

BUFFALO '66

Original Story
by
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Screenplay
by
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FIELD 30 MILES OUT OF BUFFALO, NY - EXT. DAY

An open field with one farmhouse on it. Maybe it's a farmhouse. You can't tell because it's so covered in snow.

It is snowing heavily. A blizzard. A Buffalo Blizzard. But the color palette out here is not Colorado Rocky Mountains Ski Slope white. It's grey. An End of the World grey. That somewhere between Life and Death grey.

Snow swirls dizzily and thick.

The only SOUND is that of ICY HOWLING WIND.

Across a snow-choked road from the field lies a cluster of sleeping grey brick monster bunkers covered in white snow. Each is surrounded by rows of high steel fences crowned with twirls of sparkly razor wire.

First is a hulking holding pen - the main penitentiary; then the smaller processing building; then the smallest of the bunkers, the discharge building - square and squat. The camera comes to rest on this block of grey brick, its corners softened by a thick blanket of snow. In the middle of one wall is the outline of a DOOR with a small sign that reads "PRISONER DISCHARGE".

The door is cemented shut by five foot snowdrifts.

BRIEF MAIN CREDIT SEQUENCE BEGINS over snow covered door: "_____
PRESENTS",... "BUFFALO '66". Over the "Buffalo '66" credit, the WIND
GUSTS, icy and desolate, no hope at all.

We watch the snow-drifted door for a while. It looks more like a drawing of a door than a door.

A few more credits roll.

The outline of the door gets thicker as it starts to open a crack. Someone is pushing from the inside with difficulty. The snow puts up crunchy resistance to the person pushing.

A BROWN-HAIRED HEAD peeks out of the door at the harsh Arctic landscape outside.

The brown head becomes a YOUNG MAN - 30, innocent blue eyes of a baby, but with a boxer's nose; the expression of a puppy with a broken paw.

He is dressed in a brand new cheap fiberfill parka, but the clothes underneath are clearly summer clothes, of thin cotton, and he has no hat or gloves.

The young man hunches his shoulders, bracing himself against the cold, and slowly wades out into the knee-deep drifts.

He crosses the road, trudges up to a sign where a bus schedule is posted, and reads the schedule, squinting to keep the swirling snow out of his eyes. He scans the empty landscape, his paper-white skin reddening from the cold.

Something is wrong. The young man frowns, looks very uncomfortable. He's gotta take a piss...badly. He digs both hands into his pants pockets as though to pinch the end of his bird so it doesn't leak, starts hopping around the bus stop.

The guy runs/wades back to the door he just came out of less than one minute before and pounds on it loudly. BOOM BOOM BOOM! He waits. Pounds again. Waits for what feels like a long time.

The door opens a crack. (It's already frozen over again). A PRISON GUARD sticks his head out.

PRISON GUARD

What do you want?

BILLY

Gotta bathroom?

PRISON GUARD

I can't let you back in here. This is an exit only. You wanna use a bathroom, you gotta go a half-a-mile down the road, take a right, go around to the main entrance, into the visitors' center. They got a bathroom right inside the door when you go in. But I can't let you back in here. Tough luck. Tough luck Billy.

The guard closes the door.

Billy stares at the closed door like he can't believe what he's just heard.

Then he casts a wary glance over his shoulder and unzips his pants. He's just about to pee on the prison door when it cracks open again, startling him badly. He jumps back.

The same prison guard peeks his head out. He's pissed.

PRISON GUARD

Don't even think about it! We got a camera outside and we can see you, so don't look for no other spots, or you'll be arrested.. and you'll be back inside. (then, sarcastic)--

PRISON GUARD (cont.)
..but you'll be warm!

Billy goes back to the bus stop and waits, his hands stuffed in his pockets.

A BUS comes swerving over to the stop, its wheels squashing the unplowed snow. Eight passengers are already on the bus..Billy climbs on and takes a seat.

EXT. SECONDARY ROADS TO BUFFALO - DAY

ROLL MUSIC

The bus rolls down the road in the blizzard, snaking through the deathly white countryside.

INT. BUS - DAY

Billy stares out the window. He darts a look at the other mangy passengers on the bus - girlfriends or relatives of inmates just come to visit - and turns back to looking at the grey expanse outdoors.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - DAY

The bus skids and slides along the slippery streets of Buffalo. The Buffalo of the 90's, another Northeastern industrial city - once thriving - that is having a seriously hard time now. Trying to reinvent itself with bleak results.

The bus passes city blocks that are half-renovated, half-decaying; abandoned factories - Tyco Rubber, Bethlehem Steel - then gets stuck in a snarl of traffic.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS DEPOT - DAY

The bus pulls into the parking lot of the Port Authority bus station. The passengers trickle out and disperse. Billy sprints into the depot.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS DEPOT - DAY

Billy walks up to an INFORMATION BOOTH. The plexiglass window is cracked and repaired with so much yellowed industrial tape that you can't see the man inside.

BILLY
Gotta bathroom?

INFORMATION PERSON
Yeah, it's down there. (he points down a corridor.)

Billy walks and walks, down a long corridor. Finally comes to the Men's Room. Over the door is a large sign that reads, "OUT OF ORDER".

Billy reads the sign, looks around to see if there's another restroom, and walks away.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS STATION - DAY

Billy emerges from the bus depot and turns into a Chinese Takeout restaurant next door.

INT. CHINESE TAKEOUT - DAY

A shivering Chinese guy - fresh off the boat and bundled up in 10 layers of sweatshirts - is huddled behind a cash register.

BILLY
Gotta bathroom?

WAITER
No. Foh customahs onry!

Billy stares at the guy for a minute, looks like he'd like to strangle him. The Chinese guy stares back. Billy says nothing and walks out.

EXT. BAR - DAY

Billy heads into a pub with dark windows and neon signs advertising various beers that no longer exist.

INT. BAR - DAY

Even though it's daytime outside, in here it's always night.

A handful of BARFLIES are perched on stool at the far end of the bar. The BARTENDER walks over to Billy.

BARTENDER
What are you drinking?

BILLY
Gotta batroom?

The bartender looks at him.

BARTENDER
Yeah. We got a batroom, but I can't let you
use it. It got backed up about an hour ago,
and no one's goin' in there.

Billy looks at him. He's losin' it. He walks out of the bar without
a word.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - DAY

Billy - truly desperate now - wanders stiff-legged through the
streets of Buffalo.

He finds a secluded corner between two stores and is about to go
when a WOMAN walks right by him. He quick zips up his pants, but
catches his pecker a bit in the zipper and winces in pain.

He finds a MOVER'S VAN parked next to and an old snow-covered
PONTIAC and starts to unzip his pants to pee in between the two
vehicles, only to look up and realize that there is a GRANDMOTHER
sitting in the passenger seat of the Pontiac, her eyes glued to his
every move.

Behind him, a mother and her two squabbling kids walk by. He whips
around, startled, his fists clenched for a fight.

EXT. THEATRE ARTS BLDG. - DAY

Crippled by the need to relieve his bladder, Billy hobbles down the
sidewalk, almost delirious now.

Billy walks past an old WAREHOUSE converted into a THEATRE, and
notices a guy shoveling snow. The man is a hunched up older man in
his 50's, a typical Buffalonian - miserable, worn out, fat, and
freezing cold.

The man is shoveling snow and sprinkling salt on the walkway
leading to the theatre entrance.

Billy walks up to him.

BILLY
Hey sir..you gotta batroom?

MAN

(heavy Buffalo accent)

Yeah, dere's a public batroom on da turd floor. Just take de elevator to da turd floor. Number tree on de elevator. When you get off de elevator, it's on da right hand side.

Billy hoofs it into the theatre.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Billy presses number three, gets off on the third floor, and makes a right.

INT. HALLWAY - THIRD FLOOR - DAY

Piano music can be heard coming from a classroom down the hall.

On a bench in the hallway, a SLENDER GIRL IN A LEOTARD - around 18 years old, with owl-shaped eyes, a tangle of brown hair and a little nose, really pretty in an odd way - sits stretching out a calf.

She spots Billy as he comes out of the elevator and watches him as he walks towards her.

From inside the classroom comes a SHRILL VOICE.

DANCE TEACHER

(in heavy Buffalo accent)

And one and two and one and two...

Billy shuffles swiftly to the bathroom, taking only a quick peek at the girl on the way.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

A MALE DANCER in mauve practice leotards is already at one of the URINALS, peeing.

Billy unzips his pants, fighting to get the zipper open. It's stuck. He grunts as he struggles, finally gets it open.

Billy notices that the guy at the next urinal is staring at Billy's thing.

Billy leans one shoulder deeper into the urinal, turning his back to the guy to stop him from seeing.

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The guy shifts to get in a better position to see.

The urine gets blocked half-way down Billy's urethra.

BILLY

What the fuck you lookin' at, you fuckin' asshole!

GUY

Hey man, relax. Nothin', I'm sorry, I wasn't lookin' at nothin'.

BILLY

Don't tell me you wasn't lookin' at nothin', what are you, a fuckin' faggot! Get your fuckin' face outta my fuckin' pants, you fuckin' jerk! Can't you see I'm tryin' to take a piss! Get the fuck outta the bathroom before I come and choke you to death!

GUY

Relax. I wasn't looking. Relax...

Billy collects himself and goes back to trying to pee.

GUY

(under his breath)

It's just...so...big...

BILLY

What! What did you say!

Billy explodes. He takes the guy by the face with one hand.

BILLY

Listen you fuckin' faggot. You see me? You see the evil in me? I'll kill ya! I'll kill you, you son of a bitch! Get out of the bathroom or I'll choke you to death.

Billy drags him by the face over to the door and pushes him out of the bathroom. He slams the door.

BILLY

(pacing back and forth)

That fuckin' faggot! That miserable cock suckin' faggot!

Billy settles himself down and goes to pee again. He tries, but he can't pee now. He starts freaking out. Starts pounding on things, slamming stall doors.

BILLY
Goddammit! That cocksucker! I'm gonna go
kill that fucker!

Billy storms out of the bathroom.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Outside in the hallway, there is a LONG MIRROR covering the length of the wall with a hand bar for doing warm up exercises.

Outside in the hallway, the GIRL is just finishing her stretching, staring at herself in the mirror.

Billy explodes out of the Men's Room, ranting like a madman.

BILLY
I'll kill that faggot!!...

As he utters these words he catches sight of his reflection. He's disoriented by the mirrored wall.

OFF SCREEN SOUND OF ELEVATOR DOORS CLOSING. The male dancer is gone.

ANGLE ON ELEVATOR DOORS. The "Down Arrow" is lit up.

BILLY
(to himself in the mirror)
Yeah, you better run, you...faggot!

GIRL
(looking at him in the mirror)
Watch your mouth.

BILLY
(talking to her, but watching himself
like he were watching someone else
speaking)
What? What?...Watch my mouth? Watch your
mouth!

He sees the evil look in his own eyes. Then he looks around to find where the girl is for real, and finally sees her. (the mirror makes it confusing). He looks at her.

BILLY
You gotta payphone here?

GIRL
(voice full of contempt)
It's right behind you.

BILLY
(equally contemptful)
Thanks.

Billy starts digging in his pockets, which are empty.

The girl gets up and starts to go into the Girls' Room when he calls out to her.

BILLY
Excuse me...Miss! Miss! ...Miss!
...Miss...Miss!

She turns around.

GIRL
What!

BILLY
Uh..Can I ask you a question. You gotta quarter?

The girl looks amazed that he would ask.

GIRL
Yes. (she doesn't do anything)

BILLY
Well...Could I borrow it...

GIRL
Yes. (she doesn't make a move)

BILLY
Can I borrow it...now?

GIRL
Yes.

She reaches slowly into her purse, takes out a quarter, and hands it to him.

Billy snatches it out of her hand and walks away.

GIRL
Don't you say thanks?

BILLY

What?...

GIRL

Don't you say thank you?

BILLY

What? (Billy just gives her a look and walks to the payphone.)

The Girl gives a snort and disappears into the Ladies' Room.

Billy puts a quarter in the phone and dials a number. He clears his throat repeatedly as he waits for someone to answer.

BILLY

Ma? It's me Billy...Billy! Billy, Ma, your son, remember? Ma, will you turn down the television? I can't hear nothin'...Will you turn down the television, it's Billy!... Yeah, I told you, we're gonna be in town just today. I'm comin' over. We just flew in...we're at the fancy hotel downtown...

The shrill voice of the dance teacher echoes into the hall.

DANCE TEACHER

Second position, demi-plie', and one and two...

Billy turns his back to the sound of the dance teacher's voice.

BILLY

..yeah, the big hotel. Right, yeah. Yeah. Of course it's beautiful. Yeah, we got a big room. Yeah, it's beautiful Ma. Beautiful. No, you shouldn't come here. I'm coming there. No. Ma. Ma. I wanna come over there. Don't come here, alright? I wanna see, you know, the neighborhood and stuff, you know?...Anyway, I was gonna come now, alright?...*(breathes a sigh)*..Well... what time does the game end Ma? Alright. Alright, I'll come after 5, alright? She's good Ma. Yes..she says hello. No, she can't come Ma. ..She's sick. I don't know Ma, she always gets sick when we fly on airplanes. You know, we been flyin' all over...No. Yes, she wants to come, she's just, you know, you sit in 1st class, they bring you all that food..I think she ate too much. I don't know, she's just not...she's got cramps, Ma,--

BILLY (cont.)

okay? I'm not in the room, Ma, she can't say hello. No, she's sleeping, she's upstairs. I came down to the lobby, I didn't wanna wake her up. No, she can't get on the phone, Ma, she's up in the room. Did you hear what I said? No, yes, she wants to meet you, she's dying to meet you, she's just not feeling good...Next time we're in town..

Inside the classroom the PIANIST is making loud mistakes in the musical accompaniment of the dance lesson.

BILLY

What do you want me to do? You want me to wake her up sick?

Billy puts his hand to his forehead.

BILLY

Alright Ma, fine. Fine. Alright? Okay, no, I'll go upstairs, I'll wake her up, she's sick, and I'll wake her up so you can see her, alright? Yeah, that's what I'll do. No she's not going to feel better Ma if she eats something at your house. Alright? I just told you we ate a lot of food on the plane. Alright Ma. No, no, alright.. no..I'll..I'll wake her up. She'll be fine. Okay. No, I'm gonna drag her outta bed. Alright? I'm gonna make her come. then when you see her you're gonna feel bad, alright? When you see how sick she is, okay? Alright, Alright I'll see you after 5. Okay? Okay?! Yes. I gotta go. Okay. Good-bye.

Behind him, the door to the Ladies' Room is opening. Billy slams down the phone.

He spins around, sees the girl, and in a flash, GRABS HER BY THE HAIR, jerking her head back, and starts dragging her down the hall towards the stairwell?

She lets out a high-pitched shriek.

BILLY

Shut up! Just shut your trap or I'll take a bite out of your fuckin' throat!

He pulls her hair harder, bending her head all the way back. With his other hand he grabs her bag and clamps her to him by-the waist.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAY

Looking like a TWO-HEADED BEAST they CRASH through metal doors and into a dank STAIRWELL.

The girl's neck is bent back so far it's about to snap. Her gaping mouth makes her look like a dying guppy gasping for air. She makes bizarre gargling sounds.

ANGLE ON BILLY. His face like a rabid dog.

They SLAM against the walls of the stairwell, down flight after flight. It seems that at any moment they will miss a step and topple to the bottom like a broken toy.

The girl struggles, flailing her arms and legs, trying to scream,

Then, suddenly, she decides to play POSSUM. She bends her knees up to her chest, hugs her knees with both arms, and lets herself be carried like a giant beach ball.

CLOSE ON GIRL'S FACE. Frozen, glazed expression, like someone on medication.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Snow-covered parking lot. Only four or five cars are parked. Billy and Girl burst into blinding daylight.

Billy is fumbling in the girl's purse. Sound of JINGLING. He pulls out a bunch of keys, among them a CAR KEY.

BILLY

Alright, now point to me which car is yours.
Don't say a fuckin' word, just point to it.
Do not say a word or I'll kill you right
here. Point to your car.

The girl doesn't react.

BILLY

What did I just tell you. Point to your car.
Point to it!

The girl lifts one finger and points crookedly at a rusty NISSAN COMPACT caked with snow at the edge of the lot.

