.

(to Palma)

How are you, by the way?

MR. PALMA

Let's go back to our apartments and wait. He may turn up.

MARY LOUISE

Something happened up there last night, we all heard it.

ALBERTO

If you want, call the police. I don't want to be rude, but I'd be grateful if you'd leave us out of it.

LAURA

Alberto. We can't ignore it. We shouldn't wait. We should go now.

ALBERTO

And make a fool of yourself?

MARY LOUISE

No one makes a fool of themselves for carrying out a Christian duty.

ALBERTO

We live next door to the loony. Do you want to go straight from not knowing him to having him hate you?

LAURA

Well, if it's true -- what if --

MARY LOUISE
 Something happened up there. We can't
 deny that.

MARGARET
 And it wasn't a party.

MARGARET
 And it wasn't a party.

Silence.

PALMA
 Let's wait until six. If by that time --

VANESSA
 Yes. Let's all meet at my place at six.
 Then we'll decide what to do.

They all exchange an uneasy glance.

MARY LOUISE
 It'll be better to meet at Mrs.
 Treniev's. I can't go up and down
 the stairs all day.

MARGARET
 Yes, up and down, all day.

CARLOS
 Six o'clock then.

CUT TO:

EXT BUENOS AIRES

Evening.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT BUILDING

From the top of the stairs, the group can be seen assembled below
 -- the MCKINNEYS, EDITH TRENIEV & MR. PALMA, VANESSA, LAURA and
 ALBERTO WERPACHOWSKY and CARLOS at the front.

As one, they begin their purposeful march up the stairs to
 Apartment Zero.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

There is a furious POUNDING at the door. ADRIAN goes to the door,
 looking awful, hung over, drawn, sedated.

ADRIAN
(not opening it)
Who is it?

CARLOS (o.s.)
Your neighbors!

Adrian puts on the chain lock and opens the door a crack.

ADRIAN
What do you want?

MARY LOUISE
We want to talk to Jack.

ADRIAN
He's away.

He closes the door and turns to walk back to his bedroom.

With one sharp CRACK, the door flies open, breaking the chain and bouncing against the wall with a BANG.

Adrian is struck by the door and falls to the ground in the middle of the floor.

Carlos looms in the doorway, the others are massed behind him.

COS
That's just what we thought you'd say.

Adrian looks up in shock.

His neighbors stand huddled in the doorway, open mouthed, seeing for the first time the apartment that has so long been a mystery to them.

Acting as if on cue, they bolt into the apartment.

Adrian watches them in shock.

ADRIAN
What are you doing? What in God's name do you think you're doing?

They ignore him.

CARLOS
Spread out. I'll watch him.

Mary Louise goes into the kitchen, opens and closes drawers randomly. She opens one drawer, revealing a large selection of cutlery.

She GASPS and puts her hand over her mouth.

Mr. Palma goes to the pictures of the celebrities and runs his hands over them. He stops at one particular photograph and pulls the frame apart, examining the back of the photograph.

Finding nothing, he drops the frame in pieces on the floor and starts on another one.

Margaret joins her sister in the kitchen and pulls her away from the knives, closing the drawer. They huddle for support.

Vanessa goes to Adrian's room. She runs her hand over the bedspread, opens his closet and looks through his suits. She takes the suitcase out of the closet and opens it.

Finding the womens' clothes, she looks up, confused.

Mrs. Treniev and Laura go to the door to Jack's room and find it locked.

MRS. TRENIEV

Where are the keys? Ask him where
the keys are!

Alberto joins them and with one kick knocks open the door to Jack's room. He, Laura and Mrs. Treniev spill into the room, searching for something, anything.

LAURA

(to the others)
He's not here!

Throughout all of it, Adrian is horrified, speechless. Sanchez-Verne towers over him, threatening and silent.

The others regroup in the living room. Carlos grabs Adrian by the shirt and pulls him to his feet.

CARLOS

What have you done with him? Eh?!
Speak up!

ADRIAN

Leave me alone! Animals! Criminals!

Adrian shoves Carlo's back. Carlos trips on some pieces of broken picture frame and falls to the floor.

He starts to get up but Alberto Werpachowsky is quicker. He steps up to Adrian and SMACKS him in the face.

