

CLEAN SLATE

by Robert King

EXT- VENICE BEACH (L.A.) - MORNING.

A cubist collage of colors and shapes. We're not sure what we're looking at. Until we back out.

It's a wall slathered with years of tattered flyers and posters. A hand reaches in with a SCRAPER and begins to peel away the layers of ads, as a clarinet solo starts up, bluesy and sweet.

NARRATION (V.O.)

It's Monday morning.
Your name is M.L. Pogue...
Maurice Leonard...
(Considers it.)
Pogue is fine...

Gradually a brick wall is revealed. The hand now wields a PAINT ROLLER and whitewashes the 'clean' wall, as we continue to back away.

NARRATION cont.

You're a private investigator.
Small stuff. Insurance scams,
credit reports, adopted children
looking for parents.

The painter, an artist named STANLEY, continues to prepare his "canvas"--the side of a brick building on Venice Beach--while a BLIND MAN leans next to him, playing a clarinet, his case open for change.

NARRATION cont.

Now you're on vacation.
Temporarily. Due to illness.

We move up the side of the brick building to a roof terrace. A DOG is perched there. Stoic, handsome. He wears a white medical patch over one eye.

NARRATION cont.

You have a dog.

The dog turns and trots toward a DOG DOOR leading into the apartment adjoining the terrace. He misses the door by a good two feet, bumps head-first into the wall.

NARRATION cont.

He's got a depth perception
problem.

Unperturbed, he backs up. Adjusts his calculations. And makes it through.

INT- APARTMENT BATHROOM - MORNING.

The dog trots through the apartment's small bathroom, knocking over and spilling a CAN OF CLEANSER, as he scoots through the bathroom into...

INT- APARTMENT OFFICE - MORNING.

...the office/bedroom half of Pogue's apartment. A Private Eye's office. In fact, a not too organized Private Eye's office. Files everywhere. A few old-fashioned touches. Aging roll-top desk. Remington typewriter. It's unclear whether they're out of nostalgia or necessity.

The dog moves past the mess, knocking over a box of files. Crosses to a rumpled bed. A man sits on the edge, waking up. The dog lies at his feet.

NARRATION (V.O.)
Your illness. It's called
Korsakoff Waking Syndrome. A
recurring amnesia...

We move up the man's body. Tanned. Muscular. Just as we reach his face, he begins to pull on a t-shirt.

NARRATION (V.O.)
Whenever you go to sleep, you lose
your memory.

Hearing this, the man freezes, t-shirt halfway on, covering his face. He reaches toward the TAPE RECORDER beside the bed--where the narration is coming from. He pushes "rewind." Then "play":

NARRATION
(Repeated.) Whenever you go to
sleep, you lose your memory.

And we see the man's face for the first time, as he says:

POGUE
Shit.

POGUE has a handsome, friendly face. Wide comical smile (though not presently). Casual appearance. Eyes that never seem to blink. Especially now, as they widen at what he hears. And we realize that what he hears is his own voice narrating:

POGUE NARRATION
When you dream your mind relaxes;
and you lose the details of your
life.

Pogue stands. Studies the room for clues to who he is.

POGUE NARRATION

Whatever you do, don't panic.
Everything's gonna look a bit
strange to you right now but,
really, don't panic.

Overused coffee-maker. A half-eaten slice of pizza. A
sleek fedora on a hat rack. Framed "Detective Certificate."

POGUE NARRATION

Two months ago you were injured in
an explosion. Feel the back of
your neck.

Pogue does. There's a small scar there.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

Ever since, you've had this...
amnesia. You're not taking cases.
Doctor says all you need is rest
and you'll recover.

We get a closer look at the Tape Recorder. A small hand-
written sign attached to it reads: "Push this button" and
points toward the 'play' button.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

And as long as you set up the
recorder every night, you won't be
wandering the streets.

Pogue notices on the bedpost a note, in a feminine hand:

"You were great last night! Hope
your neighbors don't complain."

Bewildered, Pogue takes the note down, and finds underneath
a set of HANDCUFFS attached to the bedpost. Pogue stares
blankly, wishing he could remember what that was about.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

One important thing. You can't
tell anyone about your amnesia.
Only your doctor knows about it.
You're testifying against the guy
who set the explosion, and if
anyone knew... Well, you'd lose a
bit of credibility.

Pogue notices a MIRROR hanging on the wall. He studies his appearance. Doesn't mind what he sees. Stands taller. Pulls in his gut just a bit.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

In the desk, you'll find a tape marked "Testimony" recorded before the amnesia. Listen to it. Remember it.

INT- CLOSET.