BILLY

Alright. Good girl. Let's just go over to
your car. Just shut your mouth. Nothin's
gonna happen.

They walk over to the Nissan. Her finger is still frozen in a pointed position.

Billy fumbles with the key, trying to turn it in the frozen lock. As he fumbles, he holds her in a very awkward position, cutting into her abdomen with his left elbow.

GIRL

You're hurting me.

BILLY

Just shut your mouth or I'll really hurt you.

But he loosens his grip a little.

Billy unlocks the car door on the driver's side, and starts to push her inside like she's a large piece of luggage. He is trying to slide her over to the passenger side, but her clothes get stuck on the gear shift.

INT. NISSAN - DAY

Finally he succeeds in getting her into the seat, and tries to sit in the driver's seat, but it is all the way in the forward position and he can't fit his legs in. He's claustrophobic and he starts freaking out.

BILLY

How do you get this fuckin' seat back! Show me where the thing is!

She starts to open her mouth to speak, but he cuts her off.

BILLY

Just point to it! Don't say a word. Where is it!

She points to a lever under the seat. Billy fumbles a bit and releases the lever, slides the seat all the way back, and breathes a deep sigh of relief.

He puts the key in the ignition, and starts up the car. The wipers are already on and start scraping away the snow on the windshield.

The interior of the car, which had been as dark as the inside of an igloo, is now brightened by two half-circles made by the wipers.

Billy and the girl sit shivering in silence, waiting for the engine to warm up. Billy REVS the engine, trying to warm it up quickly, but it just putters weakly. The engine's still too cold to rev.

BILLY
(talking to the car)
C'mon, warm up, you fuckin' thing! Warm up!

Billy watches the windshield wipers straining against the foot of snow.

BILLY
Where's the windshield scraper. Where's the scraper thing. Where's the thing!

She points to the back seat. He turns around and grabs a red plastic scraper. He gets out of the car, slamming the door behind him, like he's going to go scrape off the car.

Instead, he appears on her side of the car and opens her door.

BILLY
Get outta the car. Get outta the car! You scrape the windows. (handing her the scraper) Here, clean your car.

He puts the scraper in her hand.

BILLY
Clean the car!

She starts brushing snow off of the windows.

BILLY
Hurry up. Hurry up! Scrape around. Look, look, you missed a spot! C'mon, brush the side! Just get that ice off, alright? So I can see. Alright? Who taught you how to clean a car? What are you, retarded?

She scrapes away at the front windshield, then the rear window.

BILLY
Alright, come on, c'mon. Good, that's enough. Alright, back in the car.

He grabs her by the hair and pushes her back in the car.

GIRL
You're hurting me.

He sits her down into the bucket seat.

BILLY

(coming in close to her face)

You say that one more time. You say 'you hurt me', one more time, and I swear, I'll do Horrible Things to you. Okay? Horrible things, alright? I don't wanna hear your voice. Alright? You hear me? Just do what I tell you and shut your mouth.

Billy runs around to his side of the car and gets in. The girl is staring at him with a furrowed brow. She looks worried.

BILLY

What are you looking at? What are you looking so afraid? What, you think I'm gonna rape you? This is not a rape. Look at you. You think I'd rape you? YOU? Please. Yeah right. Just shut your mouth. This is not a rape, so just relax yourself. Don't get excited.

The girl looks at him, her eyes narrowed.

BILLY

And don't worry. I'm not gonna rob you either, so you can hold onto your nickels and dimes, alright? You can clutch on them, alright? Don't give me that..that look. Know what I'm saying? You're not my type, so, relax, alright? Just relax. Matter of fact, I couldn't do it with you if I tried, alright? So just relax yourself, and you can keep checking your pennies.

The engine is finally warm. Billy gets ready to drive away. He reaches around on the steering column for the gear shift.

BILLY

Where's the thing?

He looks down and sees the standard gear shift on the floor. He looks totally confused, thrown off.

BILLY

What is this. What is this! Is this one of those...is one of those cars you gotta shift? Is this a shifting car? Is this a shifting car?

The girl nods her head.

BILLY

Well, we got a little situation here, alright? I can't drive these shifting cars.

The girl's mouth is crinkled in a bemused smile.

BILLY

You think that's funny, you think it's funny, huh? You know why? You know why I can't drive these kind of cars? Huh? Would you like to know why? Huh? Huh? Would you? Yeah?... 'Cause I drive luxury cars, okay? Luxury cars, you know? You know, like Cadillacs, ever hear of Cadillacs? How 'bout an El Dorado, alright? I don't drive these little toy cars that you gotta shift. Alright? I drive cars that shift themselves. Alright? They shift themselves. Alright? Luxury cars. You know? So we got a little problem here, alright?... You're gonna have to drive, alright? So we're gonna switch seats. And I want this to happen quick and easy, alright, you hear me? Understand? Nod your head if you understand.

The girl stares at him, refusing to nod.

BILLY

Okay. When I say tree I want you to open your door, and I want you to walk around to my door. Alright? And I'll be lookin' at you. And if you make one move - one miserable move - I swear...even a suggestion of a movement of running away....I swear I'll come out of the car and I'll catch you. I swear I'll catch you and I swear to God, I'll end your miserable life, alright? Right here. I'll end it. Okay. Now follow my count, alright? One...two. ..tree.

They have a little staring match in which the girl looks him straight in the eyes - seemingly unafraid - and Billy stares right back at her.

Then, she opens the door and, never taking her eyes off of him, walks around the front of the car and over to his door. He opens the door, turns off the car, takes out the keys from the ignition, puts her in the seat. He takes the belt, straps her neck to the headrest again, then runs around to the passenger side and jumps in.

BILLY
Okay, now drive slowly out of the parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The little Nissan swerves its way out of the snow-filled parking lot.

SC.18 SECONDARY ROAD - OUTSKIRTS BUFFALO - EXT. DAY

The tiny car skids along snowy Buffalo roads.

Inside the car, Billy is still very WOUND UP.

BILLY
This fuckin' car, I can't even stretch out my legs. I'm all cramped up. (he puts his hands between his legs again. The need to pee has returned full force.) We're in the car a minute and I'm already cramped. Why don't you get yourself a Cadillac.

The girl starts to open her mouth.

BILLY
Forget it, don't talk. Don't even listen to me. Don't listen when I'm talking to myself. Okay, pull over...I said pull over!

They're on a deserted road that leads to the suburbs of Buffalo.

The girl pulls over and comes to a stop. Billy snatches the keys out of the ignition, then points an index finger about two inches from her face.

BILLY
(as though talking to a 3 year old)
Okay, now, I'm going to step outside a moment, you understand? I want you to put your hands on the dash. Right, yes, like that... Put them on the dash. Good girl. Now, if you move one finger. I mean, twitch a finger and I'll come in, and I'll choke you to death. I'll take a bite right out of your face and I'll shit you out. You understand? You got that?

She presses both hands to the dashboard. She's sick of his metaphors.

BILLY

Okay good. Now, keep them on the dashboard. Alright? Now nod if you understand. Nod. You understand. Right? Don't move one finger. You hear me? Not one finger.

The girl just clears her throat loudly.

Billy gets slowly out of the car, watching her the whole time.

He turns his back to the car, unzips his fly and starts to pee, keeping his eye on her in the car. Finally the relief overtakes him and he rolls his eyes upwards and lets his head roll back.

BILLY

aaaAAAAHHHHH!!...

ANGLE ON GIRL IN CAR. The girl, her hands still glued to the dashboard, turns her head cautiously to see what he's doing.

Billy - eyes in the back of his head - whips around.

BILLY

Don't look! Who said you could look!

She jerks away her gaze. Billy finishes up and zips up his pants.

ANGLE ON GIRL AGAIN INSIDE CAR, waiting for him to come back. The car door opens and Billy gets in. However, the Billy that gets into the car is almost unrecognizable from the one that got out moments before. He is more human, relaxed.

BILLY

What are you doing with your hands on the dashboard! Loosen up! You're makin' me nervous.

She looks at him strangely. He seems so different now.

BILLY

(breathes a sigh of relief)
Whooh...Alright, first thing right off the bat, I would like to apologize. Okay, I'm gonna apologize. I was a little irritable. You know what I mean? I had to go to the bathroom. You know? When you gotta hold it in for hours? Okay? I was backed up. And I swear to God, I didn't mean to scare you and I'm sorry that I pulled your hair, okay? Are you okay? Yeah? Good.

She opens her mouth to speak, but he covers it with his hand.

BILLY

Do not talk.
I uh (clears his throat)... I need to ask you a favor. I'm gonna go visit my mother and father. Now...(clears throat again)..I haven't seen them in a long time, alright? I just got outta jail...okay. So now you know. Good. I'm a criminal, big deal, now ya hate me right? Okay, good. But I was innocent. Just so you know, alright? So you're thinking, right, 'everybody in jail says that', everybody says they're innocent, but let me tell you something. I'm the one guy - the one guy - who really was innocent. Uh.. anyway - so just don't talk, okay - so anyway, I've been in jail for uh..five years, alright? And I haven't talked to my parents in all that time, but before I left for jail, I told them about this girl, they think I'm married. I told 'em I was goin' away to work for the government, you know? That I couldn't see them for a while. Alright? I made up this little lie. Alright? A few lies. Big deal. What was I gonna do... tell her, Ma, I'm goin' to jail? I did it for her! Alright. (clears throat) Now lemme ask you a question. Were you ever in a play in school? Did you ever act?

The girl starts to open her mouth.

BILLY

Ah ah! Ah!...Now, don't talk! Alright? Don't talk. See? You were gonna say a word! I saw it comin'. Just nod, alright? This is yes, and this is no. Have you ever acted?

She nods her head 'yes'.

BILLY

Good. So you've been in a play...yes or no?

GIRL

Yes.

BILLY

Ah ah! What did I just say, just nod. So you've acted. You're an actress. You're familiar with acting..

The girl nods.

BILLY

Well today is your big break, alright? Your acting debut. What I need you to do...is come to my parents' house...and all I need you to do.. is make me look good. Alright? Now, you're my wife. You love me more than anything in the whole world. You worship me. You adore me. 'Cause I'm a terrific husband. Alright? This is acting, okay?

The girl stares him like he's gotta be kidding.

BILLY

And your new name is Wendy Balsam.

The girl cracks up when she hears the name 'Wendy Balsam'.

BILLY

Don't laugh. It's a nice name. Anyway, the story is, you and I went to high school together. That's where we met. And we've loved eachother ever since. Alright? And you don't have to worry about the details 'cause I'll take over. You just be nice, a nice decent girl, alright? Now what's your name?

GIRL

I can't talk.

BILLY

You can just say your name.

LAYLA

Layla.

BILLY

Layla. Layla (turning it over it in his mouth) What kind of name is Layla! Alright, well, for now your name's Wendy. So Wendy Basically what I'm asking you to do is come to my parents' house and make me look good, say whatever you want. But make me look good. You'd be doin' me a big favor. Alright? A big favor. But if you fuck it up and make a fool outta me. Well, then Wendy, I'll have to kill you. Okay? And I swear to God, I'll kill you right there. You understand? Boom! You'll be dead. Right in front of Mommy and Daddy. And I'll tell you another thing...if you let me down, alright? You let me down. You fuck me over, you disappoint me...I'll never talk to you --

BILLY (cont.)

again, I swear to God..look at me..look at me. I swear to God, I will never talk to you for the rest of my life. Alright? (he clears his throat again) But... You do a good job, and I'll let you go, after, alright? And then you can be my friend. Alright? You can be my very best friend. Okay, if you have any questions, you can talk now..

Layla doesn't say a word.

BILLY

Good. So we got a deal.

LAYLA

Do I have a choice?

BILLY

No. You do not. So whaddaya say.

LAYLA

Well, if I don't have a choice how can I make one?

BILLY

Alright alright! Stop that crap! Let's pretend, just to see what you would do, let's pretend you have a choice.

LAYLA

(looks thoughtful)

Well, first, tell me your name.

BILLY

What do you want to know my name for?

LAYLA

Just, I wanna know your name.

BILLY

Billy. Billy Brown. You happy? Now... what's your choice?

She thinks about it. Bites her lip like she's making a tough decision.

LAYLA

What's the name of the girl I have to be-- -- again?

BILLY

What'd I just tell you, Wendy Balsam.
Alright? Wendy Balsam. And remember, you
love me. You love me. Alright?

Layla looks at him. Thinks about it.

LAYLA

Wendy Balsam. Hm. (thinks some more)
Alright. Okay. I can do that.

Billy tries to hide his surprise.

LAYLA

I'll help you out. Just one thing... you
can't pull my hair anymore.

BILLY

Yeah, alright. Alright. I won't pull your
hair. Just don't start yappin'. Alright?

LAYLA

(she's serious)
You can't pull my hair anymore. It hurts.
You're giving me a headache.

BILLY

Alright alright. Okay. Good.

Layla starts to practice.

LAYLA

(in a super-polite falsetto)
Hi Mr. and Mrs. Brown. I'm Wendy. I've heard
so much about you!

BILLY

(excited)
Good. Good! That's it. Good. Like that.
Alright, so keep practicing, alright? Keep
practicing in your head, though, not out
loud. Practice in your head. Alright, so we
got a deal.

Billy is so thrilled that she's gonna do it that he forgets himself
and reaches his hands towards her head, claw-like, about to pull
her hair again out of sheer excitement.

BILLY

= (remembering at the last minute not to pull her
hair)
..Thank you. Seriously, thank you.

Billy opens Layla's coat and takes a look at her chest.

BILLY

Hey uh Wendy, you got any kleenex?

LAYLA

There's some in my purse.

BILLY

You get it. I'm not putting my hand in there again.

LAYLA

What, you're afraid of a girl's purse?

BILLY

No, I'm not afraid of a girl's purse. What you should do is you should be afraid of ME. And watch your mouth. You should be very afraid, and just watch your mouth. Okay?

LAYLA

(with mock fear)

Oooohh...

BILLY

Don't get smart.

He hands her the purse and she pulls out a kleenex, from among a multitude of clinking vitamin bottles.

BILLY

Okay, now fold up some kleenex. Fold 'em up. Alright? Fold 'em up into little balls. Alright? Now stuff them in your bra... alright?

Layla reddens. She looks very offended, very hurt.

BILLY

You hear what I said? Put 'em in your bra. Make yourself look a little bigger. You know what I mean? Like a...woman. Alright?

Layla makes an annoyed huffing sound.

Finally she takes the kleenex and puts it inside her bra. She gives him an acid look.

LAYLA

How's that?

BILLY

Yeah that's better, that's good.

Layla takes out some kleenex, folds it up into a cone shape, and holds it out to him.

LAYLA

Here.

BILLY

What. What's this?

LAYLA

Here's some for you.

BILLY

Whaddaya mean, some for me...

LAYLA

Well why don't you stuff some in your pants?

BILLY

What is that..what is that supposed to mean?

LAYLA

Well...I thought you might wanna look bigger...for your Mom and Dad.

BILLY

You think that's funny? That's disgusting.

Billy just sits there looking at her with repugnance.

BILLY

Okay? Now just start the car and watch your mouth.

Layla pulls out onto the road again.

BILLY

(under his breath)

Okay...here we go...

EXT. ROADS LEADING TO BUFFALO SUBURB

WIDE SHOT CAR navigating snowy roads.

BILLY

Remember, your job is to make me look good.
Ya hear me? ... You can eat all you want,

BILLY (cont.)
...have a good time, just don't forget...
You're there to...why are you there?

LAYLA
To make you look...

BILLY
To Make Me Look Good. ME. Make me look
good...and you can go home. Make me look bad
and I'll do Evil Things.

He makes a menacing grimace. Layla looks completely unfazed.

LAYLA
Are your parents vegetarians? I hope they
are because I do not eat meat - ever.

EXT. BILLY'S PARENTS' NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

WIDE SHOT of car driving into a crummy working class version of a suburb.

INT. CAR - DAY

LAYLA
So we're almost there?

BILLY (V.O.)
(in a small voice)
Yeah.

ANGLE ON BILLY: as the car nears his parents' house, Billy undergoes a transformation. He begins to shrink lower and lower into his seat. He seems small and vulnerable, unrecognizable from the crazed brute of before.

Layla looks over at him.

LAYLA
Is something wrong?

BILLY
(small voice)
No. I'm fine.

LAYLA
Is there anything in particular I should
tell your parents?