Adrian falls out the open door and onto the landing at the top of the staircase.

He tries to get up but Alberto is closing in on him, fists clenched.

Adrian stumbles back, loses his balance --

-- and falls down the stairs. It's a long, hideous, painful fall, finally coming to a crushing stop at the foot of the steps.

Adrian's body lies at the bottom of the stairs, blood pouring from the side of his head.

From the top of the stairs, the neighbors watch dumbfounded.

At that moment, before anyone has time to react, the front door to the apartment building opens.

JACK returns.

There is a general SCREAM from everyone upstairs.

Jack sees Adrian's body lying at the foot of the stairs and he runs to his aid.

Vanessa runs down the stairs as Jack picks Adrian up in his arms.

VANESSA

Jack! We thought you -- oh, how terrible. Is he -- ?

Carlos pushes Vanessa aside.

CARLOS

I told them to wait! I --

MARY LOUISE

You were all for it, Mr. Sanchez-Verne.

CARLOS

Shall I call an ambulance?

JACK

No. I'll take care of him.

Jack carries Adrian up the stairs.

CARLOS

Let me help you.

JACK

I can manage.

CARLOS

Don't take it out on me, Jack.
We all -- I thought he had --
where the hell were you?

Jack reaches the top of the stairs and looks at all of them. They are terribly ashamed.

MARGARET

We'll write him a note, to apologize.
Poor Mr. LeDuc. Is he breathing?

Jack looks at Laura. She covers her face with her hands and runs to her apartment.

ALBERTO

She's very upset. We all are.

Jack gets inside the apartment and closes the door.

MRS. TRENIEV

(to Mary Louise)

If something happens to Mr. LeDuc,
I'll hold you personally responsible.
You started all this.

MARY LOUISE

Margaret, tell this person I don't
wish to dignify that filth with
an answer.

MARGARET

She heard you, Mary Louise.

MARY LOUISE

Filth, Mrs. Treniev. I'm not going
to be your scapegoat. I didn't force
anyone to come. We all thought it was
the right thing to do. And it was --
it could have been.

Tears pour down her cheeks. Margaret holds her.

MARGARET

We always liked Mr. LeDuc.

MARY LOUISE

Always.

MARGARET

(points at Carlos)

It was you who poisoned us against him. Remember all those filthy stories you told us about him --

CARLOS

If you're ready to build a monument to Adrian LeDuc all of a sudden, go right ahead. I don't know you ladies.

ALBERTO

I told you to wait, didn't I?

MARY LOUISE

Everyone is so bloody wise all of a sudden. Help me down, Margaret. I'm sick. I want to vomit.

MARGARET

Don't vomit, Mary Louise. It's not worth it.

PALMA

I think we've done enough for one night.

MRS. TRENIEV

Don't get excited. You can't afford it.

VANESSA

We should all buy him a little something.

They all look at Vanessa, then at each other in silence. They turn and walk to their respective apartments.

Vanessa is left standing alone in the entryway.

VANESSA (cont.)

What have I said? I don't mean anything expensive. A gesture. I don't know. Some flowers?

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

JACK is helping ADRIAN into bed. He has cleaned the wound on Adrian's forehead and is keeping a wet cloth pressed against it.

Adrian looks at Jack, reassured and calm.

Adrian is still a bit drunk, and disoriented from his fall.

ADRIAN

I should press charges.

JACK

There's no point, they know they're guilty. Use it to your advantage. They'll be like little lambs from now on.

ADRIAN

What did they want? What did they think?

JACK

They thought you'd done something to me. And you have. You're building me -- roots.

Adrian smiles.

ADRIAN

You noticed. That's good, Jack. That's very good. We'll always be there for each other. That's so good, Jack. So good.

JACK

Have a rest now.

ADRIAN

Stay for a while. Roots, yes. That's good.

Adrian falls asleep. Jack removes the cloth from Adrian's forehead.

Looking across the room, Jack sees them both reflected in the large vanity mirror. He stares at it. It's a haunting image -- Adrian looks dead, interned in the bed like his mother. Jack stands over him, the blood-soaked cloth in his hands.

It's a confusing, terrifying image.

The telephone RINGS and jars Jack.

He answers.

JACK

Hello? No, he's asleep, Claudia. His mother died yesterday.