Pogue opens the door to his closet, not thrilled with his messiness: a clothes pyramid in the hamper; vines of wrinkled shirts hanging from a bar.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

You've been a private eye in Venice for about two years. Venice, California.

Pogue runs his hand through the hanging clothes. Too much of a potpourri to offer himself much of a theme. He pulls out a suit, its pant cuffs temporarily hemmed with pins and tape. He holds the suit up to himself. Stands more poised and dignified in front of the mirror.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

You charge 150 dollars an hour... plus expenses. You're not getting rich, but it pays the rent. Sometimes it pays the rent.

Putting it aside, Pogue holds up a dangerous-looking leather jacket--a balled-up clump of duct tape stuck to it. Pogue glances oddly at a small skull-and-crossbones label attached to the tape before throwing it aside, and holding the jacket up to himself. He turns tough.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

You do mostly surveillance work. Long nights. A low profile. Sticking to the shadows. Blending in.

He puts on a baseball cap. It seems to fill out the picture for him. Hunted. A loner.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

A lot of the time you don't know who to trust. Who's an enemy, who's a friend. Life is cheap. So are the clients. Especially the women.

Pogue turns to the recorder, frowning incredulously: Right. Suddenly he hears KNOCKING. Coming from the other room.

INT- BEDROOM/OFFICE.

Pogue snaps off the recorder, crosses to the door, and opens it, preparing to enter, but...

It's another closet. An ironing board falls out. Slightly embarrassed, Pogue stuffs it back in. Goes to the room's second door. Carefully opens it. Peers in, relieved.

INT- KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - MORNING.

His adjacent apartment living room. Pogue enters, scans the area. All new to him. Lots of windows. Cluttered.

The knocking continues, coming from the front door. Pogue goes to it, but before he can turn the knob, the door bursts open and a dark beautiful woman slips into the room:

WOMAN

(Panicked.)

They're following me!

Dark hair, tanned face, figure of a movie star. Sunglasses cover her eyes. Hat pulled down low. Pogue looks at her, surprised and not a little impressed.

WOMAN cont.

They want to kill me.

POGUE

Who?

But the woman rushes past him and into the bedroom. Pogue watches her go, curious.

INT- BEDROOM - MORNING.

He enters to see the woman closing the bedroom blinds. Glancing through them at the street.

WOMAN

Cornell, the FBI, I don't know.

Pogue moves toward the phone.

WOMAN cont.

What are you doing?!

POGUE

Calling the police.

WOMAN

You can't! I don't trust them! I need you.

POGUE

I'm not taking cases.

The woman throws her arms around Pogue and kisses him... passionately. Pogue responds, glancing at the handcuffs on the bedpost, putting two and two together.

POGUE cont.

Well, I can listen.

WOMAN

Don't be mad at me.

POGUE

I'm not.

WOMAN

You are!

POGUE

Really, no.

WOMAN

You can't lie to me.

Giving in:

POGUE

Alright, a little.

WOMAN

Pogue, you've got to believe I missed you. I didn't want you to suffer. Do you believe me?

POGUE

I believe you.

WOMAN

Did you think I was dead?

POGUE

Should I have?

WOMAN

Yes.

POGUE

Yes, I did think you were dead.

WOMAN

Will you kiss me?

POGUE

Sure.

They kiss. Suddenly the room explodes with gunfire! Windows shatter, blown apart! A line of bullet-bursts crisscross the wall! With lightning-speed, Pogue pulls the Woman down onto the floor. As suddenly as it started, it stops. Car skidding is heard outside.

Silence. Pogue lies on top of the woman, looking down into her eyes. She looks up into his. Pogue realizes he's hesitating in this position a bit too long. Clearing his throat:

POGUE

Run that by me again.

INT- POGUE'S BATHROOM - DAY.

Water running in a sink. The Woman splashes it onto her face. Relaxing. She calls into the living room:

WOMAN

I'm being blackmailed.

INTERCUT with Pogue in the LIVING ROOM, silently searching through her purse.

POGUE

By who?

He pulls out a gun. An outdated snub-nosed. He checks the chamber. Loaded.

WOMAN

I honestly don't know. I got a note telling me to come to L.A. If I didn't, they'd tell Cornell where I was.

Pogue pulls out a wallet. Finds her drivers license.

Meanwhile, the woman picks up the spilled cleanser and notices two framed pictures in the bathroom. Fading photos of Santa Monica Pier in the forties; men strolling in suspenders and hats, jackets over their arms. The woman looks at them bemused.

WOMAN cont.

I'm s'posed to phone them in two days. Set up a meeting.

The name on the license is "Beth Holly." Picture matches.

POGUE

Who followed you... (Venturing)
Beth?

The Woman looks up, confused:

WOMAN

You can use my real name, Pogue.

POGUE

Good, good, I will.