BILLY

What? Uh, no... You just make it up when you're there. That'll be fine. Slow down, slow! You can park right here.

Layla pulls over and parks sloppily, the back end of the car sticking way out into the road. She gets out and walks over to the sidewalk. Billy takes a long time to get out.

LAYLA

Which house is it?

Billy points to a house all the way at the end of the block.

Layla walks on ahead with Billy trailing behind.

INT. BILLY'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

Beautiful lower-class, very Italian-American living room. Everything is perfectly and pristinely neat and clean, there is plastic on the furniture, there's a statue by the TV of a baby angel holding a big bowl of plastic fruit. The carpeting is 60's shag, the walls are panelled, with Buffalo Bills penants on them. Very tacky, very Buffalo.

JANET BROWN, 50, strong Italian face, bleached reddish blond hair (obviously fake) is bundled up on the couch (because in Buffalo, people are too cheap to turn up the heat). She is immersed in a Bills' game on TV, with a Bills jacket on and a Bills blanket over her. She is obviously very knowledgeable about football.

Covering the walls is the entire spectrum of Buffalo Bills memorabilia; signed posters, photographs, pennants. A virtual shrine to the ill-fated football team. The home of a SPORTS FANATIC.

TV ANNOUNCER

The Bills' punter, Cooper, back to punt from Bills 10-yard line. Ohhh! He just gets it off!...It was almost blocked! Jackson takes it at the 50!...

JANET

(sarcastically)

That's beautiful. Idiots! Tackle him!

ANNOUNCER

...45!

JANET
(screaming)
Gettem!! You Greenhorns!

ANNOUNCER
...35!

JANET
(hysterical)
Gettem!

ANNOUNCER
Tackled at the 32nd yard line of Buffalo!

JANET
(furious)
You morons! You're so stupid! Idiots!
Idiots! I can't believe them!

ANNOUNCER
The Bills are going to have to stop them
here. They're already down seven points and
there are only eight minutes left. They
can't afford to give up any more points.

ANGLE ON FOOTBALL GAME. The Giants are making a big play.

ANNOUNCER
The 25! 20! 10! Touchdown!! Jackson scores!!

JANET
(upset and hysterical)
Look at them! They're pathetic! They're
giving 'em the game. I can't believe it..

Janet waves a REMOTE CONTROL at the TV and REWINDS 30 seconds to
before the touchdown. The show is on VIDEOTAPE!

ANNOUNCER
...They're already down seven points and
there are only eight minutes left. They
can't afford to give up any more points.

JANET
(re-living the same emotions)
STOP HIM you IDIOTS! Tackle him before it's
too late!!

ANNOUNCER
The 25! 20!...

JANET

NOOOOooooo!!

ANNOUNCER

...10! Touchdown!! Kelly scores!!

From the other room comes the VOICE of JANET'S HUSBAND VINCENT yelling.

VINCENT

Jan! Jan!...JANET!!!

JANET

Go ahead you bums! Let 'em run all over you!

ANNOUNCER

There is no way the Bills can recover now in the time left..

VINCENT

(yelling louder)

Janet! JANET!

VINCENT BROWN, mid-50's, tall, protruding stomach and a large head, enters the living room.

VINCENT

Goddammit! You don't hear me? I'm callin' you for 15 minutes.

Janet, annoyed at the interruption, waves the REMOTE CONTROL at the TV and presses "PAUSE". The players stop in their tracks.

JANET

What is it Honey! What do you want. Why are you yellin'? Stop yellin'. I'm watching the game.

VINCENT

Don't tell me to stop yellin'. I been screamin' for you for a half hour! I'm lookin' for my lighter. I left it in the table next to the bed, and I can't find it now.

JANET

Honey. I didn't take it. I don't know where your lighter is.

VINCENT

Well you were cleaning in there, you touched all my things. Where did you put it?

JANET

Honey. I didn't go in there all day. I didn't clean the room today.

VINCENT

(supremely frustrated)

Jeezus Christ. Alright, lemme.. where's da, dose boxes a matches from da Chinese restaurant?

JANET

They're in the drawer in the kitchen.

Vincent walks away.

Jan turns back to the TV, waves the remote, and the Bills snap into action.

TV ANNOUNCER

They're lining up again, but can they make it in the short time left!

Janet hasn't skipped a beat.

JANET

It's not too late! You can still catch up!

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Layla is on the doorstep, but Billy is hanging back. He's white as a sheet. Ready to pass out.

BILLY

Uh, listen, I haven't seen them in a long time. I'm a little nervous, I feel a little sick to my stomach. I feel like throwing up. Could you just, before we go inside, could you just...hug me a second, just for a second.

Layla moves towards him uncertain what to do. Then Billy snaps out of it and stops himself.

BILLY

No, forget it, don't touch me, don't touch me... Come on, let's go. Don't touch me, alright?

LAYLA

Are you okay?

BILLY
(unconvincingly)
Yeah I'm fine. Just ring the doorbell.

Layla looks at him. He looks wierd.

BILLY
Just ring the doorbell!

INT. PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

The DOORBELL rings, but is drowned out by the noise of the TV. The Bills are in the middle of a big play. Janet is clapping and going wild.

JANET
(screaming)
Run!! Run!! Run!! Run!! That's my Bills!

Vincent yells from the other room.

VINCENT
Jan! JAN!! The door!! Get the door!!

Janet is delirious.

JAN
Pass! Pass!! Pass!! STUPID!!

Vincent comes grumbling out of the bedroom.

VINCENT
Jeezus Christ!! What'd I just say!
Somebody's ringin' the doorbell!

He opens the front door. Billy is standing there like a ghost. Layla wears a forced grin.

BILLY
(voice of a 12 year old)
Hey dad...

His father looks as though it takes him a second to recognize him, then he turns to his wife.

FATHER
Jan, your son!

JAN
Who?

FATHER

Your son! Come and answer the door!

The mother puts the game on pause again and comes to the door, still wearing her BUFFALO BILLS BLANKET.

JAN

Who's here?! Oh!... Honey! Billy!
Billy's here! (like he's a stranger) How are you!

BILLY

Hey Ma...Uh...(clearing his throat) This is my wife Wendy. The one I told you about?

JAN

Oh! I thought you were sick, you weren't gonna come. Billy told me you were very sick.

BILLY

She's better now Ma, okay?, so don't bother her.

JAN

Oh, okay Honey. So take off your shoes and come on inside!

Billy's father is checking out Layla.

JANET

(to her husband)

Honey, your son's here with his wife, go put a shirt on.

Vincent heads for the bedroom.

Billy and Layla bend over and take their shoes off, banging off the clumps of snow and laying them on some newspaper that's been spread out next to the door.

They stand there awkwardly, waiting around.

Vincent returns with a shirt on.

VINCENT

Kids! Come inside. It's cold out here.
Billy, bring your wife in the house.

They all go in and sit at the dining room table.

JAN

Billy's told me so much about you.

LAYLA

Oh! Well, he's told me a lot about you and Mr. Brown too. He's very proud of you two... Do you think I could I use the bathroom?

JAN

Sure Honey! Billy, go show her where the bathroom is.

Billy gets up and leads her towards the bathroom. His eyes are narrowed.

BILLY

Don't take too long in there. Hurry up and get back.

LAYLA

(indignant)

I have to go to the bathroom!

BILLY

Just hurry back.

Billy goes back and sits with his parents. His father ignores him pretty much, just rolls his eyeballs around from time to time when Billy speaks.

JANET

So Honey, you look tired. Are you sick?

BILLY

No, I'm not sick Ma, what are you talking about?

JAN

No! You just...you look so tired.

BILLY

Yeah, well I'm tired Ma, I just flew on a plane.

JAN

Okay Honey. Don't get upset.

BILLY

I'm not upset Ma!

JAN

Alright. Do you want something to drink?

BILLY

Yeah.

JAN

What do you want to drink?

BILLY

Just give me a glass of water.

JAN

Honey, you don't want some pop?

BILLY

Ma. You know I don't drink pop. I hate pop. You know the bubbles bother my stomach.

JAN

You want some ginger ale Honey? That's good for the stomach.

BILLY

Ma, what'd I just say? I don't drink pop. Ginger Ale is pop. Alright?

JAN

Yeah, but Honey, it's good for the stomach.

BILLY

No. Ma. I don't want ginger ale. Thank you. Can I please just have a glass of water please? Thank you?

JAN

Honey. You want me to make you some juice? I got the frozen juice.

BILLY

No Ma. Just a glass of water. Please.

JAN

Okay Honey.

She gets him some water in a Buffalo Bills glass.

JANET

I got some of those chocolate donuts that you like, for dessert. You want one now? Or you think it'll spoil your appetite..

BILLY

Ma, it won't spoil my appetite Ma, but you know I don't eat chocolate.

JAN

Honey you eat chocolate, what are you talking about you don't eat chocolate?

BILLY

Ma. Don't you remember Ma? I'm allergic to chocolate? Remember? Your son? When I eat chocolate my face blows up like a balloon? Remember Ma? Your son? Me?

JANET

Honey. You always ate chocolate.

BILLY

No, Ma. No. I didn't. Don't you remember? My face? And that you had to take me to the emergency room?

CUT TO FLASHBACK: A little boy with brown hair is holding a large chocolate bar. Chocolate is smudged all over his face, which is red and swollen.

His mother - 20 years younger, identical hairdo - is staring at him.

JAN

Oh honey! What happened to your face? It's all swollen! We better put some ice on it.

END FLASHBACK

JANET

Honey. I don't know what you're talkin' about. You always ate chocolate.

BILLY

Listen Ma. I'm allergic to chocolate. But I don't want to talk about it. Alright? I don't want a donut. Okay? Can we talk about something else?

JAN

Don't get upset Honey. Just relax.

BILLY

Don't tell me not to get upset.

JAN

Alright Honey, just calm down.

Layla walks back into the dining room.

LAYLA

Hi.

JAN

Wendy Honey. Sit down. What do you want to drink?

LAYLA

Do you have any ginger ale?

JAN

Yes Honey! Just, sit down.

She sits down at the table next to Vincent.

VINCENT

Oh honey. Come here. Let me hug my new daughter. (he hugs her). Daddy loves you so much. Oh yes, my beautiful baby daughter.

Jan comes back with Layla's ginger ale. She hands her the soda and looks at her a moment.

LAYLA

(as though reading her mind)
I'm twenty-eight.

JAN

Oh honey. You look like a baby. You look so young and pretty.

LAYLA

Thank you.

JAN

My son used to be a be-oootiful baby too. Oh! You should have seen him. He was so be-oootiful. But look at him now...

LAYLA

(taken aback by her innocent cruelty)
Oh, I think Billy's the most handsome guy in the whole world.

JAN

Who honey?

LAYLA

Billy. I think Billy's the most handsome guy in the whole world.

JAN
Billy who?

LAYLA
(pointing at Billy)
This Billy.

JAN
Oh, I can't stand when he grows his hair long!

VINCENT
Wendy Honey, why don't you take off your coat. Billy! Take her coat! What are you gonna leave her there, holding her coat?!

LAYLA
Can I keep my coat on? I'm a little cold.

JAN
Honey. Why don't you turn up the heat a little. She's cold.

VINCENT
(turns red like a tomato about to explode!)
Don't start with me with turn up the heat!!
I told you to leave the thermostat alone!!

LAYLA
Oh no no. Don't worry, because I'm always always freezing, even in the summertime.

JAN
Oh, honey. You're just like me. I'm always cold. But my husband, he's always hot, always got the window open.

VINCENT
Alright Jan, we heard enough.

Layla quickly tries to diffuse the tension.

LAYLA
Hey, Mrs. Brown, can I see some photos of Billy when he was little?

JANET
You wanna see some pictures? Sure!
(to her husband)
Honey, where's the Billy picture? Honey!
Where did you put the picture, Billy's

JAN (cont.)
picture. We got a picture, hold on.

Then she gets distracted her collection of Bills photos on the wall. She takes a framed snapshot off the wall.

CLOSE ON FRAMED PHOTO - the kind taken with a shitty pocket camera in muddy 70's colors.

JANET
Oh, did you see this? This is a picture of me with Jack Kemp.

LAYLA
(feigning interest)
Wow.

JANET
Here's the picture of O.J.Simpson...Here's me with the Buffalo Bills caterer...Here's my husband...Here's our wedding...
(suddenly remembers)
Honey, did you find it?

Vincent comes over carrying a SMALL COLOR SNAPSHOT in a very old frame with balloons on one side. It is covered with dust and he wipes it on his shirt front.

VINCENT
(hands it to Layla)
Here.

Layla squints at the dusty photo.

LAYLA
Ooh he's so cute! What a cute puppy he's holding. Whose doggie was that?

CLOSE ON "BILLY PICTURE". It is a picture of Billy at about 12 years old. He is holding a little furry puppy.

VINCENT
Oh, that was Billy's dog, uh, Bingo.

LAYLA
Wow. What a cute puppy. What happened to him?

VINCENT
I don't know. It ran away, or somethin'.. I
can't remember. It ran away. Yeah. It ran
away.

CUT TO FLASHBACK

EXT. THE BROWNS' BACKYARD - TWENTY YEARS EARLIER - DAY

VINCENT - 20 years younger, jet black greased back hair - bursts
out the front door holding the puppy by the neck. He's furious.

VINCENT
What'd I tell ya about keeping this
thing..this dog in the back yard! What'd I
tell ya! It just peed all over the kitchen!!
Didn't I tell ya I'd kill this dog if it
peed in the house one more time! Didn't I
tell ya that.

CLOSE UP ON LITTLE BILLY'S HORRIFIED FACE.

OFF SCREEN SOUND OF PUPPY YELPING AND CRYING as Vincent chokes it
to death.

CAMERA STAYS ON CLOSEUP of Little Billy sobbing and begging for his
Dad to stop. His Dad doesn't stop.

LITTLE BILLY
Noooo! Please! Noooooooooo!

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY - AFTERNOON

VINCENT
Alright! Enough looking at the picture.
Let's go back and eat. I'm getting the
shakes! I'm hungry!

As he speaks, Layla spots a picture on the wall of Vincent.

LAYLA
Oh! Who's that handsome guy singing in that
picture.

VINCENT
(his expression changes)
Oh. That's uh..me. I used to uh, be a
singer. That's me singin' at a nightclub
downtown with a band I uh, used to sing

VINCENT (cont.)
with. You know, Frank Sinatra sang in that club. He sang in that actual club.

LAYLA
Oh wow. You're a singer?

VINCENT
(preening like a peacock)
Well yeah. I sang, you know. I mean uh...I sang a little, yeah.

LAYLA
Wow. Do you have any tapes? Did you ever make any records?

VINCENT
Well uh..no, but uh, yeah, I made some tapes. You wanna hear a tape?

LAYLA
I'd love to.

VINCENT
Alright. Right after we eat, we'll come and I'll play you some tapes.

JAN
Honey. It's gonna be 20 minutes before I'm done with dinner. Why don't you go play her the tapes now.

VINCENT
Alright Wendy...You wanna hear the tapes? Yeah, come, we'll go in the other room.

INT. FATHER'S REC ROOM

Vincent plays her a tape of him singing "Fools Rush In". His voice is really good. Layla listens, mesmerized. Vincent abruptly turns off the tape.

LAYLA:
Wow!

VINCENT
Yeah, well...Come here. You wanna see how I made it? I got the Nelson Riddle Singalong Record. It's all the songs that Nelson Riddle composed for Frank. But without Frank's voice.

He puts on the record and proceeds to sit down on the bed, holding up his protruding belly with both hands.

He starts to sing along with the record, "Fools Rush In". His voice is sweet. Beautiful. There is a desperate incongruity between the sublime beauty of his voice and his internally tormented, fat, uncomfortable body.

He sings the song in an offhand way, almost like he's ill at ease with his own talent, but, at the end of the song, he finishes up with an unusually special flair. A beautiful little flourish with his voice.

VINCENT
(wrapping up the song)
..Boo boo doo boo boo boo....

Layla is in a trance from listening to his song.

As soon as the song is finished, Vincent jumps and takes off the record.

VINCENT
Alright. Enough of this shit. I got the shakes now, let's go eat.

He returns to his nasal, snarly speaking voice - unrecognizable from his singing voice - like he's got a split personality.

LAYLA
That was really really good. You sing so beautiful.

VINCENT
Yeah yeah yeah, come on, let's go eat, Alright? I'm hungry.