CLAUDIA (o.s.)

Oh, no! I was so worried. Poor Adrian. How is he?

JACK

Well, imagine. He's asleep now.
I'll tell him you called.

CLAUDIA (o.s.)

Yes. Please tell him not to
worry, I can take care of everything
at the Club. I'll come to see him
tomorrow.

JACK

Fine.

CLAUDIA (o.s.)

Is there anything I can do?

JACK

Not really, thank you. Good
night.

Jack hangs up. He looks at Adrian, then back at the mirror.

CUT TO:

EXT A CEMETERY DAY

ADRIAN, dressed in black, walks slowly behind SIX PALL BEARERS,
obviously workers at the cemetery, who carry his mother's casket
through the ornate graveyard.

Adrian is solemn, somber. He wears a white bandage on his head.

CUT TO:

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX DAY

A Volkswagen bug pulls up and parks in front.

CLAUDIA gets out and goes into the apartment complex.

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX

The place looks deserted. Claudia climbs the stairs and knocks on
the door of Adrian's apartment.

There is a long pause, then JACK answers the door.

CLAUDIA

Is Adrian in?

Jack smiles at her.

CUT TO:

EXT CEMETERY DAY

Adrian's mother's casket is lowered into the earth. The WORKERS stand back and look at ADRIAN.

He is the only one there. There is no ceremony.

Silently, he picks up a handful of earth and tosses it on top of the casket.

CUT TO:

EXT APARTMENT COMPLEX EVENING

ADRIAN walks down the sidewalk. He hesitates in front of his building, recognizing Claudia's car, which is still parked in front.

He goes in.

INT APARTMENT COMPLEX

Adrian climbs the steps, slowly at first, then with growing speed and alarm.

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian throws open the door.

JACK is standing in the middle of the room, shaking. He sends Adrian a feverish look. His hands are full of blood.

Womens' legs stick out from behind the sofa.

Lifeless.

Bloody.

Claudia.

Over on the coffee table, Jack's metal briefcase is open. A handgun rests inside fitted foam rubber, a long black silencer attached to the end of the barrel.

Adrian remains rooted to the spot. He stifles a scream and tries to stop the throbbing in his head by pressing on his temples with his hands.

JACK

I'll clean the carpet. I promise.

He moves toward Adrian.

JACK (cont.)

She wanted it so badly. She just pushed me into it. You know how some people have "martyr" written all over their faces? I can't stand it.

He looks back at the body.

JACK (cont.)

It's such a mess. But, I can't help that either. Thank God you're here. You're so -- we're brothers. I've never had a brother. I never felt like this about anybody. You're it for me, Adrian. I love you so much. Talk to me.

(pause)

You're making me nervous.

(a shriek)

TALK TO ME!!

He reaches out and touches Adrian with his bloodied hand. Adrian pulls back.

JACK (cont.)

Hey, hey. I just want to say hi. I'm glad you're here. I'm sorry about my hands. I'll go wash up. I'll put the mask on and come back, is that okay?

ADRIAN

We're lost.

JACK

Don't be stupid, Adrian. Don't think about her. Forget it. If it wasn't me it would have been someone else. Her way of saying no is so provoking. "No, no, no!" And you're thinking "Yes, yes, yes!" And you know she likes it, you know that's exactly what she wants.

(imitating a childish voice)

"No, no, no!"

(and a towering tone)

"Yes, yes, yes!"

(he looks at Adrian)

Come on, talk to me. You're making me feel weird. Remember what we promised each other? I look after you and you look after me. The rest can stay in hell. You're not going to do something stupid, are you? You won't spoil this bond, this -- this friendship, will you? You need me, Adrian.

ADRIAN

Yes.

JACK

And I need you.

(almost cheery)

So go have a nap. I'll take care of everything.

ADRIAN

What about Clau -- her.

JACK

Don't worry. I'll take care of everything.

ADRIAN

No. We'll do it together. Whatever it is.

JACK

No, no, no. You'll mess up things. I'm used to it. You go have a rest. You look pale. This isn't for you.

ADRIAN

It wasn't for me outside this house. Now I'll deal with it.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO LATER

ADRIAN sweats profusely as JACK and he wrap Claudia's body in a sheet.