Pogue goes back to the purse.

WOMAN

I don't know. I didn't get a good look at him. Big.

In the purse: Package of salted nuts from an air flight. A Motel key to the "Voyager Motel." A fashion show program.

WOMAN cont.

By the way, how's Dolby doing?

POGUE

Dolby?
(Guessing.)
...Good.

WOMAN

Really? I heard he was shot.

POGUE

Ah, except for that.

WOMAN

And he was dying.

POGUE

Yeah, but he looks great. Jogging.
Playing tennis.

WOMAN

So he's out of the wheelchair?

POGUE

No, no.

But...?

WOMAN

POGUE
It's a new wheelchair. Just
invented. (Winces at his stupid
response.)

WOMAN
(Confused.) Oh.

POGUE
It's sad really. I don't like to
think about it much.

A folded note in the purse. Typed. It's addressed to:

"Sarah Novak."

Pogue repeats the name. It doesn't mean anything to him.
He begins to read the note: "We know who you are. Unless
you give us--" But he's interrupted by hard, loud knocking
on the front door. Pogue quickly stuffs the note back in
the purse, as SARAH NOVAK rushes out of the bathroom,
panicked:

SARAH
(Whispered.) Who's that?

Pogue shrugs.

LOUD VOICE (O.C.)
It's the police, Mr. Pogue!

POGUE
(To Sarah.) The police.

Hiding behind the bathroom door:

SARAH
Don't tell them I'm here! Don't--!
(Not sure how else to put it.)
I need you, Pogue.

Touched by her earnestness, Pogue nods. He motions for her
to be quiet as he opens the door. Just a crack.

EXT- ROOF TERRACE.

Two policemen. Grim giants.

POGUE
Yes?

POLICEMAN

Could you come outside, Mr. Pogue?

Pogue considers this, then follows orders. Outside...

POGUE

What is it?

POLICEMAN

Could you turn around, Mr. Pogue?

Pogue follows this order a bit more hesitantly.

POLICEMAN

Now could you put your hands behind
your back?

As soon as Pogue does so, the policemen slap handcuffs on
his wrists.

EXT- BOARDWALK - DAY.

Pogue is led down the circular staircase from his apartment
by the cops. The artist, Stanley, looks up from the
whitewashed wall; he's beginning to sketch a large mural:

STANLEY

Hey, Pogue.

The blind clarinetist, MORT, stops his ragtime solo:

MORT

How's it going, Pogue?

POGUE

Great.

MORT

Got that five bucks you owe me?

As the cops wave for a patrol car parked up the street,
Pogue tries to reach into his back pocket. Meanwhile,
Stanley, unphased by the cops, points to his sketching:

STANLEY

What do you think?

Staring up at it:

POGUE

What's it going to be?

STANLEY

The Mona Lisa.

Pogue finally pulls out a bill, and Mort grabs it before Pogue can see it's a twenty.

MORT
Want the joke of the day?

POGUE
Sure.

MORT
Why don't blind people skydive?

POGUE
Why?

MORT
Scares the shit out of their dogs.

Mort laughs; tries to high-five with Stanley... misses. The two go back to their tasks, as the patrol car pulls up, and the cops force Pogue in. Just as it pulls away, Pogue's red-face LANDLORD, seventy and bitter about it, runs out of a neighboring pizza joint, yelling:

LANDLORD
MR. POGUE! THE RENT!

But the patrol car turns the corner.

INT- PATROL CAR - DAY.

With one of the officers in the backseat:

POGUE
If it's not too much to ask...
What did I do?

Nothing from the officers. A sinister nothing.

CUT TO:

EXT- DOWNTOWN - DAY.

The patrol car turns up a pot-holed street, lined with decaying warehouse. An unappetizing part of town. It parks in front of an unpainted building. Lettering on the side too faded to read. Deserted. No other cars. Wind whistles.

The three Officers pull Pogue out of the back seat, and lead him toward the building. Yellow police tape crisscrosses the entrance. The officers tear through it.

INT - WAREHOUSE - DAY.

They lead Pogue to the center of the gymnasium-sized room. It's pitch black. Dripping water. No other sound.

OFFICER

Stay here.

The Officers leave, closing the warehouse door behind them.

Alone. Pogue looks around apprehensively. Only darkness. Then suddenly... The lights burst on!!! And...

CROWD

SURPRISE!!

The warehouse is filled with people--about fifty people--a dozen of them police officers in uniform. They all start into...

CROWD

"Happy birthday to you.
Happy Birthday to you...!"

Pogue can't believe it. He looks around at all the happy singing faces--not a single one familiar!--and he isn't sure whether he'd rather face police torture.