LAYLA
Well..can you just sing one more song?

VINCENT
(jumping down her throat)
What'd I just tell ya!! I gotta eat!
Alright?!

Vincent looks at Layla and realizes that he has scared her with his outburst. He makes the monumental effort of reigning in his temper, and speaks now in a gentler voice.

VINCENT
I'm sorry Honey. I just...no more singin', alright?. Let's go in the other room.

He starts pushing her out of the room, chagrined that he's exposed his horrible self - his normal self, which is horrible - and tries to compensate by buttering her up.

VINCENT

Listen, after dinner, I'll look through my stuff and I'll get you a tape that you can keep for yourself. Then you can listen at home.

LAYLA

Oh that would great! Thank you.

He gives her another kiss on the side of the head.

VINCENT

Oh, my beautiful daughter, Daddy loves you so much.

In that instant, Jan calls out at a deafening volume from the other room.

JAN

Honey! Come on, dinner's ready!

VINCENT

(yelling back)

We're comin' Jan!

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Vincent and Layla go into the dining room.

Billy is sitting at the table by himself, waiting.

LAYLA

You know you're right Billy. Your father does have the most beautiful voice in the whole world.

Billy looks at her, impressed at her techniques with his parents.

They sit down at the table. Layla is still wearing her coat.

On the TV, a tape is playing the ill-fated 1990 Superbowl game between the Buffalo Bills and the Giants, with the sound off.

Jan is carrying a steaming plate of food.

JAN
Be careful Honey, it's very hot.
I hope you like tripe.

She sets the plates down.

LAYLA
Um..I'm not sure what it is.

JAN
You know, tripe, the intestines of the cow.

LAYLA
Oh! Yeah! Oh yeah, of course! I've heard of that. That sounds really good.

She kicks Billy under the table. Billy kicks her back.

BILLY
(teasing her playfully)
Yeah. Give her a lot Ma.

VINCENT
(in a stingy snarl)
Everybody'll have the same, alright?!

Jan serves her husband first. Then Layla. She waits for Layla to taste it before serving Billy.

JAN
Try it honey! Tell me what you think.

Layla - an extreme vegetarian, not a cow-intestine lover - makes a heroic attempt. She puts it in her mouth and seems in fact to be eating it.

LAYLA
Mmm. Ohh! So good! It's so good.

Then she wipes her mouth with her napkin and deftly deposits the tripe in the napkin.

Jan serves Billy, then herself, and they all begin to eat. Layla continues to plop tripe in her napkin.

LAYLA
Oh, Mr. Brown, you're very lucky that your wife is such a good cook.

VINCENT
(rolling his eyes)
Yeah. M-hm. Oh yeah. I'm real lucky.

JAN
(pretending to be mad)
Oh honey, don't get smart.

She slaps him across his back, then turns to Layla.

JAN
Do you cook honey?

LAYLA
Oh, yeah..I cook a little, but Billy is such a good cook, and he cooks for me all the time, that I hardly get a chance to cook. He doesn't let me do anything.

Billy's father is getting very antsy. He can't listen to anybody compliment Billy. It's too much for him. He's too competitive.

Billy has just finished buttering some bread, and puts his butter knife down on the table, the tip of it pointing at his father. Instantly, the father yells.

FATHER
Turn your knife away from me! What are you pointing your knife at me for! You wanna come and stab me with the knife?! Point your knife the other way!!

BILLY
I'm sorry Dad! I'm sorry. I wasn't pointing it at you.

VINCENT
Don't tell me you weren't pointing at me. Make sure you point the knife the other way! I don't like the way you point the knife at me!

BILLY
Alright, I'm sorry Dad.

JAN
Honey! Calm down! Just calm down, alright? She's talking.

VINCENT
Don't tell me to calm down! You see what your son did? You see what he did? He's tryin' to stab me with the knife?!

JAN
Honey, alright, alright. Just calm down.

Jan looks at Billy.

JAN

Honey, do you want some more tripe Honey?
Why don't you take some more tripe.

BILLY

(ruffled from his Dad yelling at him)
Okay, I'll have a little more.

VINCENT

Don't you think you've had enough of the
meat, why don't you try having some more
bread. Just fill up on the bread.

JAN

Honey, that's your son. Let him have some
more tripe.

Turning back to Layla.

JAN

I'm sorry Wendy Honey, what were you saying?

LAYLA

Well I was just going to tell you how
Billy's the nicest husband in the whole
world.

VINCENT

(rolling his eyes again, pained)
Yeah. M-hm. Oh yeah. (sarcastic) I'm sure
he's terrific.

LAYLA

I'm the luckiest girl in the whole world to
have such a great husband. I fell in love
with him the first time we met.

JAN

Honey, can you hand me the remote control
there? I wanna turn up the volume. It's
behind you.

Layla reaches over and hands her the remote.

LAYLA

Did Billy tell you how we met?

Jan just looks back and forth between Layla and the TV.

LAYLA
(to Billy)
You never told your mom how we met?

BILLY
No. I don't know..didn't I tell you Ma?

JAN
No Honey. How did you two meet?

BILLY
(to Layla)
You tell the story.

LAYLA
Well...I was working as a typist for the CIA, which is a secret part of the government. And Billy is a top agent at the CIA, I'm sure you know that. I'm sure you're very proud. And he has HUNDREDS of people working for him. And ALL the girls always kept telling me how much they were in love with their boss...but I had never seen him, because I worked way down the other side of the building...

Vincent is squirming in his chair, huffing and making loud coughing sounds as though he's choking. He can't allow himself to listen to a word of this. It's too painful.

LAYLA
..And one day, he came into the office, and..I saw him..and I fell madly in love, madly in love. And we worked together for a year, but I was just a typist, so I could never talk to him. And I would just stare at him, everyday, madly in love with him, dreaming about him..and I wouldn't go out on any other dates. And I always prayed prayed that he would come and talk to me. But every girl in the office was in love with him. I was NOT the only one. I mean, he's the smartest guy at work..the most handsome guy, the kindest...I mean, everybody loved him. Even all the guys..they idolized him!

Layla has lost her audience. Janet is staring at the TV, occasionally glancing back at Layla and saying 'uh-huh'. Vincent is rolling his eyeballs around the room like he's got cerebral palsy.

LAYLA

(trying desperately to win them over, but it's impossible, a losing battle)

...So..I never thought..that he would like me..I mean, I was just a little typist girl, and he was like, the king! He's VERY important to the government, I mean, even the PRESIDENT, you know, is really proud of him. So, I just never thought he would like me...

VINCENT

Yeah. M-hmm. (clears his throat loudly. This is killing him.)

LAYLA

And one day, I come to work..and there's this GIANT bouquet of roses on my desk! And I'm thinking, God! What are those flowers on my desk! Maybe they got the wrong desk or something. And there was a note attached. And I opened up the card...and it said.. 'Dear Wendy, I've been in love with you for a year, but I'm very shy..I didn't know how to say anything before, but I want you to know, that I'm really in love with you. And I would like to take you out to dinner some time.' And guess who it was signed by...

JAN

Oh Honey! Just a second! This is the big play!

LAYLA

Billy! Billy signed the note! It was signed, 'Love, Billy.'

JAN

Uh-huh! Honey..just uh..watch this play!

Layla realizes at that moment that there is no way to impress Billy's parents. It's all pointless.

Jan turns the volume on the television way up.

On the TV, the final moments of the 1990 Superbowl between the Bills and the Giants are being played out on a well-worn videotape.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

There are three seconds left in the game. Scott Norwood, the Bill's kicker, is on the field.

ANGLE ON TELEVISION and Superbowl game.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE

This will be the last play of the game. If he makes the kick, the Bills win. If he misses, the Giants are Superbowl 25 champs.

ANGLE ON BILLY. Squirming and looking very uncomfortable, sweating, sick. Over his closeup, the voice of the announcer shouts, delirious with the tension and excitement of the moment.

ANNOUNCER

There's the snap!

(pause)

The kick is up!

(announcer screaming)

It's no goooooood! Wide to the right.

The game is over.

The New York Giants have won Superbowl 25.

The Bills have lost by one point.

JAN

Goddammit!! Oh oh ohhhhh!!

CLOSE ON BILLY. Traumatized. Looking at the game.

JAN

Agh! I can't believe it! Did you see that game Honey? Did you see that?

LAYLA

No. I didn't see that game..

JAN

Ahh! Fifteen years I went to the games. They haven't won since 1966. And I missed that game because that's when I had Billy.

INT. THE BROWN FAMILY'S LIVING ROOM - TWENTY YEARS EARLIER - DAY
FLASHBACK of JAN - VERY PREGNANT AND HEAVING - WATCHING THE 1966 CHAMPIONSHIP. SHE'S GOING INTO LABOR.

VINCENT

Jan! We're goin' to the hospital!

JAN

I AM NOT going. I want to watch the end of this game!

VINCENT
Janet I am going to count to ten!...1...2...
...3

END FLASHBACK

INT. DINING ROOM - PRESENT DAY - AFTERNOON

JAN
Oh yeah. They finally made it to the Superbowl. They were beating the Giants. All he had to do was make the field goal and that Scotty Norwood.. I never liked him, he was a bum! A bum! A bum! And he missed the field goal.

Jan turns pale as she tells the story.

JAN
(in pain)
Ohh. When it happened, I was sick. Oh, Honey, I couldn't get outta bed for a week! From screaming I lost my voice. For almost a month I couldn't talk.

LAYLA
Oh wow. (turns to Billy) Did you like the Bills too?

He looks too weak to answer.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - AFTERNOON

BILLY IS TALKING TO SOMEONE ON THE PHONE AT A PHONE BOOTH. HIS BEST FRIEND GOON - SLIGHTLY RETARDED (OR JUST FROM BUFFALO) - IS WITH HIM.

BILLY:
Yeah, I said ten thousand on the Bills.

GOON
Billwee! That's too much! Billwee, don't do it Billwee!

BILLY
(elbowing him away)
Shutup! Shutup! (back into the phone) Yeah.
Ten thousand. I wanna put ten thousand on
the Bills. Bills to win. Yes, I have the
money. I can pay. Don't worry.

GOON
Please Billwee, yer gonna gets in trouble!

BILLY
(smacking him lightly on the side of
his head.)
Shut up!
(then, talking into the phone again)
Yeah yeah. I got it. Ten thousand on the
Bills.

INT. GOON'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

BILLY WATCHES AS SCOTTY NORWOOD MISSES THE FIELD GOAL. HE STARTS
FREAKING OUT. GOON IS BY HIS SIDE.

GOON
I toldja Billwee! I toldja, yer gonna be in
big trouble!

BILLY
(grabbing Goon's head)
Just SHUTUP!!! (shaking Goon's head) I'm
dead!!! Shit!!

INT. MAFIOSO SOCIAL CLUD - NIGHT

BILLY IS SITTING - PALE AND SWEATING - AT A TABLE WITH A BLOATED
SMALL-TIME MAFIOSO BOSS. THE BOSS HAS A 4 INCH RADIUS PURPLE
BIRTHMARK THAT WRAPS AROUND ONE HALF OF HIS FOREHEAD.

THEY ARE IN THE BACK ROOM OF A SOCIAL CLUB WHICH SERVES AS THE
BOSS'S OFFICE.

MAFIOSO
(Lovingly clears some phlegm from his
throat. He speaks very very slowly
and from the depths of his throat)
Well. Well well well.
You fucked up. You asshole. You're an
asshole. Ass Hole.
But...you do owe me money. A lot of money.
So? What do I do?
Do I kill the Ass Hole?
No. No. (laughs) Hah. No, that would be

MAFIOSO (cont.)
dumb. Then I would be an Ass Hole too. But
you're the Ass Hole.
So. This is the situation...Billy.
(pronouncing his name like it were bile in
his mouth).
You. Are Nothing. You are a piece of shit.
You are nobody. You are no one. You're
nothing. I own you. You understand? I own
you now.

THE MAFIOSO OPENS A DRAWER IN HIS DESK, PULLS OUT 3 BIG SACKS OF
DOPE, AND PUTS THEM ON THE TABLE.

MAFIOSO
I need this stuff delivered to a friend of
mine. His name is Tommy. Here's the address.
I want you to deliver this to him.

BILLY
(deathly white)
I can't...

MAFIOSO
Shut your fuckin' mouth.
Ass Hole.
I want you to deliver this to him.
It's already paid for, so you don't have to
take any money. And I want to see you
tomorrow at the same time. You hear me? Ass
Hole?

Billy looks around at the boss' sidekicks in the office. Looking
for an escape?

MAFIOSO
Now if you're having a delusion of not doing
this. Of not following my orders, verbatim.
If you imagine refusing me, then I will
mutilate your mother's cunt. And then, I'll
drown your fat fuck father, in his own
fuckin' bathtub. And then, what I'm gonna
do, is I'm gonna have a nigger ass-fuck you
up your asshole asshole while you suck his
nigger best friend's cock. Alright? Now,
imagine that for a second, alright? Ass
Hole? Now get the fuck away from me.

Billy gets up to leave. He reluctantly picks up the three sacks on
the table. As he is almost at the door, the Mafioso calls out to
him. He stops. -

MAFIOSO

Hey asshole. Look at me in the face. Let me
axe you a question, ass hole.
Who told you to bet on the fuckin' Bills.
What are you a moron?

EXT. DOORWAY OF RUNDOWN HOUSE - NIGHT

BILLY PRESSES ON A DOORBELL. A GUY LETS HIM IN. THEY CUT OPEN A
SACK. THE GUY PULLS OUT A BADGE. TURNS HIM AROUND AND THROWS HIM
AGAINST THE WALL, MAKES HIM STICK HIS HANDS IN THE AIR. HE'S
ARRESTED.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

BILLY IS BEING GIVEN HIS SENTENCE.

JUDGE

Five years.

BILLY IS ESCORTED OUT.

INT. VISITORS ROOM - NEW YORK STATE PENITENTIARY - DAY

GOON IS VISITING HIM. BILLY HANDS HIM A PILE OF LETTERS AND LITTLE
PACKAGES TO SEND TO HIS PARENTS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS TO HIDE
THE FACT THAT HE'S IN JAIL. HE IS AWARE THAT HE IS ASKING AN
IMBECILE TO DO THIS FAVOR FOR HIM, BUT HE HAS NO CHOICE.

BILLY

Listen to me Goon. Pay attention. Send this
one in June. This one. You see here? I wrote
down 'June'. Anytime in June, alright? Just
remember June, okay? It's before July. Any
day in June, send this one. Then send the
package at Christmas. The first time you see
Christmas lights somewhere, that's around
Christmas time, alright? You understand?

GOON

I know when Christmas is. What, you think
I'm dumb?

BILLY

Yeah I think you're dumb. I know you're
dumb.

=

GOON

Cut it out, Billwee, or I'm not gonna do it.

Billy ignores him.

BILLY

(leaning into the glass)

I'm gonna kill that fuckin' Scott Norwood! I know he missed that fuckin' field goal on purpose. Some guys in here told me that they're sure he took payola. That he threw the game. It's 'cause of him, that cocksucker, that I lost that bet, that fuckin' cocksucker. I wonder how much he got paid to ruin my life, that miserable bastard! You watch, when I get outta here, I'll tell you right now, Goon, when I get outta here, all I wanna do is kill that fuckin' bastard. That ten cent field goal kicker. I'm gonna kill that sonofabitch. I don't care if I have to kill myself to kill him.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. DINING ROOM - PRESENT DAY - LATE AFTERNOON

Billy gets up from the table to call Goon.

BILLY

I gotta make a phone call Ma, can I use the phone in the bedroom...

JAN

Sure Honey. Use the phone in the bedroom.

FATHER

You making a local call? Where are you calling?

BILLY

Yes Dad, a local call.

VINCENT

Yeah. Just make sure you don't go in my drawers, and put anything in your pockets.

Billy just looks at his father, hurt. He gets up.

INT. PARENTS' BEDROOM - DAY

Billy is standing next to his parents' bed, using their princess phone. There are so many pink ruffles on the bedspread, that he doesn't dare sit down for fear of squashing them.

Billy is calling his best friend GOON.

BILLY

Yeah, Goon, it's me, it's Billy, what are you doin'?

GOON

B-Billwee! I just..don't want people call me that no more. Even you Billwee.