Jack hefts her and tries to stuff her into a trunk.

JACK

Christ, what a whale.

He laughs and looks at Adrian, who is about to faint.

JACK (cont.)

So are you going to help me here or what?

INT HALLWAY

Adrian comes out of the apartment, leaving the door open. He looks around.

All clear.

He waits a few seconds, then comes back in quickly and re-emerges, carrying the trunk with Jack. They carry it down the stairs.

As they approach the ground floor, the door of the building opens and LAURA AND ALBERTO WERPACHOWSKY enter. Adrian freezes.

Jack smiles like an actor.

JACK

Good evening.

Laura and her husband are a bit shy, trying not to look at Adrian, who still wears his bandage.

ALBERTO

Can I give you a hand?

ADRIAN

NO!

(regaining)

Thank you.

JACK

(pointing to the trunk)

I'm off to California in the morning.

Laura sends him a confused look.

So does Adrian.

Jack winks at Laura.

JACK (cont.)

I'll be in touch.

EXT APARTMENT BUILDING

Adrian and Jack carry the trunk to Claudia's car.

ADRIAN

Can you drive?

JACK

Are you serious? Of course.

ADRIAN

Do you have a driver's license?

JACK

Why, are you afraid of breaking the law?

(laughs, jolly)

Adrian, you're a trip. Jump in!

EXT CITY NIGHT

A rather squalid area near the Tigre River, a dirty brown body of water in the suburbs.

The car is parked in the darkness. ADRIAN and JACK sit in silence. Some PEOPLE are gathered outside a bar about a hundred meters away, LAUGHING.

Adrian looks at Jack, who seems unconcerned. Jack's casualness is driving Adrian insane, but he is making an effort to keep it under control.

 ADRIAN
Why don't they go away?

 JACK
They're having fun. Relax, will you? We have plenty of time.

The People in front of the bar move away.

 JACK (cont.)
It's now or never.

They get out of the car and pull the body out of the trunk. They carry it to a wooded area. A slope leads down to the river.

They push the body down the slope. Claudia rolls about halfway, then gets entangled in some bushes and stops, still a long way from the river.

 JACK (cont.)
Shit. Oh well. Never mind.

 ADRIAN
We can't leave it there.

 JACK
What difference does it make? I'm going to get rid of the trunk.

Jack walks away.

Adrian remains alone, shaking, looking at the body. He steps out onto the slope and lets himself slide slowly down to where Claudia is entangled.

It's pitch dark.

He gets to the body and tries to free it from the branches, but one of Claudia's fingernails gets tangled in the cross on a chain that Adrian wears around his neck.

Hysterical, he tries to pull Claudia's hand away and in so doing he comes face to face with her face -- eyes wide open and her features frozen in a horrible expression of pain and fear.

He frees her hand and pushes her down the slope to the river. She lands with a soft SPLASH.

Adrian is shaking all over. Jack returns and grabs him by the shoulders, then SLAPS Adrian's face and embraces him.

JACK

Come on now. You've done it. You'll never have to prove another thing to me.

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET NIGHT

A dark street. The Volkswagen is parked. ADRIAN cleans the interior frantically, trying to get rid of any fingerprints.

Jack looks at him, smiling.

JACK

You're a wonder.

The two of them leave the car and walk away.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

JACK and ADRIAN return, exhausted -- although Jack looks as if he was ready to party.

JACK

God, how am I going to sleep tonight? Tomorrow, we have to think of something. If they see me here -- remember, I said I was going to California.

ADRIAN

Let's go to California.

JACK

(like a kid)

What? Are you serious? Do you really mean it? Adrian, that would be fantastic! Look at me, tell me -- am I hearing things or what?

ADRIAN

Let's go to California together.

JACK

You see? This is it. I have never shared this with anyone. I mean, when it was a job, when I came from South Africa and helped your people clean up this country -- that doesn't count. I was just following orders then. Then they fucked me up. Nobody wanted to take responsibility. They told me "You don't exist. You're dead. Nobody can touch you." As if that would take care of me. But I don't even have a passport.

A thought.

JACK (cont.)

By the way, I borrowed yours. But only to -- I mean -- well, that's the past. I was getting kind of cranky, they'd promised me papers -- but you know how they are. They left me with one hell of a problem. Adrian, California! I'm so excited -- look at this.