The arresting Officers, now smiling, return and unhandcuff Pogue. Meanwhile, leading the singing is a large black man, District Attorney, JOHN DOLBY. Grand and impressive, in the James Earl Jones mode, despite being confined by a neck brace and a motorized wheelchair. Smiling broadly, he yells to Pogue:

DOLBY

Told you I'd get you!

Pogue waves a 'naughty-naughty' finger back at him. The singing ends with applause. And Dolby starts a call for:

DOLBY cont.

Speech! Speech!

Panicked, Pogue shakes his head, trying to stop him, but the crowd picks up the call: "Speech! Speech!"

POGUE

No, no. Thank you.

Ignoring his humble protests, several cops stand Pogue up on a chair. The partyers quiet down and stare up at him expectantly. Pogue stares back. Fifty "strangers."

POGUE cont.

I just wanna thank everyone for
their effort here.

Pogue tries to step down, but the crowd goes "Noooo" and
forces him back up to say more. Pogue composes himself.

POGUE cont.

In looking around at all your
faces, each one brings back such...
(Lost)
...memories, that it's hard to know
where to begin...

COP

Start with the girls!

The other cops laugh. Slap backs. One yells at the first
COP:

ONE

Jealous, Bob?!

More laughter. Pogue takes the cue; at least he knows one
name:

POGUE

You ol' dog, Bob.

Bob smiles back, dopily: happy for the attention. Back to
the speech, Pogue begins to hit his stride:

POGUE cont.

Sure I could talk about Bob...
(Rushing through common names:)
...John, Susan, Mary and all the
others whose friendship means so
much to me, but that wouldn't be
fair. I'm reminded of a story...

"What story?" Pogue looks quizzical, his mouth moving ahead
of his brain.

POGUE cont.

It's a story about guts and
patriotism and hard times. And
about love. Let's not forget love.

The crowd nods thoughtfully.

POGUE cont.

You all know who I'm talking about,
so I won't embarrass him by
mentioning his name... But what
sacrifice, huh?

Pogue leads the light applause for the unnamed person's
sacrifice.

POGUE cont.

...But deep down we all make
sacrifices. There's a joke that
goes "Why don't blind people
skydive?"

Pogue wishes he could slap his mouth.

POGUE cont.

...Is it irrelevant? I don't think
so. Call me old-fashioned, but I
think overcoming handicaps,
grabbing the initiative, yes, even
skydiving blind, are the true
virtues.

A COP on crutches listens intently, his eyes wet.

POGUE cont.

But I'm sure many of you have your
own stories. Raise your hand if
you have your own story.

Several people nod humbly and raise their hands.

POGUE cont.

Because we're all in this together.
Which is just to say...
(Lost again.)
I have a rare group of friends.

The crowd goes "Awww" and Pogue steps down to their
applause, wiping sweat from his forehead.

CUT TO LATER:

Candles being put in a CAKE. Music. Partyers milling,
chatting.

Pogue moves nervously through the crowd, waving to people
who call out his name, returning winks, and handshakes. A
circle of lawyer-types pull him in, slap his back, hug him.
Pogue allows himself to be swept along.

LAWYER

You should've seen your face!

POGUE

I'll bet.

Two FRIENDLY COPS peer into the group:

FRIENDLY COP

Pogue, who's your friends?

An awkward silence. Everyone waits for Pogue to introduce them. Pogue is blank. Luckily a pretty SOCIALITE type interrupts:

SOCIALITE

Time to cut the cake!

She grabs his arm and pulls him away. As they move through the crowd, the Socialite smiles at Pogue. Pogue smiles back. Knowingly.

POGUE

Hi.

SOCIALITE

Hi.

POGUE

Good to see you again.

The Socialite smiles, nodding.

POGUE cont.

How long has it been?

The Socialite laughs:

SOCIALITE

A while.

Pogue isn't sure how he's being funny.

POGUE

I missed you.

She laughs again, charmed:

SOCIALITE

Yeah, I've missed you too.

POGUE

What are you doing now?

SOCIALITE

I'm the caterer.
(Reaches out her hand to shake.)
My name's Nancy, by the way.

She laughs. Pogue shakes her hand. Suddenly two hands fly over his eyes. The female owner of the hands:

FEMALE

Guess who?

Pause. Pogue just stands there.

POGUE

Ummm. I'm not very good at this.

FEMALE

Com'on, guess.

Dolby steers up to them, laughing:

DOLBY

Let the man go, Judy.

Saved:

POGUE

"Judy"?

JUDY--a pretty redhead in a power suit with some aggressive shoulder pads--lets go of Pogue pouting:

JUDY

Dolby!, no fair.

She leans forward and whispers in Pogue's ear:

JUDY cont.

Eleven-thirty.