BILLY

Yeah well, too bad, alright, 'cause uh, first of all, I don't even know your real name, I can't remember, 'cause you always been Goon. Why, what do people call you now?

GOON

Well..my name...now my name is...Rocky.

BILLY

Rocky. YOU? You changed your name to Rocky? Man, I go away for two seconds and you go from Goon to Rocky. Yeah, right.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Layla is talking with Billy's parents.

LAYLA

I have a little surprise that Billy doesn't know yet. I'm pregnant. We're going to have a baby.

JAN

Oh Wendy Honey! You're gonna have a baby! Ohh! I'm so excited!

LAYLA

Sshh. Don't tell Billy, 'cause I want to surprise him later.

JAN

Oh Honey. I won't say nothing. I won't say nothing.

VINCENT

Oh! That's terrific. Come and hug me. Ohh!

Layla sits on his lap and gives him a hug.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

BILLY

Alright Rocky, Big shot. So uh, listen...
Rocky...so do me a favor. Remember Norwood?
Well, I'm out, and I need to find him.

GOON

Why Billwee? Are you still gonna do the bad
thing that said you were gonna do? Don't you
think you maybe that's not a good thing to
do? What if the policeman catches you. You'd
have to go back to jail again.

BILLY

Yeah, well, there's no way I'm getting
caught. I got it all figured out, alright?
Just uh...can you help me find him, or no? Is
he still in town? Do you know anything about
him?

GOON

Well, he does the commercial on TV, and,
he's got one of those clubs, you know, where
the girls take off their clothes?

BILLY

(disgusted)

What?! The guy opens up a strip joint in
Buffalo?!

GOON

Hey Billwee, you wanna come over? You wanna
come and have dinner at my house? 'Cause my
Mom is cookin'.

BILLY

Fuckin' loser.. Alright, what's the name of
the joint?

GOON

It's named with his name, I don't know.
Yeah, it's got his name.

BILLY

Just listen to me Goon. Do you remember what street it's on? In the commercial did it say what street it's on?

GOON

Stop. You're confusing me Billwee. I..I don't know. I don't remember. But you, you shouldn't go over there. 'Cause I know you Billwee, you shouldn't go over there. I know how you are. You better just not go over there.

BILLY

Just, don't worry about it Goon. I know what I'm doin'. Alright? I know what I'm doin'. I'm gonna go in there and I'm gonna fuckin' shoot that bastard is what I'm gonna do. That fuckin' bastard. Don't tell me not to go down there. I'll go down there. I'll shoot him right in the fuckin' head and then I'll shoot myself and then they can't do nuthin' to me. Then no cop's gonna put me back in jail.

GOON

Billwee. You goin' crazy. Billwee, don't say things like that.

BILLY

Don't worry 'bout it Goon, I'm just kiddin', alright? Don't worry about it. I just wanna go down and talk to him, I just wanna ask him a couple questions.

GOON

Are you sure Billwee? I know how you get. You shouldn't go over there.

BILLY

Don't worry about it Goon. I just told you I was only kidding. Just forget about it.

GOON

Billwee, yer gonna go back to jail if you do bad things. Don't do any bad things, alright? Did you get the raisins that I sent ya?

BILLY

Yeah, I got 'em. Thanks a lot. Listen, you gotta-phone book there?

Goon doesn't say anything.

BILLY

Hey Goon, you listenin' to me or no? Can you hear me?

GOON

Billwee, could you please don't call me Goon no more? Please, 'cause I don't like that name no more.

BILLY

Alright, alright, alright, what was your name again? Rocky, right? Rocky, hey Rocky, ya happy? You gotta phone book yes or no?

GOON

Listen, Billwee, my Mom's gettin' mad 'cause I'm talkin' on the phone too long.

BILLY

You can't look in a phone book for me, real quick, one second? Huh?

GOON

No. My mom's callin' me, I gotta go.

BILLY

Okay, forget it, retard. Big shot! Rocky! Go run away because Mommy's callin'. Rocky! Big guy!

GOON

C'mon Billwee, don't be sore at me like that.

BILLY

What do you mean, don't be sore! You're supposed to be my best friend, I'm askin' you one little favor here, it'll take one second, and you gotta run to your mommy? Fuckin' jerk. You always been a jerk! You know that? It's 'cause you're retarded. And your name is Goon. Alright? Goon! You're Goon. Goon Goon Goon!! Alright? Good-bye.

He slams down the princess phone with a clunk and paces around the ruffled pink bed to calm down.

He seems to dread going back out into the dining room. Finally, he goes in and sits at the table.

JAN
(immediately)
Oh! Honey! You're gonna have a baby!

INT. DOORWAY - DAY

The four of them are saying their good-byes. The parents shower Layla with hugs.

VINCENT
Oh, Wendy Honey. You're terrific. It was such a pleasure to meet you. If it's a boy, I know it's gonna be a boy, be sure to name it Little Vinnie..

JAN
Oh Honey. We love you so much. Make sure you come back.

LAYLA
Yeah, you gotta come and visit, 'cause you should see all the things that Billy built in the house. Oh, he made the house so beautiful. Oh he's so handy. He fixes everything.

The scene is thick with tension, mainly because the parents are so cold to Billy and so excessively warm to Layla.

JAN
So Honey, make sure you visit again soon. We love you so much.

Both parent kiss and hug Layla. Billy stands off to one side.

JAN
(to Billy)
Bye Honey! Make sure you drive safe!

VINCENT
(to Billy)
Alright, so I'll see ya. (then, to Layla again) Oh Honey, come give Daddy one more kiss. (he hugs her and kisses her) Oh, my beautiful daughter.

JAN
Don't forget to call me, Honey.

VINCENT
Bye Kids. Bye.

The parents close the door, leaving Billy and Layla on the doorstep.

EXT. PARENTS' HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Billy and Layla come out of the little house.

BILLY

I don't believe it. I don't believe it man.
Did you see that? Did you see that shit?

LAYLA

What! What are you talking about? Why are you upset?

BILLY

Did you see them kiss your fucking ass? I mean, I'm their son. I'M their son! And they're like, all over you. All over you. It's always the same shit man. Bullshit.

LAYLA

It's good that they like me, because then they'll be proud of you, that you have a nice wife.

Billy just looks sad and disgusted and hurt.

Layla tries to console him.

LAYLA

It's good. You shouldn't be upset, I mean.. they like you. They love you. I could tell that they really like you. (Layla is working real hard to paint a picture here) They're just.. your father is a little insecure, you know? He's a little jealous, but he's really proud of you, you can tell, and your mother, she adores you, she just doesn't know how to...uh...

BILLY

Don't gimme that shit. Come on. (then, inconsolable) Aw man...

Billy feels defensive and insecure so he immediately sets in criticizing her.

BILLY

And what was that crap about the CIA, I

BILLY (cont.)
mean, what the fuck was that. The CIA? You think my father fell for that crap man?! Come on. The CIA (then, in a voice like Goofy) 'He served as a secret agent..all the girls love him'. I said make me look good, not...what are you retarded? The CIA..

LAYLA
How could you be mad at me! I mean, I thought I was fantastic. I thought I did a perfect job, and you're gonna sit here and insult me.

BILLY
I can't believe it! I mean, I'M their son! They didn't even kiss me good-bye!

LAYLA
(gentle, at a loss for words)
Billy...(she sighs)...you just have to... I don't know. Your parents are just wierd with you, but you didn't do anything wrong... Anyway, if you were my son, I would be really proud of you, and...

Billy is sinking into a depressed state, withdrawing deep within himself.

BILLY
(in a small tired voice)
Anyway. Thanks for doin' a good job and..um.. I guess I'll see ya around. I'll see ya around.

LAYLA
Where are you gonna go now?

BILLY
I gotta go downtown.

LAYLA
How are you getting there? Do you want me to give you a ride?

BILLY
No. I don't want a ride. I can get there.. Anyway, thanks for helping me out and I'll see you around.

LAYLA
Listen, I'm goin' downtown too. I'm happy to give you a ride.

BILLY
No. Just leave me alone.

LAYLA
(pretending to be stern)
Billy, you're my husband! Now let me give you a ride!

BILLY
Yeah, I'm your husband...

LAYLA
I'm only kidding, but come on. I really want to...(she stops in mid-sentence) Wait a second! Wait a second...here I am, you KIDNAPPED me! And I'M begging YOU to let me give you a ride! This is insane! I shouldn't even let you in my car!

BILLY
Alright. You really wanna give me a ride? Fine. I'll do it for you. Alright? But while we're driving don't talk to me. Okay?

INT. - LAYLA'S CAR ON THE STREETS OF BUFFALO - DAY

Billy drives through the streets. He's obviously looking for something.

He spots DEL BELLO'S DRUG STORE.

BILLY
I'm just gonna stop in here a minute. You stay in the car.

He pulls over and double parks the car. Then he gets out and disappears into the Drug Store.

ANGLE ON LAYLA watching him, then turning to watch the few Buffalonians tramping through the snow drifts.

ANGLE ON PASSERSBY. You can't even see their faces, they are so bundled up.

OFFSCREEN SOUND OF CAR DOOR SLAMMING. Billy has hopped into the car. He hands a SLIM WHITE PAPER BAG full of GREETING CARDS with the name "HALLMARK" on it over to Layla. She starts to open it.

BILLY
Don't look inside there!

=

EXT. "CONNECTICUT LANES" BOWLING ALLEY - EARLY EVENING

Billy and Layla pull up to the bowling alley. A SNOW-CAPPED ORANGE SIGN from the 60's reads "CONNECTICUT LANES".

They get out of the car and Billy pauses to stare up at the sign.

LAYLA

I don't like bowling.

BILLY

Be quiet.

Billy heads to the door. Layla follows him in.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - EVENING

The bowling alley hasn't been renovated since it was opened in 1969. There is a PHOTO OF BILLY HOLDING A TROPHY behind the food counter.

The bowling alley is almost empty. One elderly man is packing up his ball, bent over by its weight. From the food counter SONNY the BOWLING ALLEY OWNER lets out a yell of recognition.

SONNY

Hey Billy Brown! Everybody! Lookit! The King is back! How's it goin' Billy!

Billy, embarrassed by all the attention, gives a wave. Sonny comes limping out from behind his cash register. He wears an ORTHOPEDIC BOWLING SHOE with a two inch platform.

BILLY

Good Sonny, I'm good. Hey..you guys uh..did you keep my ball?

SONNY

Do we still have your ball! Of course we got your ball. We got your locker! Everything's in there, just the way you left it! I promised you, right? I renewed your membership every year, like I told you, right? You weren't here to pay it, but I paid it, right? 'Cause I'm your friend, right Billy?

BILLY

Yeah yeah. Thanks a lot Sonny. Really, uh... thanks a lot.

Billy goes over to a locker and starts dialing the combination from memory.

SONNY
I'll give you lane 7. That's the one you like, right? By the way, who's this girl with you?

LAYLA
I'm his wife.

BILLY
She's just a hitchhiker I picked up.

SONNY
Ohhhh... (he winks) You don't waste any time...you just got out of the pen, didn't cha.

BILLY
(irritated at the question)
Yeah, Sonny, yeah, that's right...

Billy starts pulling stuff out of his locker. All his worldly possessions are inside. There are PHOTOS and MAGAZINE CLIPPINGS taped on the inside of the locker door. It looks like the inside of a kid's locker in middle school.

CLOSE ON NEWSPAPER CLIPPING "Billy Brown wins first place in Buffalo Bowlers 12 and under Championship". A few TARNISHED BOWLING TROPHIES glimmer from the upper shelf.

In a prominent position on the inside of the locker door is a 5 x 7 SCHOOL PHOTO PORTRAIT OF A GIRL with brown hair and big white smiling teeth.

LAYLA
Who's the girl?

BILLY
Ah...just my old girlfriend, you know..

LAYLA
Oh really! You had a girlfriend...

BILLY
Yeahh...you know, she was madly in love with me..

LAYLA
What happened?

BILLY

Well, she was jealous, she was so crazy about me and...I don't know...I had to get rid of her. She wanted too much from me. She was callin' me every day. She wanted to do something with every day. I don't know. I'm the kinda guy, I don't like to get close to girls, it's too much, I need to be a free man.

LAYLA

Ohhh.

BILLY

Speakin' of which, you mind givin' me a little privacy? This is my private locker, okay?

LAYLA

Sure, sorry..

Layla takes a walk around the alley, looking at the photos on the walls.

Billy pulls out a WORN VINYL BOWLING BAG and gets a sentimental expression on his face. He struggles with the zipper which is rusted and stubborn. Hidden in an inside pocket is a roll of cash. Billy stuffs it in his pants pocket.

He reaches deep inside the bag and feels around for his GUN. He tries the mechanism. It seems to still work. He pulls out a BOWLING SHIRT and puts it on over the shirt he's wearing. It's tight on him, but he wears it. He looks really happy to be wearing that bowling shirt.

He takes out a pair of dry-looking BOWLING SHOES, takes off his own shoes, and puts on the bowling shoes. Suddenly he realizes something is missing.

BILLY

Sonny! Where's my ball!

Sonny is hobbling over carrying Billy's BOWLING BALL. It's a black and gray marbled ball and is polished to a brilliant sheen.

SONNY

Billy! Billy! Don't worry! I got it here! I kept it by the polisher.

BILLY

(wincing at the ball's beauty)
Ooh. Coooh...

SONNY

By the way, how's your mother? She still a Bill's fan, even though they lost the Superbowl four times in a row?

BILLY

Yeah, she still watches them. How 'bout you? You still like the Bills?

SONNY

What, are you fuckin' kiddin' me? I hate those bastards.

BILLY

Yeah. Me too. Uh..I'm gonna go bowl now Sonny.

SONNY

Sure Billy! Don't sweat it, you go ahead and enjoy yourself. Five years in the pen..whew! ..knock yourself out!

BILLY

Thanks a lot Sonny. Oh and...Sonny?

SONNY

Yeah Billy?

BILLY

I wanted to ask you a favor. I wanted to renew my membership for my locker.

SONNY

Sure Billy! But why do you need to do it now? You can do it next time.

Billy pulls out the roll of bills in his pocket.

BILLY

How much is five years?

SONNY

Five years Billy? What do you need to... You can just pay year by year..

BILLY

Well, you know, I might be goin' out of town, so...just promise you won't let anybody touch this locker. Just leave everything like that.

SONNY

Of course. What are you talking about? No one's taking your locker. It's been your locker your whole life.

BILLY

Well I just don't want anybody takin' it in case I go out of town for a long time..

SONNY

Don't worry Billy. As long as I own this place, no one's opening up that locker. It's yours. Forget the money.

BILLY

Thanks Sonny. (he's moved) I...I'm gonna go bowl now.

Billy zips up his bag and walks over to Lane 7. He hides his bag under the scoring station and moves into position at the foot of the lane. He closes his eyes to concentrate.

Layla walks up to watch.

LAYLA

You want me to keep score Honey?

Billy stops dead in his tracks. Snaps out of his bowling trance.

BILLY

(spinning around)

Let me explain something to you Wendy..

LAYLA

Layla.

BILLY

Whatever. Bowling is not a social thing for me. It's something else, it's...I've always bowled alone. Now I brought you here today because I was forced to and because you did good, but right now, I need you to sit down, be quiet, and just be invisible for a while.

LAYLA

I can't bowl too?

BILLY

No. You can't bowl at the same time. Maybe when I'm done. I'll leave and you can bowl by yourself.

LAYLA

Boy you ex-cons are tough.

Billy shoots her a daggered glance and turns away.

He takes a deep breath, raises the bowling ball with both hands, cradling it like a sacred object, then, with a perfect motion, rolls it down the lane, straight as an arrow. It's a strike!

SONNY

(to Layla)

He's the King!

Billy rolls strike after strike, five in a row. He's in a trance.

Suddenly, his ball gets stuck. It won't return back up the chute. He presses the reset button over and over. Distant SOUND of JAMMED MACHINERY trying to send the ball back.

Sonny comes running/limping over carrying a stick and a wrench.

SONNY

Just hold on a sec' Billy. I'll get it out!

Billy's flipping out. Sonny hobbles down to the end of the lane and disappears. SOUND OF FIDDLING and CLINKING. The MARBLED BALL pops up the chute.

But it's too late. Billy's game is thrown off. He's fucked. He throws a GUTTER BALL.

BILLY

God Damn it!!!

Layla starts laughing. She can't help it.