Jack grabs Adrian's hand and pulls it to his crotch.

JACK (cont.)

See what you're doing to me?

Adrian moves away.

ADRIAN

It won't be that easy, if you don't have any papers.

JACK

I'll get a passport. Don't worry, you can get one from anybody.

ADRIAN

I have to think.

JACK

Don't you dare change your mind!

ADRIAN

No, but -- Jack, this may be an every day event for you, for me it's --

JACK

I know. I'm sorry. For me too, the first time was kind of -- I had the advantage of practicing on commies.

(sympathetic as hell)

She was a friend of yours. You sort of liked her, didn't you?

He embraces Adrian.

JACK (cont.)

The first time is always, I don't know, strange. But don't worry. You'll get used to it.

As Jack embraces him, Adrian looks over his shoulder. His eyes fall on a letter opener on his desk.

Long.

Sharp.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION DAY

INSPECTOR BENOIT and ADRIAN are in Benoit's office. Benoit looks through a file in silence.

He looks up at Adrian, who now has only a small scar on the side of his forehead.

BENOIT

We have everything we need, Mr. LeDuc. You were at your mother's funeral at the time of the murder, nothing to worry about there. We'll call you if we need anything else.

ADRIAN

Is that all?

BENOIT

Yes. Unless you can tell us something that --

ADRIAN

I miss her.

BENOIT

Yeah, well -- I know.

Benoit stands and shakes hands with Adrian. Adrian heads for the door, which opens as he reaches it.

CHRISTIAN SALCEDO enters and looks at Adrian.

CHRISTIAN

Adrian LeDuc? I'm Christian Salcedo. Claudia told me so much about you. She was very fond of you. She said you lived in a sort of political limbo but she admired your integrity. Very lonely without her.

ADRIAN

I'm not alone. But I miss her.

CHRISTIAN

So do I. We have a lot of work to do for Claudia. For all of us.

ADRIAN

Yes.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

INT APARTMENT ZERO

The doorbell RINGS and ADRIAN goes to it, pausing along the way to spray a can of air freshener casually around the room.

He answers the door. LAURA WERPACHOWSKY is outside.

LAURA

I'm sorry to disturb you -- I was just wondering -- do you happen to have Jack's address?

ADRIAN

No, I'm sorry. I haven't heard from him yet.

LAURA

Strange.

ADRIAN

Yes, well -- perhaps soon.

Adrian closes the door.

INT STAIRWELL

Laura turns at the top of the stairs. Most of the other TENANTS are gathered at the bottom of the steps, staring up at her expectantly.

MARGARET speaks in a whisper.

MARGARET

Anything?

Laura shakes her head sadly. Mary Louise pinches her fingers over her nose and speaks delicately, almost mouthing the words.

MARY LOUISE

Did you ask him about the smell?

CUT TO: .

INT APARTMENT ZERO

Adrian turns from the door. He suppresses a small giggle and puts his finger to his lips.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Shhhh!

The room is in darkness, lit only by two candles on the dining room table. Adrian goes to the table.

Adrian sits across from Jack, whose back is turned.

ADRIAN (cont.)

So far so good!

Adrian pours a glass of wine for both of them. He raises his glass in toast.

He drinks. Jack does not.

Adrian looks at him.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Go ahead. It's okay.

Adrian moves around the table to Jack. He picks up Jack's wine glass and raises it to Jack's lips.

ADRIAN (cont.)

Come on. Drink up.

Adrian tilts the glass and red wine dribbles from the lips of Jack Carney.

Who is dead.

And has been for some time.

Adrian looks at Jack, who sits at the table stiffly.

ADRIAN (cont.)

That's better.

CUT TO:

EXT CINEMA DAY

ADRIAN comes out of his cinema. He's dressed in a brightly patterned sport jacket, wide collars on his shirt. He hasn't shaved in a few days and his hair is longer, unkempt.

Behind him, the marquis announces a lurid X-rated selection of films. There is a lot of activity, many people coming in and out of the lobby.

Adrian puts a cigarette in his mouth and lights it with a shaky hand.

He puts his head back and inhales deeply.

The cigarette seems to help.

FADE OUT.