...and rushes off. Pogue stares after her, unsure what this cryptic message means.

DOLBY

How you doing, Pogue?

POGUE

Pretty good...
(Suddenly connecting.) "Dolby."

DOLBY

Yeah?

POGUE

I talked to a friend of ours this morning.

DOLBY

Who's that?

POGUE

Sarah Novak.

Dolby becomes immediately unsettled. Making sure no one overheard, he looks around--his wheelchair motor whirring. With a fatherly nod, he motions Pogue to sit. Quietly:

DOLBY

Listen, Pogue. I've seen a lot of innocent people killed in my time. Hell, I'm haunted by them constantly. Getting hit myself gave me time to think: Maybe I didn't do the right thing, maybe not soon enough. But Sarah's dead, Pogue. You're alive.

Pogue covers his surprise. Dead?

DOLBY cont.

Stop torturing yourself with it.
Stop "talking" to Sarah.
Concentrate on putting that bastard Cornell in jail...
You nervous about Thursday?

POGUE

Thursday?

Thinking that Pogue is being jokingly unconcerned, Dolby laughs heartily, smacks him on the back. Pogue pretend-laughs back.

DOLBY cont.

Just remember. Be yourself on cross-examination. Tell it like you know.

Catching on:

POGUE

Like I know.

DOLBY

Right, counselor?

...Dolby asks of a man passing by. DONALD ROSENHEIM. Hard-edged Assistant D.A. New York accent. Prematurely bald. Tough in court. Nervous in his private life.

ROSENHEIM

Right. No one's been able to get to Cornell till now. People either wind up dead, bought, or...
(With a glance toward Dolby.)
...in a wheelchair.

DOLBY

(Patting Pogue's back.) But not you, Pogue.

Pogue looks down. Notices he's standing in the middle of a police outline of a dead body. Dolby explains:

DOLBY cont.

It was too late to rent a hall.

Dolby and Rosenheim laugh, and Pogue tries to join in, as two PARAMEDICS carry a body-bag out in the background. Rosenheim pulls Pogue away, steering him toward a private corner:

ROSENHEIM

Pogue, I need to ask a favor. As a friend.

POGUE

Sure.

ROSENHEIM

My fiance's cheating on me.

Pogue looks around, unsure how he's supposed to react.

ROSENHEIM cont.

I know you'll say, "Rosenheim, you're paranoid--"

POGUE

Nooo.

ROSENHEIM

But I want to hire you.
I need to hire you.

POGUE

I'm really not taking--

ROSENHEIM

I'm desperate, Pogue.
It's making me crazy!

POGUE

I'm on vacation.

ROSENHEIM

Just find out who she's sleeping
with, that's all I ask.

They are interrupted by a tall, collegiate-looking man. DR.
TONY DOOVER. Athletic, polished, sure of himself. An
overgrown frat-boy.

DOOVER

(To Rosenheim.) May I borrow the
birthday boy for a sec?

INT- WAREHOUSE RESTROOM - DAY.

Dr. Doover practically pushes Pogue into the restroom.
Vacant.

DOOVER

You're s'posed to be resting,
Pogue.

POGUE

You think I want--

DOOVER

Open your mouth.

Doover checks his mouth with a pocket flashlight and a
tongue depressor.

DOOVER cont.

I told you I'd keep your amnesia
confidential because of the trial,
but if you're gonna' be out making
an ass of yourself--!

POGUE

I already said--!

Doover sticks a THERMOMETER in his mouth.

DOOVER

Turn your head.

He shines a light into Pogue's ear.

DOOVER cont.

You need some stability. You need to relax. Find a woman and settle down: someone who'll help you get over this.

POGUE

(Mumbling with the thermometer.)
Ah wam' nmothing dhetter--

DOOVER

Look up.
(Checks his eyes.)
'Cuz if you keep up a life of high adventure, this amnesia's gonna be permanent. Look down. The best place for you right now is at home. Familiar surroundings, people you know.

Pogue explodes, yanking the thermometer from his mouth:

POGUE

I'M SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE I KNOW!--
that's the problem! Who are they?!
Who are you?!

Taking pity on him, Doover hands him a small NOTEPAD and PEN. Pogue starts a crib-sheet.

DOOVER

I'm your doctor. Anthony Doover.
We're friends. We play tennis
every Sunday.

Pogue takes notes, gobbling it up.

POGUE

And the guy I was talking to?

DOOVER

Rosenheim. Donald Rosenheim. The
Assistant D.A. You worked together
on the force.

POGUE

(Writes.)
The guy in the wheelchair?

DOOVER

John Dolby. He's the D.A.

POGUE

(Writes.) And Sarah Novak?

Doover hesitates. Turns grim.