BILLY

You're laughin'! Okay, let's see you try it, big shot!

Layla

Okay.

Layla picks up a ball, and is surprised by the weight of it. She takes a few mincing practice steps and then lets the ball loose. It makes a loud CLUNK sound as it hits the wood. Then it rolls down the alley, really slow, wavering, goofy. The pins fall down one by one...it's a STRIKE!

Layla jumps up with excitement.

BILLY
(Looking miserable)
Figures.

LAYLA
(exuberant)
Mind-if I throw another one?

BILLY
I gotta go to the bathroom. You keep
playin', I'll be right back.

Billy walks over to his locker, takes off his bowling shoes, and puts them in his locker. As he opens the locker door, he looks at the picture of the girl one more time. Then he puts his regular shoes on.

He heads over to the Men's Room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

Billy goes to the sink to wash his face. He catches sight of himself in the mirror. He looks at himself for a moment, and starts to cry.

He puts his hand over his face and cries, then looks up again at himself, still sobbing.

BILLY
(tiny, garbled, cracking voice)
I don't understand....I don't understand.
..Oh God...(he sniffles)..please...what did
I do?

Then, Billy washes his face, blows his nose with a paper towel, and exits the bathroom.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - AFTERNOON

Billy comes out of the bathroom and goes over to the phone that is next to the restrooms.

His face is swollen and red, like he's been beaten up.

He puts in a quarter and dials 411, still very emotional.

The operator picks up.

BILLY
(small, weepy voice)
Uh..Buffalo?
I need the number for...Scotty Norwood's
Exotic Dancers.

BILLY (cont.)

(pause)

I don't know, "Norwood", with an "n".
Alright? I don't know. Scotty Norwood.
N-O-R...

An automated voice gives him the number. Billy grabs a pen from next to the phone and writes the number down on the palm of his hand.

Billy dials the number on his hand. An answering machine picks up.

ANSWERING MACHINE

(man's goofy voice)

Hi! This is Scotty Norwood! You know, the guy Buffalonians love to hate! Well, folks, I'm real sorry 'bout that field goal, but, guess what! Got some beautiful dancers down here at my night club, and I'd love to see you all come down and check 'em out. They'll be strippin' down to next to nothing here at Scotty Norwood's Live Exotic Dancers.

Billy hangs up, with a disgusted look on his face.

BILLY

(to himself)

I'm gonna kill that mother..

Billy walks back to the lane where Layla is still bowling. She has just rolled another strike, the same wobbly wavering kind.

BILLY

Come on. We gotta go.

LAYLA

Aw come on, I'm having fun. Can't I bowl just one more time.

BILLY

Just come on, otherwise I'm leaving here. You wanna stay here, then stay, otherwise come with me.

Layla puts down the ball with a huff and walks over to him.

Instead of leaving, he leads her down to the other end of the bowling alley, where there's a PHOTO BOOTH.

BILLY

Alright, listen. I need you to do me a favor.

LAYLA
What do you want me to do?

BILLY
I want you to go in this photo booth with me, and I just want to take a few pictures. Alright?

LAYLA
(excited)
You wanna take pictures with me?

BILLY
Yeah.

LAYLA
Really?

BILLY
Yeah!

LAYLA
Alright. Well...let me fix my hair.

BILLY
No, that's fine. You look fine. Don't start with that shit. You look fine.

He walks her over to the photo booth. They go inside.

Billy spins down the stool and feeds two bucks into the slot. Layla settles onto one of his knees. She gets too close for comfort to his privates.

BILLY
Careful! (then, referring to the flashing green light) It's green!

FLASH! The camera takes a picture.

They do four shots in a row.

Layla makes a different goofy face for every photo.

BILLY
(yelling)
What are you doing! What is this! I wanna take a nice picture! Aw man..Two dollars! I just wasted two dollars!

He goes to get more change from Sonny.

BILLY

Now listen to me. We're taking some pictures so that I can keep sending pictures of us together to my parents' house, alright? So...look like we like we like eachother. And...we're tryin' to make pictures that look like we're spanning a lot of time, okay? We're SPANNING TIME. Let's span time. No funny faces, no bullshit, let's just span time like a couple that's been together for a long time.

Layla just looks at him.

LAYLA

You're so wierd...
I don't know, it's just so...(she sighs)
Alright, alright. I'll do it for you.

BILLY

But you gotta look like you like me in the photos.

LAYLA

Billy. I do like you.

BILLY

You know what I mean, just make it look like you like me in that way, you know? Like we're husband and wife. Like we're getting along, we're spanning time and we like eachother.

LAYLA

I'll do my best.

BILLY

Don't do your best, just do it right.

LAYLA

I'll do my best.

BILLY

Don't get smart with me, do it right.

Billy slides some more singles into the slot.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE OF PHOTO TAKING PROCESS ALL SEEN THROUGH THE PHOTO BOOTH LENS IN A SERIES OF STILL PHOTOS IN SATURATED 70'S COLORS.

Layla uses her clothes in clever and creative ways to make it look

like Summer, Fall, etc., and to make them look like a couple 'spanning time'.

A few times the camera snaps a picture as Layla is pulling clothing over her head, obscuring her face.

In the middle of the montage sequence, Layla kisses him on the cheek. Suddenly, we switch from STILL PHOTOS to LIVE ACTION.

BILLY

What, are you fucking crazy?! Don't touch me!

LAYLA

What do you mean, don't touch me, we're supposed to be husband and wife. Don't you want it to look good?

BILLY

Yeah. Make it look good, just don't touch me!!

We return to the MONTAGE SEQUENCE OF STILLS. They finish up when he runs out of dollar bills.

CUT TO:

Billy and Layla waiting outside the booth for the last strip of photos to come down the chute.

BILLY

Great. That's enough.

Billy puts on his coat and starts gathering his things. He blows on the last strip of photos to dry them. Then he reaches into his coat pocket and pulls out a clump of Christmas cards with cutesy pictures of Santas and stuffed animals and presents.

BILLY

I need you to do one last thing for me. If you can't do it, I'll get Goon to do it, but I can't get Goon to do it because he hates me. I need you to do me a favor. I need you to take these Christmas cards - I'm gonna sign them now, we'll sign them together - and I'll cut up one photo for each one. And then, every holiday, you know, every Christmas, send one to my parents. Alright? I got five cards here for the next five years. Just send them one card each year. I'll give you the money for the stamps, so don't worry.

LAYLA

Billy, I..why can't you send them yourself?
I mean...alright, alright, I'll do it...

BILLY

And you gotta send them early 'cause the
mail's slow around Christmas. I want you to
send them by December 1st.

LAYLA

Alright..whatever you say...

Billy scribbles his signature on one after another of the
Christmas cards.

Sonny comes walking over carrying a SHOEBOX FULL OF YELLOWED
NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS.

SONNY

Hey Billy, look what I saved! (and he pulls
out a fistful of clippings about the bank
robbery Billy pulled, when he was arrested.)

Layla catches a glimpse of the headlines and sees a MUG SHOT of
Billy.

LAYLA

I thought you said you were innocent.

BILLY

(fiercely)

I WAS innocent!

Sonny starts rifling through the articles to show them to Billy.

CLOSE ON PHOTO OF BILLY UNDER HEADLINE "DRUG KINGPIN BILLY BROWN
BOWLS HIMSELF A FIVE YEAR SENTENCE"

SONNY

I cut these out Billy. I been saving them. I
been waiting for you to come out. You think
maybe you could sign them, to me and the
bowling alley and I'll put them in a frame
behind the counter.

BILLY

Whaddaya mean put them up on the wall! What
are you crazy man? I'm not signin' those.
Gimme those things. What are you, wacked
out?

Billy makes a grab for the clippings but Sonny swipes them out of
his reach.

SONNY
C'mon Billy, you're a big celebrity here..

BILLY
Yeah. I put them up on the wall so everybody knows that I've been in jail. That's great. Here comes the convict to bowl.

SONNY
Aw Billy. Don't take it like that...

BILLY
What do you do, tell everybody your friend, the big shot's in jail? Come on!

SONNY
Of course not!

BILLY
Well I'm not signing them, and don't show them to anybody. Jeezus I'm gettin' outta here.

SONNY
Aw don't leave mad, I'll put 'em away Billy. I promise.

BILLY
Forget it. Forget it Sonny, it doesn't matter. Just do me a favor and don't give away my locker, don't give away the celebrity convict's locker, do me that much!

He strides out with his bowling bag in hand, motioning to Layla to follow him.

BILLY
C'mon! What are you standin' there, come on!

SONNY
(contrite)
You got it Billy! It's yours for life!

Billy and Layla exit the bowling alley.

EXT. BOWLING ALLEY - DUSK

Billy and Layla walk into the parking lot. The neon sign "CONNECTICUT LANES" glows in the dusk.

BILLY

Okay. So, nice to meet you. Thanks again.
Please please please please please do not
forget to send the cards...please?

LAYLA

Billy. I promise you. My promises are good.
I promise you I won't forget. I'll make a
note for myself. You can trust me.

BILLY

Alright good. Just don't forget.

LAYLA

Billy! I promise.

BILLY

Okay. Good. Just don't forget.
(Billy looks at her, then looks at the
ground) Okay, well...nice to meet you and
thanks again, please don't forget, and...I
gotta go.

LAYLA

(incredulous)

Where are you going? You don't want to see
me anymore? We spend the whole day together
and you don't want my phone number? Nothing.
You don't ever want to see me again?
I mean, you pull my hair, you yell at me all
day, I do you this big favor and you're just
going to leave, right? So, we're never going
to see eachother again. That's great. Just
fantastic. So, great, thanks. Okay, good.
...I mean..what if I call the police?!
You're not afraid that I'm gonna tell the
cops that you kidnapped me?

BILLY

(turned infantile)

(makes a farting sound with his mouth)

LAYLA

I mean. I just think, you know, you pull my
hair, you drag me..you kidnap me..I go to
your parents' house, I have to eat cow
intestines. COW intestines! Now, you know,
you don't even want to talk to me anymore.

Billy has transformed himself into a truculent three year old.

BILLY
(makes the farting sound)

LAYLA
You know. That's not very nice.

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
You're such a baby.

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
I mean you're going to leave and you're not even going to ask me for my phone number?

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
You're being a jerk.

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
You want my phone number?

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
Cut it out with that! Stop that! I'll write down my phone number. If you want to call me, you call me. You don't want to call me, don't call me. Okay?

BILLY
(fart sound)

LAYLA
(clears her throat, exasperated)
Do you have a pen and paper? I'll give you my phone number.

BILLY
I have a photographic memory. I can memorize anything.

LAYLA
Okay. 726-2253.

BILLY
Okay. I got it. So...I'll see you soon.

LAYLA
Yeah, okay Billy. Can you just tell me my number again?

BILLY
It's uh...yeah...it's, you know...uh, yeah I remember it...I know..

LAYLA
Well, what is it?

BILLY
Alright, what is it again?

LAYLA
726-2253.

BILLY
Okay. So, nice meeting you.

He starts walking away, head down. Layla stays where she is. After Billy gets about ten feet, she calls out again.

LAYLA
Billy! What's my number again?!

BILLY
Uhhh...I know it. 726...What is it again?

LAYLA
726-2253!

BILLY
I got it. 726-22...Listen! You're confusing me now. Wait here one second 'cause I gotta make a phone call.

He walks over to a glowing, snow-topped PHONE BOOTH and goes in.

MEDIUM SHOT on Billy in phone booth.

He puts a quarter in and dials the number written on his hand from before.

BILLY
Can I speak to Scotty Norwood?

WOMAN ON PHONE

Scotty's not in, he doesn't come in 'til later. Who's calling.

BILLY

Just a friend. Uh, what time does he come in?

WOMAN

He doesn't come until late, 'til about 2 o'clock in the morning.

BILLY

What time is it now?

WOMAN

It's 8:15.

BILLY

(sighs)

He doesn't get there earlier than two?

WOMAN

He never comes in before two, he comes about 2, 2:30...and he stays 'til closing. If you wanna see him, come in at that time.

BILLY

Okay. (he hangs up the phone)

He comes out of the phone booth. He's aggravated.

He walks over to Layla.

BILLY

I gotta go.

Layla starts to cry, despite herself.

LAYLA

You're just like your mother and father. You're so cold...cold-hearted. It's just terrible. You're so mean.

BILLY

Listen...I've been in jail a long time. I'm not close with anybody, I don't love anybody, I don't care about anybody. I just ...I gotta do something tonight and I've got somebody to...

He looks at her— Layla is staring at him intently with reddened

eyes.

BILLY

You know you're doing this just to bust my balls, you want to suck me in so you can laugh at me, so you can hurt me. Well let me tell you something right now. I do not love anybody. I do not trust anybody. I don't even like people, I think they stink, they're creepy, they're disgusting. Matter of fact, you see my face? I'm blushing? I'm red? You think it's a sunburn? No. I'm embarrassed to be a human being. That's it. I'm blushing 'cause I hate people.

Billy rubs his eyes, then massages his forehead with spread fingertips, trying to recover from his ranting.

BILLY

So, listen, you want to go lay down with me for a minute? Can we go lay down together, lay in a bed together somewhere?

Layla looks surprised.

BILLY

(jumping in before she can answer)
No! Don't uh...I was just kidding. I mean, heh heh heh! I'm losin' it...(changes tone)
I need to take a bath, like, I need to be in hot water. You wanna go...we'll go someplace and we can just go in the room together and have something to eat, you know or, I don't know, go lay down together somewhere. You wanna do that with me? Or no...no, you don't want to, right? No, it's disgusting. Let's not do it. You wanna or your don't?

LAYLA

Sure, I guess so.

BILLY

You sure? Don't do it for me, 'cause I'm doin' it for you, so don't do it for me. Alright, so you wanna go with me or no? No fancy place. We're goin' to like. I only got a little money, so we'll go to like a motel. I need to take a fuckin' bath without a fuckin' bunch of guys in the room.

EXT. CONNECTICUT LANES - AFTERNOON

LAYLA
You wanna drive?

BILLY
No, you can drive.

LAYLA
Okay.

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

Layla drives through the streets of Buffalo with Billy directing her by jabbing his finger around in the air.

BILLY
By the way, I was only kidding about laying down together. So, don't get your hopes up.

LAYLA
That's too bad, because I was looking forward to laying down next to you.

Billy looks at her to see if she's mocking him. But Layla just drives. She's cold. Her teeth start chattering.

LAYLA
I'm freezing. Can we get a hot chocolate?
Then we'll go to the motel?

BILLY
Alright.

LAYLA
Hot chocolate is my favorite thing in the whole world.

BILLY
Terrific.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Billy walk in and stop at a brown sign that reads "Please Wait To Be Seated".

A TEENAGE HOSTESS - the kind who drinks too many Diet Cokes - bounces up to them.

HOSTESS
Smoking or non-smoking?

BILLY
I don't know, just gimme a table.

She leads them to a table. They sit down.

HOSTESS
(Handing them menus) Your waitress will be here in a moment.

The WAITRESS - 17, scrawny with bad acne - shuffles over, eyes downward. She clumsily slings two ice waters onto the table.

WAITRESS
Oops.

LAYLA
I'll have a hot chocolate. Very hot.

WAITRESS
And you sir?

BILLY
I don't want nothin'.

WAITRESS
Okay. (she shuffles away)

Billy and Layla are left staring across the table at each other. There is an AWKWARD SILENCE. Neither is a conversation maker. Layla starts staring at the lights on the ceiling. Billy looks off to the right and left, head bent down.

Off screen, a LOUD WOMAN'S VOICE can be heard. Billy's head jerks up when he hears the voice.

BILLY
Oh no. (he puts his head down again.)

WOMAN (O.S.)
Where do you wanna sit sweetie?

A WOMAN - in her early 30's, a bleached blond Buffalo Beauty, skinny from too much cocaine type - enters the restaurant with a yuppie-looking MAN - also in his 30's, real estate type. The hostess goes up to seat them. The woman is alternately giggling and making out with her boyfriend. They are disgusting.

They are standing a few yards from where Billy and Layla are seated. In between kisses, the woman spots Billy. A glimmer of

recognition crosses her face. She walks over to Billy.

WOMAN

Hey. Weren't you in my third grade class?

BILLY

(acting nonchalant)

Oh yeah, I think so. Yeah.

WOMAN

Don't you remember me? Wendy Balsam?