DOOVER

Don't think about her, Pogue.
You're feeling guilty about it.

POGUE

About what?

DOOVER

You'll never get over your amnesia
'til you come to terms with what
happened.

POGUE

What happened?

But a MAN in a business suit, with an earring in one ear,
enters the bathroom. Doover whispers to Pogue:

DOOVER

Just get home and get to bed.

He exits, as Pogue sighs.

Pogue goes to a urinal. A SECOND MAN, also in business
suit, and with earring, enters the restroom. Although there
are ten urinals, the two men go to the urinals on both sides
of Pogue.

Pogue looks askance at this oddity: three men standing in a
row. He looks down. Both men point guns at him.

FIRST BODYGUARD

Don't move.

A pause. Pogue doesn't move.

FIRST BODYGUARD cont.

Alright. Zip up.

EXT- WAREHOUSE - DAY.

Business suits on both sides of Pogue, the triplets walk
from the warehouse to a nearby idling LIMOUSINE.

INT- LIMOUSINE - DAY.

In the backseat of the limo sits PHILIP CORNELL, a respected
industrialist with a well-hidden dark side. John Gotti
reinvented as Jean Getty. Suave. Tasteful. Always polite.
Plays dirty only when he has to. Has two great passions:
money and art.

Pogue is placed across from Cornell who cracks and eats nuts. The car starts off with a jolt, and Pogue slides into him.

CORNELL
(Helping Pogue up.) We've never
met formally, have we Mr. Pogue?

Returning to his seat:

POGUE
If you mean by formally, "at
gunpoint"? No.

CORNELL
Philip Cornell.

They shake hands. Pogue notices that Cornell has no thumb on his shaking hand.

POGUE
You've got no thumb, Mr. Cornell.

Bodyguard #1 reaches across and slugs Pogue in the stomach. Pogue doubles over. Calm, as if it hadn't happened, Cornell takes a hot towel from a steam cabinet, and wipes his hands:

CORNELL
My Dad loved art, Mr. Pogue. He
loved art so much that when I was
kidnapped as a little boy of eight,
and the kidnappers threatened to
kill me if my Dad didn't surrender
his Rubens' "Descent From the
Cross"--a surpassing work, by the
way--My Dad called their bluff.
(Pause.)
The kidnappers sent my thumb back
to him in a box.

Groaning, recovering, but still unable to help himself:

POGUE
Bet your mom loved that.

He quickly guards his stomach from another slug, but it doesn't come.

CORNELL
(Proud.) The kidnappers were
captured, and the Rubens was
undamaged.

POGUE

And who needs another hitchhiker?

Pogue glances cautiously at Bodyguard #1, but #2 is the one who slugs him.

POGUE cont.

Could they stop doing that?

CORNELL

Your testimony on Monday, Mr. Pogue... I would be most grateful if you could see your way clear to have a convenient loss of memory.

Pogue looks twice at Cornell: Hitting very close to home. But Cornell continues on, handing Pogue a document.

CORNELL cont.

This is a statement explaining that you were mistaken. You never saw me at the crime scene. In turn, I could offer you this.

Cornell hands Pogue a check. Reading it, Pogue has to clear his throat, and point skeptically:

POGUE

Is that a comma?

Cornell nods. And offers Pogue a pen. Pogue looks down at the document, tempted.

POGUE cont.

Can I think about it?

CORNELL

Of course...

Cornell takes back the check--Pogue watches it go longingly --and motions for the driver to slow down.

CORNELL

...Till tomorrow morning. Give us time to make... (A threat.)
...other plans.

EXT- STREET - DAY.

Pogue is dumped out onto the street. The car skids off, and Pogue sits up, watching it go.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)

This is bad.

CUT TO:

INT- POGUE'S APARTMENT - DAY.

The snazzy fashion show PROGRAM from Sarah's purse is left on Pogue's desk. Under the show's theme "What's New?!" is written: "meet me at eight --sarah."

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)
You've gotten involved with a Sarah Novak.

A file marked "Sarah Novak" is pulled out of Pogue's office filing cabinet.

POGUE NARRATION (V.O.)
She's either in trouble and needs your help. Or she's dead and in a remarkable state of preservation.

We realize the narration is coming from Pogue; recorder in hand, he adds to his tape for the next morning, as he sorts through the clippings in the file:

POGUE cont.
Sarah Novak was Philip Cornell's lover. Inseparable for five years. Until she left him.

Picture of Philip Cornell and Sarah Novak, her face distorted by a hat and sunglasses, on a society page.

POGUE cont.
Afraid that Cornell intended to kill her for what she knew about his illegal activities, Sarah decided to testify against him.

Photo of Sarah exiting a courtroom shielding her face from reporter.

POGUE cont.
She hired a private investigator to protect herself...

Photo of Sarah again leaving a courtroom, but this time on the arm of... Pogue.

POGUE cont.
...Yours truly.

Meanwhile, Pogue's dog begins to whine, standing two feet to the left of his doggie bowl, biting at the air.

Pogue reaches out a foot, nudges the bowl over, under his mouth. The dog again moves two feet to the left of it. Pogue shoves the bowl to the wall. The dog, trying to move to the left again, hits the wall, and lets it guide him down to the bowl. He eats gratefully. And we CUT TO:

INT- CLOSET - DAY.

Pogue, program in hand, opens the door to his closet, noticing his various hats: a baseball cap, a stetson, a racing cap. He runs his hand through his hanging clothes, all similarly varied. The wardrobe of a collector.

POGUE NARRATION

(Continuing, but now in Voice Over)
Sarah testified before a Grand Jury
that Cornell's art business was
illegal. The FBI was brought in,
and Cornell was indicted.

Pogue holds a leather jacket up to himself. Looks at himself in the mirror. Inappropriately tough.

POGUE NARRATION

Cornell knew that without Sarah the
FBI's case would fall apart. As
her bodyguard, protecting her
became very important to you.
Sarah became very important to you.

Behind the leather jacket, he finds a suit, apparently his only one--the pant cuffs temporarily hemmed with pins and tape. Pogue sighs: Oh well, it'll have to do. He holds it up to himself; he stands taller, more dignified.

POGUE NARRATION

A week before the trial, Sarah was
killed. A car-bomb. You were
blown clear. The only witness...

Pogue glances at the program. Then turns to his dog, still eating. His dog looks up at him. A philosophical moment.

POGUE

Why isn't she dead?

CUT TO:

EXT- LOS ANGELES NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM - NIGHT.

A quaint older brick building with a monstrous modern addition, oddly thrown together in that particularly Los Angeles way. "What's New?!" trumpet the banners.

INT- MUSEUM FOYER - NIGHT.

The cavernous foyer is crowded with people watching dozens of models strolling up and down runways, on both sides of a giangantic dinosaur skeleton.

Pogue squeezes through the standing crowd, looking for Sarah. He freezes, surprised to see...

Sarah on the runway. She's one of the models. Cool. Reserved. Her face MTV white. She turns at the end of the walk, and sees Pogue. Breaking out of her reserve, she nods to him, and covertly gestures toward the back of the stage.

INT- BACKSTAGE.

A gap between the stage and the Museum proper. The models rush in and out. Pogue waits for Sarah. She approaches, whispering:

SARAH

He's watching me.

And passes as if not knowing him.

INT- DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT.

Mass chaos. Every model for herself in this jerry-built dressing room: it's actually where the surplus exhibits are housed (stuffed water buffaloes, etc). Each model is given only a small space and chair; all blase about their nakedness, even though some male designers are present.

Pogue enters briskly. He stops. Glances around. Getting an eyeful. He begins to back out, but sees there's no commotion at his presence. Trying hard to act casual--all part of the job--Pogue crosses toward Sarah's corner.

Seeing him, Sarah is suddenly demure, covering herself. She isn't sure why she feels this way. And Pogue senses something too. He turns away, trying to give her privacy, which puts him in the line of fire of several other changing models.

SARAH

What did the police want?

POGUE

It's my birthday.

She nods: I know, and reaches into her purse, handing him a present. Pogue is surprised; it doesn't seem like her.

SARAH
Happy birthday.

POGUE
Thanks.

He opens it. A pair of b/w checkered suspenders. Very forties. Pogue looks at them, curious.

SARAH
It seemed... you.

POGUE
How's that?

SARAH
(Shrugs.)
Black and white.

Pogue tries to fit this into who he is. He asks:

POGUE
Like your anklet?

Sarah is surprised, looks up at his back: How'd he know about that?

SARAH
Always the detective?

Pogue shrugs humbly. Although we can see he actually spies her--can't help but spy her--in a mirror on the opposite wall. As she adjusts her antique ANKLET WATCH:

POGUE
How do you tell time?

SARAH
With difficulty. It's broken.

POGUE
Why don't you get it fixed?

SARAH
My grandmother engraved on the back
"Vivi ogni momento al suo massimo."

POGUE
Ah yes, italian.

SARAH

"Live every second to the fullest."
I'm doing my part.
(Turns to him.)
The clasp?

Pogue turns to connect the clasp on her necklace, as Sarah wriggles into a stunning evening gown. Pogue is taken aback; she looks incredible. As he struggles with the necklace:

POGUE

Can I ask a question?

SARAH

Sure.

POGUE

Why aren't you dead?