BILLY

Oh yeah.

LAYLA

Oh! That's funny. I'm Wendy Balsam too.

Billy does not find Layla's joke funny and covers for her.

BILLY

She's a comedian.

WENDY

What happened to you. Didn't you get in trouble? Didn't you go to jail or something?

LAYLA

Well he was innocent.

WENDY

Yeah, we were in third grade together. I think you were in my class every year. Did you have Mrs. Dannon?

BILLY

Uh yeah.

WENDY

Did you live on my block? 'Cause I used to see you walk by my house every day.

BILLY

No. I was visiting a friend who lived up the street.

WENDY

Yeah. It was so strange. Seems like every time I looked out my window I would see you walking by...

There is an uncomfortable pause. The guy she's with steps out of

the wings.

WENDY

Hey Don, this is...what's your name?

BILLY

Billy. Brown.

WENDY

That's right! Billy Brown, this is my fiancée' Don Shanks. (in typical 'competitive female' style, she ignores Layla, only sees the men)

DON SHANKS

Hey, why don't the four of us sit together and get to know one another.

Wendy looks unpleasantly surprised at his suggestion.

BILLY

No we can't. We were just getting ready to leave.

WENDY

Oh that's too bad. Well, nice to see you.

Wendy Balsam and Don Shanks flounce off to a table far in the corner where they resume their giggling and making out. All the blood has drained from Billy's face. Layla has the whole picture now and Billy knows it. There is a deathly hush.

LAYLA

(mischievous)

Funny, she had the same name as me...she looked an awful lot like the girl you had a picture of in your locker.

Steam is coming out of Billy's ears. His eyes are black with humiliation.

The scrawny waitress shuffles over to their table.

WAITRESS

The hot chocolate's gonna be a minute. The syrup's clogged in the machine. Did you want something else instead?

BILLY

Uh, you know something. We're not gonna stay.

LAYLA
What do you mean...

BILLY
We're not gonna stay, okay? (to the waitress) I'm sorry, we're not staying.

LAYLA
But...

BILLY
Are you coming or are you staying? You can stay if you want, I'm leaving.

They get up to leave and get as far as the vestibule, the glassed-in space between the two sets of doors. Layla stops him.

LAYLA
Oh come on, let's..you know..Come on Billy. I really want a hot chocolate...I've been dying for one all day. Don't worry about that girl. She's creepy. You're such a nice person, and she's so creepy.

Billy starts to blow his top.

BILLY
What are you trying to say.

LAYLA
I just think that, you know. I know you had a crush on her. I saw the picture in your locker, alright? And let me tell you, I think you're much too good for her.

BILLY
Don't give me that bullshit, 'I was too good for her' bullshit. Don't feel sorry for me. I hate that crap.

LAYLA
So what, we have to leave now because you ran into some girl from school you had a crush on!

Billy has barely heard her. He is in his own head.

BILLY
(muttering under his breath)
I'm gonna kill that fucking Scotty fucking Norwood bastard. I'm gonna kill him. That rat bastard..

LAYLA
What did you say?

BILLY
I didn't say nothin', you wanna come or you
don't wanna come.

Wendy hesitates, not sure whether to stay or go.

BILLY
Listen, I don't care about you and your
fuckin' hot chocolate. Alright? I don't need
nobody. You don't wanna come? Then don't
come. And lemme just tell you something.
I could go out with any girl I want to. You
understand? Any girl I want. And that's the
truth. Alright? The fact is, I just don't
want anybody. There's nobody that I like.
Alright? 'Cause all girls stink. They're all
bad, and they're all evil. And they're all
back-stabbers, so let's go.

LAYLA
I don't want to go. I want to have a hot
chocolate. I've been thinking about having a
hot chocolate all day. And, I don't wanna
go. I'm gonna stay.

BILLY
Good, then stay. Fuck you.

LAYLA
Fuck you too.

Billy is red in the face. Layla is equally red.

Layla turns her back on him and goes back inside. Billy spins
around to leave.

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Billy smacks open the door and stalks out. He has worked himself
into such a state, that he now has to take a pee again.

BILLY
(wincing in pain)
Now I gotta pee!

He looks around. There's a gas station across the street. We watch
him go inside and come out again quickly, no luck. The camera
tracks with him and follows him into an AUTO ZONE car accessories

franchise. A puffy CASHIER is the only human being in this No-Man's Land of rows of car parts and accessories.

BILLY
You gotta fuckin' bathroom!

CASHIER
There's no restroom for customers. Use the one at Denny's.

BILLY
Great. I knew it.

He exits the store.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Billy slips into Denny's. Layla has her back to him, but we can see that she is crying from the way her shoulders jerk up and down. Layla doesn't see him go by and into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

Billy enters the bathroom and begins to pee.

He does his business at the urinal and goes to the sink to wash his hands.

Again he starts to cry. Only this time, he rips at his own face with his hands, pulling on his skin, his hair, his ears, as though he wants to mutilate himself.

While he pulls on himself, he makes an odd sound, a scary, groaning cry of a sound.

BILLY
(breaking into tears)
I don't want to live anymore.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Layla has just been served her hot chocolate, but she is unable to drink it. Instead she is fishing icecubes out of her water glass and putting them on her eyes to make the puffiness go down. She looks miserable. Billy steals up behind her, his face puffy again.

He takes a quick look over his shoulder to see if Wendy is still there. Wendy is at a table way over in the corner and has her face buried in Don's stripey sweater.

Billy stands next to Layla. She looks up at him, then turns away, wiping her tears.

BILLY
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm very sorry.

Layla sniffles, embarrassed to be caught crying again.

BILLY
Now can we just get out of this place,
please, so I don't have to see that witch
over there, please?

LAYLA
But what about the hot..

BILLY
I want you to come with me. Let's get outta
here.

LAYLA
Okay.

Layla gets up from the table. She tries to take a sip of her hot chocolate, but it's boiling hot, and she spills it all over the table instead.

LAYLA
Shoot! ...

Billy leaves a couple bucks on the table and they leave the restaurant.

INT. LAYLA'S CAR - DENNY'S PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Outside it is a blizzard. Layla turns on the wipers, then the heating fan, which is useless. It's freezing.

LAYLA
So..you wanna go get a room now, so you can
take a bath, you'll feel better?

Billy is huddled in the front seat. He takes Layla's wrist to look at her watch.

BILLY
Okay. I still got a couple hours to kill
anyway.

LAYLA
Okay. _

INT. MOTEL LOBBY - EVENING

The "TEN PINS MOTEL".

Billy and Layla are talking to the MOTEL OWNER - dark, middle-aged, from New Delhi, in a depressing lobby with yellow wall paper and graying plastic flowers on the counter.

BILLY

I need a room for one night.

MOTEL CLERK

(heavy Indian accent)

How many nights?

BILLY

Just one night.

LAYLA

So what really happened with that girl back there? I'm not jealous or anything, I just want to know.

BILLY

Can we just get to the room first? Do I have to tell everyone in the lobby here?

MOTEL CLERK

I need a license and cash or a credit card.

Billy hands him a driver's license.

BILLY

How much is the room?

MOTEL CLERK

\$29.99 plus tax. Comes to \$34.70.

BILLY

(huffing) \$34.70.

Billy pays him.

MOTEL CLERK

Check out time is at 11 AM. And there's no smoking in the room. (he hands him a key.)

BILLY

The room's got a bathtub, right?

CLERK

Yeah, there's a tub.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - EVENING

Billy and Layla cross the snow covered lot. There are only a few shitty cars parked in front of motel room doors.

Layla spots their room number. They tramp through knee-deep snow on the un-shoveled stairway and into the room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - EVENING

Billy and Layla enter the predictably dingy motel room. It's freezing in the room.

Billy looks disgusted by how dirty the room is. He goes over the bathroom and turns on the light.

He comes out of the bathroom with a washcloth to use as a dustrag. He starts moving the furniture around to his liking, dusting as he goes along.

Layla sits down on the bed, bouncing up and down a few times. She gets up and switches the bedroom light on and off, then goes back to bouncing on the bed.

He tries to pull off the bedspread but Layla is sitting on it.

BILLY

Don't sit on that thing. Can't you see it's dirty? It's disgusting.

LAYLA

You never even went out with Wendy Balsam, did you.

BILLY

I already told you I did.

LAYLA

Hmmm.

Billy yanks the bedspread off the bed from under Layla's butt and shoves it in the cupboard of the bedside table.

He sits down on the bed as though it's got dog poop on it.

BILLY

I saw Wendy Balsam the first day that I went to school. I remember going to school and really hating it, I was crying and screaming. I went to class and I saw that girl, and all through class I just stared at

BILLY (cont.)
her and imagined us being together and being
in love, being married, all day through
school, and also when I was bored at church,
I would imagine being with her.

LAYLA
Did she know that you liked her?

BILLY
No. She would just ask me why I was staring
at her. You know, 'why don't you take a
picture!'

LAYLA
Did you ever have a girlfriend?

BILLY
No. Just her.

LAYLA
Ohh..

BILLY
She was so sweet in grade school, so cute
and sweet, then when she got to high school,
man, she went out with all the guys..

LAYLA
Except you...

BILLY
I just remember the pain of that. It's the
most painful pain.

LAYLA
Tell me why you were in jail.

BILLY
I told you, I was gonna take a bath. I don't
have a lot of time.

LAYLA
Where do you have to go?

BILLY
Stop bothering me.

Billy goes into the bathroom. He wets a washcloth and wipes down
the tub, sink, and toilet. Then he turns on the faucet in the tub.

BILLY

My Dad was such a cheap bastard when I was a kid. I used to have to take a bath in an inch of water. He didn't want to pay for hot water.

Layla is in the other room listening at the door.

Billy strips down to his underwear and gets into the brimming tub, still wearing his briefs. The tub is so full that water splashes all over the floor.

Layla sits down in the freezing bedroom while Billy takes a bath.

LAYLA

(yelling out)

Billy are you in the tub yet?!

BILLY

Yeah. Why?

LAYLA

Well can I come and sit in there? I don't want to be out here alone. I'm cold.

BILLY

I'm in the tub! What do you mean, come and sit in here?

LAYLA

Well, can I just sit in the bathroom and talk to you, I don't want to be out here.

BILLY

No you can't, I'm in the tub.

LAYLA

I promise I won't look. I'm not gonna look. I'll look the other way, but I wanna sit and talk to you.

BILLY

(lets out a long sigh)

Alright you can sit in here, but if you look at me one time, I'm gonna throw you out of the room, alright?

LAYLA

Yes.

BILLY
I swear to you Layla. One time, you take one fuckin' peek and I'm throwin' you out of the room. I'm not kidding.

LAYLA
Okay I promise.

Layla enters the bathroom with her eyes closed, and covering them with one hand, her head turned the other way.

She finds her way to the toilet, puts the cover down, and sits down.

LAYLA
You look like a little boy in the bathtub.

BILLY
What did I just tell you! Didn't I just tell you not to look?

BILLY
I'm not looking, I'm just imagining.

BILLY
You're wierd....'just imagining'..

Layla's teeth are chattering from the cold.

LAYLA
I'm freezing Billy, do you think I could sit in the tub with you?

BILLY
What are you insane? Are you an insane person? No you cannot sit in the tub with me.

LAYLA
Why?

BILLY
'Cause I'm nude in the tub! Alright? I don't take baths with people.

LAYLA
But I'm freezing, can I please get in the hot water?

BILLY

No. And if you ask me again I'm gonna make you go sit in the other room.

Layla sighs with exasperation.

LAYLA

You're so uptight. You're just like my father was.

BILLY

Oh yeah? Where is your father by the way. You haven't told me anything about your father or your mother. Are they in Buffalo?

LAYLA

No. My daddy just died six months ago, in July. July 11th. And...I never knew my mother. My father told me she was crazy. I don't know. I never knew her and..I can't really tell you anything about her, 'cause we just never spoke about her. I saw a picture of her one time though, and she was very pretty. I don't know what happened to that picture. So..I really just grew up with my father. But, I guess I'm alone now. Since my father died, I guess I'm alone.

BILLY

You don't have any other relatives?

LAYLA

No. It was just me and my father. I was very close to my father, though. He used to take me with him all the time. He worked for Pepsi-Cola. His job was to introduce Pepsi-Cola to countries that didn't have Pepsi. He was the first person to bring Pepsi to Russia, to Argentina, to Mexico. He was with the company for a long time. And he would take me all the time with him overseas. I wish you could have met him. He was a very very goofy guy. He was very very tall, six foot five. Very skinny. And he was...so nice. Um..anyway, he was in Puerto Rico, and he got sick there, and he was in the hospital. So, I called the hospital, to see how he was, and the nurse told me that he was fine, that he was okay. And that I should call in the morning 'cause he was sleeping, but, that he was okay.

LAYLA (cont.)

And...when I called in the morning...he had died.

Layla's face is twisted up with grief.

LAYLA

And I hate that nurse. I hate her. I hate her guts. I hate her for that. And I feel so bad that my Daddy had to be alone, and I didn't get to see him. And then, about a week after that..I got my first seizure, and I started getting them every day, and I had to go to a doctor, and I take a medication, Dylantin, so that I don't get seizures and if I stop taking it, I'm afraid that I'm gonna get them again. And I don't sleep good anymore. And I don't wanna be alone. So...could you please not keep telling me to go away? And could I please come in the bathtub, 'cause I'm freezing? please could I come and sit with you, please?

Billy looks at her.

BILLY

Alright, listen. Hand me my T-shirt over there.

Layla reaches over and grabs his T-shirt.

BILLY

Don't look. Don't turn around, just throw it to me.

She throws him the T-shirt and he puts the T-shirt on in the bathtub.

BILLY

Okay. You can come in the bath tub, but don't look at me. Alright?

Layla takes off her clothes. As she removes her bra, the kleenex falls out.

Billy has a frozen, stunned expression, as though he has never been in a room with a naked girl in his life. He is squirming with shyness and discomfort.

Layla gets in the tub slowly because the water is very hot. More water splashes on the floor. They sit on opposite sides of the tub. Billy is in his T-shirt and underwear, and Layla is naked.

Suddenly, now that they are face to face, in the tub together, Billy and Layla are tongue-tied. They stare at each other awkwardly. Billy looks away.

A drop from the shower head plunks into the bathwater with a loud sound. The bathroom is very echoey.

Billy picks up on it.

BILLY

Ohhh..Ahhh..(like a Gregorian chant)

LAYLA

Ooohhh...Aaahhhhh...

BILLY

Oooooohh....(then he stops, embarrassed)

Layla begins singing "Fools Rush In", the same song Billy's father sang. She doesn't know it exactly, but hums over the parts she can't remember. She plays with the echo as she sings. She has a sublimely beautiful voice, like an angel.

Layla finishes the song. She stares intently at Billy. Billy puts his head down. He doesn't like to be looked at.

BILLY

Would you stop looking at me?

LAYLA

Why?

BILLY

I don't like when people look at me.

LAYLA

I think you have the most handsome face in the whole world.

Billy doesn't say anything, just half-covers his face with his hand.

LAYLA

Can I ask you a question?

BILLY

What.

LAYLA

Did you ever have a girlfriend? I mean, did you ever really have a girlfriend? Were you ever in love?

BILLY
Will you leave me alone with this crap..

LAYLA
Did you ever kiss a girl?

Billy huffs and squirms uncomfortably.

LAYLA
Come on Billy. I want you to tell me things.
I want you tell me the truth. Did you ever
kiss a girl? Tell me the truth.

Billy looks at her. He has his hands over his eyes.

LAYLA
Of course I kissed a girl. I had lots of
girlfriends.

LAYLA
Billy. I'm your friend. I want you to tell
me the truth, just tell me the truth. Did
you ever kiss a girl, really, but for real.
Tell me the truth.

BILLY
No. Alright? I never kissed a girl, alright?
I never had a girlfriend, alright? You
happy?

LAYLA
Well. Do you wanna kiss me?

BILLY
No. I don't wanna kiss you.

LAYLA
Are you sure?

BILLY
Yeah, I'm sure.

LAYLA
Okay.

Billy pulls the plug out of the tub. The water starts to drain out.

BILLY
Let's get out of the tub.

They work their way out of the tub. Billy can't look at her,
because she's naked. He's still very embarrassed.

When he gets out of the tub still in his underpants, Layla notices them and smiles privately. They dry off and put on some clothes quickly.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

They are both freezing, and they both jump into the one bed to get warm.

They squirm and squiggle under the covers, trying to get warm again.

Layla mashes up against him, and Billy goes stiff.

They both lie on their backs, staring at the ceiling in silence, their arms on top of the blankets.

Layla reaches over and holds his hand. At first he clenches his fist. And eventually holds her hand.

Then they turn to each other and hug. Billy gets his first kiss of his whole life.

After they kiss. Billy curls up against her like a baby, his head in her stomach. Layla just holds him.

With his head buried deep in her belly, they fall asleep together.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - ONE HOUR LATER - NIGHT

Billy slowly wakes up, disoriented, confused.

He looks at the little digital alarm clock chained to the bedside table. It reads 1:45 AM.

BILLY
(softly)
Good night...Layla.

He slowly gets out of bed. Then he goes over to his bowling bag, takes out his gun, and puts it in his inside jacket pocket.

LAYLA (O.S.)
Where are you going?

BILLY
(startled)
I'm just goin' to get a cup of coffee...uh..
you want something?

LAYLA

(in a sleepy voice)

Yeah, can you get me a hot chocolate...
..I'm still dying for one.

BILLY

A hot chocolate. Alright, I'll get it for
you. I'll be right back... A hot chocolate.

LAYLA

When are you coming back?

BILLY

I'll come back in 5 minutes.

LAYLA

Do you promise you're coming back? You
promise you won't leave me anymore?

BILLY

Yeah. Of course. What do you mean? Why do
you keep asking me that. Stop asking me
that.

LAYLA

No, I just..I have a feeling you're not
gonna come back. I wanna know, if you're not
gonna come back, tell me, don't lie to me.

BILLY

(defensive)

I'm gonna come back! Why are you bugging me
like that, I'm just going down...you want
your hot chocolate or you don't..

LAYLA

Yes, but, I just...I really like you, and
I'll be really sad if you don't come back.
Unless you tell me. If you tell me you're
not coming back, okay fine, then I'll know
that you're not coming back, but everybody
always lies, people always lie, they always
lie, they're not nice. It's creepy, it's not
nice, are you gonna come back, or are you
not gonna come back?

BILLY

Are you sick? What's your problem? I'm just
goin' down to get a coffee. You want a hot
chocolate. You want me to stay? I'll stay.
If you don't trust me..I'll stay. Want me to
stay?

LAYLA

No. If you want a coffee, go get a coffee.

BILLY

You want me to stay? 'Cause I'll stay up here and I'll...yeah...you trust me or no, 'cause I'm comin' right back, I'm comin' right back.

LAYLA

Alright...Can I have a kiss good-bye then?

BILLY

No! See, you're starting..you're starting trouble, you're starting evil. No, you can't have a kiss. No. Don't touch me. I said I'd come back, I didn't say I'd give you a kiss.

LAYLA

Well how 'bout just a..like a hug..

BILLY

No. I'll shake your hand. Let's shake hands good-bye.

LAYLA

Okay.

Layla gets up from the bed and stands before him, her hand outstretched.

Billy takes her hand to shake it but when he shakes it she sort of melts against him, her forehead falling against his chest. Without meaning to, Billy gives her an awkward half hug and a goofy pat on the back.

Then, he abruptly breaks away and makes a beeline for the door.

LAYLA

(in a singsong voice)

Remember, you promised! You're comin' right back! ...bring me a hot chocolate.

BILLY

You gonna start this again? I said, I'm comin' back. Okay.

As he fiddles with the lock, which is confusing, Layla calls out to him again.

LAYLA

Billy!_

BILLY
What.

LAYLA
I just wanna tell you that I think you're
the sweetest guy in the whole world, and the
most handsome guy in the whole world and....
I love you.

Billy doesn't say a word. Just looks at her. Then..

BILLY
Yeah okay. I'll be right back, okay? I'm
comin' back.

LAYLA
Okay. I won't bug you no more, but hurry
back.

BILLY
Okay. I said I'm comin' right back.

He goes out the door.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Billy takes his gun out of his jacket and puts it in the top of his
boot.

He walks down the stairs and starts to cross the street.

Directly opposite the motel is Scotty Norwood's strip joint, its
neon sign flashing on and off in the black black night. Billy
crosses the street.

EXT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Billy stands in front of the strip joint, looking at it. He looks
around him at the darkness. He's alone.

There is a payphone next to the entrance to the club. Billy goes
over to it.

Billy dials Goon's phone number which he still knows by heart.

Goon picks up.

BILLY
Hey. It's me.

It's two o'clock in the morning. Goon was asleep.

GOON

(sleepy, but still mad at Billy)
Yeah, why ya call me, Billwee?

BILLY

I just want to tell you, I know you helped me out, I'm sorry that I yelled at you before.

GOON

Yeah, well you always yelling at me!
It's bedtime Billwee. I'm in bed already.

BILLY

Anyway, I just want you to know, thank you very much for helping me out, and thanks again for that time when you sent me those raisins. ...(he starts to choke up)

GOON

I sent you raisins Billwee.
I told my mom to buy those, and I found a little box, and I sent them to you. But... you're always yellin' at me Billwee, and.. you know, yer not very nice to me..and I don't wanna be friends wit you if ya keep yellin' at me.

BILLY

Well, I understand Goon, but, anyway, I'm sorry. I'm sorry Goon.

GOON

Billwee..please don't call me Goon..I axed ya already not to call me Goon. My name is Rocky.

BILLY

..I mean Rocky. I meant to say Rocky. Anyway, I'm gonna make it up to you, alright? You know my locker at the bowling alley? Well, I'm gonna give you the secret combination to my locker.

GOON

You're gonna give me the combination?!
What for Billwee?

BILLY

I want you to be able to use my locker, and plus, I left some things for you...you know my favorite pen, my good luck pen? Well it's in the locker, and you can have it. You know all my trophies there? My bowling ball? Everything. Matter of fact, you can have everything in my locker...(he starts to choke up)

GOON

But...I don't want your things Billwee. Those are your things. Why don't you want your stuff no more?

BILLY

(fighting back tears, very sentimental)

..well, you know, Goon, I...I mean Rocky - I'm sorry - Rocky, I just...you're my best friend and I want you to have all my stuff. I feel really bad that I always yell at you. Plus, I'm goin' out of town. I got a really big job comin' up, and I gotta go outta town for a long time...(he jerks the phone away from his mouth because he's starting to sob)...And I just want you to have all my things.

GOON

You're not gonna do crazy things, Billwee, are ya? Is that why you wanna give me your stuff?

BILLY

No. No...Listen, I was just kidding about the Scott Norwood thing. Listen, you want the combination? It's 32-15-21..alright? And...thanks for the raisins that you gave me and, listen Goon, you're the only one who's my friend and, anyway, I gotta go.

He hangs up the phone, his eyes streaming with tears. He wipes his eyes repeatedly with the back of his hand and tries to compose himself.

He takes a few deep breaths and walks slowly to the night club entrance, like he's in a trance.

A few drunk customers stagger out into the parking lot. SOUND of CARS STARTING UP and driving away.

A heavysset BOUNCER - squinty, close-set eyes in a hormones'n'beer-puffed face - is standing at the doorway.

BOUNCER

Ten dollar cover tonight.

Billy pulls out what's left of his wad, extracts ten dollars, and hands it over.

The bouncer raises Billy's arms in order to frisk him.

BOUNCER

Sorry. House policy.

BILLY

Sure. (he winces as the man's hands touch his ribcage and waist)

BOUNCER

Okay. Have fun.

Billy enters the club.

INT. SCOTTY NORWOOD'S EXOTIC DANCERS CLUB - NIGHT

Billy enters the club. On the wall near the doorway are a bunch of GREASY OLD FRAMED PHOTOGRAPHS of Scotty Norwood in his Bills uniform. A moustache is drawn over his face on one of them.

On a small stage at the far end of the club is a FEMALE DANCER wearing nothing but a football helmet and a G-string and sequined football pasties on floppy breasts. She's a tired, sexy thing, not the barbie doll, plastic surgeried kind of stripper.

WAITRESSES with tight, kid-sized Buffalo Bills football shirts move through the smoky place carrying trays with drinks and scooting away from customers who try to pinch their rear ends.

Billy moves through the club, looking for Norwood.

SLOW MO' TRACKING POV as Billy penetrates the club

ANGLE ON BILLY as he finally spots Norwood.

ANGLE ON NORWOOD, sitting at a round booth at the center of the joint. He is short, with a stomach, wears a toupee. And he's drunk.

Billy is pale and sweating. He looks around the club to see if anyone is watching him. Everyone is oblivious to him, their eyes

glazed and staring in the direction of the naked helmet-head dancer.

Billy looks back up at Norwood, realizing he is about to lose his nerve. He reaches down into his boot for his gun, and slides the gun up his body and into his coat pocket.

Sitting on the back of a booth is someone's half-drunk Scotch. Billy takes it and downs it, the first alcohol he's had in five years.

Slowly he walks toward Norwood's booth.

He gets to the booth and stands there looking at Norwood, watching him. The rest of the room is swimming. Norwood's voice echoes over the room, as though it were the only voice in the place.

CLOSEUP ON BILLY as he looks at Norwood. This is the guy that, for some reason, he's blamed for everything that's gone bad in his whole life. Even before he ever heard of Scotty Norwood. This is the guy that, for the past five years, all he thought about was killing, killing this guy. He hated this guy. After all, if he hadn't missed the field goal, everything would be just fine.

And now he's looking at him. The camera slowly dollies toward Norwood. What we see is a fat, bald, drunken, washed up football player who missed the most important kick of his life. He's way out of shape and he looks awful now. And he's surrounded with two of the most tacky broads we've ever seen in our lives. They're kissing him and brown-nosing him. He's giving them dollar bill tips for each kiss.

Suddenly Billy gets a look in his eyes of feeling sorry for him. After all, Scotty Norwood died the day he missed that field goal. His soul is dead. His pride is dead. He's nobody.

Billy closes his eyes and rubs them.

BEGIN NEGATIVE FANTASY SEQUENCE: This sequence is heavily stylized, the film stock is grainy, or the light is smoky, heaven-like. There is no sound until the explosion of the gun.

IN SLOW MOTION Billy pulls out his gun, lets out a scream, "AAAAHHHHH", and fires 3 or 4 shots into the chest of Scotty Norwood. Norwood falls back against the back of his red vinyl seat. His toupee falls off in the blast, and he is mutilated.

Still in SLOW MOTION, Billy points the gun at his head, and shoots himself in the head.

CUT TO:

(STILL IN FANTASY STYLE)

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A casket. Above-ground next to an open grave. And two chairs. In one chair is Billy's mother, dressed entirely in Buffalo Bills garb, with a TRANSISTOR RADIO. She is screaming into the radio.

JAN

Run you bastard! Tackle him! Tackle him.
Ohhh! I can't believe them!

Billy's father is squirming with discomfort in his chair, rolling his eyeballs, looking all around - at everything but the casket. He turns to Jan.

VINCENT

(looking at his watch)

Jan, it's two o'clock! You know? I'm starting to get the shakes, I'm starving. Can we go eat?!

END FANTASY SEQUENCE

INT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

ANGLE ON BILLY, his eyes staring off. He turns away, and walks out of the club in a trance.

EXT. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

Billy comes out of the club, still transfixed, still strange-looking.

Suddenly it comes to Billy that he has a choice. That he's got a girl waiting back at the motel room for him.

Almost like someone who has just won the lottery, he becomes incredibly excited, his hands waving in the air.

BILLY

(to himself)

Oh my God. I gotta girl man. She said she loved me! She said she loved me! (talking to himself) Did you hear that?! She said she loved me! What am I, wacked out?! I don't wanna die, I'm not gonna kill nobody! I

BILLY (cont.)
gotta girlfriend now! I can't kill anybody.
I gotta girlfriend!

The Bouncer stares at him, but Billy doesn't notice. He's in his own world.

BILLY
(still talking to himself)
Fuck that fat bastard! Fuck him! Did you see him? He looked awful! Who the fuck told me to bet on the Buffalo Bills?! I'M the Asshole!

Billy thinks of something, reaches quick into his pocket, pulls out another quarter, and throws it into the phone.

GOON (O.S.)
(sleepy voice)
Hello?

BILLY
Forget it.

GOON
Who's callin' here? Billwee? Billwee? It's bedtime Billwee.

BILLY
And if you go near my fuckin' locker...if you tell anybody the combination, I'll kill you! I'm just gonna tell you right now, the deal is off, I take it back. Stay away from my locker, you can't have nothin'! Alright? And if one thing's missing, I swear to God, I'll know it was you. Goon I'll tell you right now, I'll know it was you, and I'll kill you, alright? I'll come and get you.

GOON
Billwee. I'm sleepin' Billwee. Okay? I don't even know the combination. I thought I was dreamin' when you called. I was still sleepin'.

BILLY
Yeah? Don't think you're hustlin' me. I'm just telling you to stay away from the thing. (sweet and friendly again) Anyway, I gotta go. Listen, I'll give you a call tomorrow, alright? Maybe we'll get together and go bowling or something. I gotta girl.

BILLY (cont.)
Alright? Anyway, I gotta go, I'll talk to
you later.

GOON
Okay. Bye.

Billy runs across the street to the Dunkin' Donuts and goes inside.
The COUNTER PERSON is a worn-out, bitchy woman. A few bums are
scattered around. Billy rushes up to the counter, very excited.

BILLY
Can I order a hot chocolate? Do you have hot
chocolate here?

WOMAN
Sure do.

BILLY
Alright, can I have a LARGE hot chocolate to
go...no, make it two hot chocolates to go...
No, wait a second, I don't drink hot
chocolate. Make it one large hot chocolate
to go and...what do I want...and a coffee. A
large hot chocolate and a coffee to go.
Okay?

WOMAN
Okay.

The woman is not up to Billy's level of energy and excitement.
She hands him the hot drinks, he pays, and walks quickly toward the
motel.
He passes a DUMPSTER and suddenly remembers something. He pulls his
GUN out of his boot and throws it in the dumpster.
He walks quickly up the snowy steps of the motel and into the room.

CUT TO:
INT. BILLY'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Billy's father Vincent has just fallen asleep on the couch in front
of the TV, watching the Tonight Show.

Janet sees that he's asleep. She goes over to him to check.

JAN
Honey? Honey? You asleep?

Vincent is snoring softly. Jan tiptoes over and gets her tape of the 1990 Superbowl and pops it into the VCR.

We DOLLY INTO THE TV SET until it completely fills the screen.

SUPERBOWL 25 is in full swing and the Bills are a few plays away from the final fateful Norwood kick.

FINAL CREDITS BEGIN TO ROLL

A cluster of SuperBowl COMMERCIALS come on. Then we return to the game. More plays.

MORE AND MORE CREDITS ROLL as the game continues.

A few more plays and Norwood is up.

MORE CREDITS

The crowd is delirious.

FINALLY THE LAST CREDIT ROLLS, just before Norwood is preparing to make his kick.

At that precise moment, Vincent wakes up from the sound of the roaring fans and the frantic announcer.

VINCENT (O.S.)
Jan! I'm tryin' to sleep! Will you turn the
God Damned game off!

JAN (O.S.)
Honey, just lemme watch the game.

VINCENT (O.S.)
Just turn off the TV.

Vincent clicks off the TV with the remote. We see a little burst of TV SNOW, and then the TV SCREEN GOES BLACK

The MOVIE IS OVER.

Over a BLACK SCREEN, the SOUNDTRACK of the game continues. The VOLUME IS SUDDENLY MUCH HIGHER. AS THE AUDIENCE FILES OUT, THE LAST TRAGIC MOMENTS OF SUPERBOWL 25 ARE PLAYED OUT, FILLING THE DARK THEATER.

ANNOUNCER'S VOICE
There are three seconds left in the game.

ANNOUNCER (cont.)

Scott Norwood, the Bills' kicker, is on the field. This will be the last play of the game. If he makes the kick, the Bills win. If he misses, the Giants are Superbowl 25 champs.

.(pause)

There's the snap!

The kick is up!

(Announcer screaming)

IT'S NO GOOOOOD! WIDE TO THE RIGHT.

THE GAME IS OVER.

THE NEW YORK GIANTS HAVE WON SUPERBOWL 25.

THE BILLS HAVE LOST BY ONE POINT.

- FINE -