Sarah frowns, looks around nervously. Her necklace clasped, she leaves her corner and rushes through the dressing room. Pogue comes up beside her, grabs her arm. She turns to him angrily, but Pogue gives her the news photo of the burning car. Quiet:

SARAH

It wasn't me. It was a double.

POGUE

Why?

SARAH

Can we handle this later?

POGUE

Tell me now.

SARAH

The FBI. They knew Cornell was going to hit me. So they put an agent in just in case. They didn't expect...

She nods toward the photo. Someone calls to Sarah:

SOMEONE

You're on, Beth!

Sarah tries to leave, but Pogue holds her arm. He needs to hear it all.

SARAH
I became Beth Holly. Of San
Francisco. A model.

EXT- BACKSTAGE.

Sarah rushes out of the dressing room, Pogue beside her:

POGUE
What do I call you now, Sarah or
Beth?

SARAH
(As if it's obvious.)
Sarah.
(A serious whisper.)
Someone's threatening to tell
Cornell I'm still alive unless I
give them something.

Sarah stops, puts on a stage face.

POGUE
What? Give them what?

She hands him a WALKMAN and saunters onto stage. Pogue watches her make the circuit of the runway. She's stunning. There's something mysterious about her. The other models are just cold. But Sarah seems elusive, untouchable.

He looks down at the walkman. It's the kind museums use for self-guided tours. Pogue puts on the headphones, and pushes 'play.'

WALKMAN NARRATION
On display at the end of the Hall
of Archeology you'll find the
oldest coin we now know to exist,
"The Coin of Royal Power."

Pogue looks up confused as Sarah momentarily returns from her circuit of the runway. She thrusts a POSTCARD at him and returns to the stage before he can ask anything.

Pogue looks at the postcard. It's of a coin: a tear-drop of gold about the size of a quarter, with a small hole near its top. Crudely-made but stunning, it has a finely-drawn bull and lion pressed into its surface.

WALKMAN NARRATION

Dating from the year 650 B.C., the coin is customarily held under the tightest security in China's Forbidden City, but was loaned to the Natural History Museum in a rare cultural exchange last year.

Sarah, suddenly beside him again, interrupts. She only has a second before she needs to make another circuit with two other models. A rushed whisper:

SARAH

He stole it.

POGUE

Cornell?

SARAH

He was obsessed with it. You know he has every valuable coin in the world. He had to have this one too.

POGUE

That's why you went to the FBI?

Sarah hesitates, then shakes her head.

SARAH

I took it from him.

Pogue turns to her stunned, but Sarah--saved by the bell--is pulled back on stage by her two co-models. With renewed interest, Pogue returns to the headphones:

WALKMAN NARRATION

It is named the "Coin of Royal Power" due to the symbols of royalty: the lion and the bull. Its estimated value is 7 million dollars.

Pogue looks up, whistles. And stares sternly at Sarah as she returns from the stage. Whispering defensively:

SARAH

I was angry. I wanted to hurt him. So I took it. He came after me, so I went to the FBI. I promised to testify about Cornell's business if they protected me.

POGUE

Now the blackmailers want the coin?
(Sarah nods.)
Give it to them.

SARAH

I don't have it.

POGUE

Who does?

SARAH

You do.

Pogue's mouth forms an outraged "What?" but before he can get it out Sarah is back on stage.

INT- EXHIBIT ROOM - NIGHT.

A massive whale-like skeleton, ivory-white in the darkness. It's suspended from the ceiling of a echoey-quiet exhibit room. Below...

Pogue and Sarah lean against a stuffed bear, whispering.

SARAH

The morning before the explosion I gave you something to hide. Remember? I didn't tell you what it was. I couldn't. I just asked you to hide it, and you said you had the perfect place... Remember?

Pogue looks off: uh-oh.

SARAH cont.

Pogue?

POGUE

Right.

SARAH

You said one word... "Baby."

POGUE

What...
(An afterthought.)
...honey?

SARAH

No, that was it. "Baby." Remember?

POGUE

Baby?

SARAH

Uh-hum. You wouldn't tell me what it meant.

Pogue think, his stomach queasy.

SARAH cont.

What's wrong?

Pogue shakes his head, nothing. But suddenly Sarah looks over his head, and gasps! Pogue looks up too.

Through the ribs of the whale, on a balcony ringing the room, a face appears! A person. A massive six-foot-five person.

INT- MUSEUM ROTUNDA - NIGHT.

Pogue and Sarah race across a cavernous deco rotunda:

POGUE

That's who's following you?

Sarah nods as they exit. Meanwhile on the balcony above, Hendrix follows, grimly pacing himself.

INT- BACKSTAGE - NIGHT.

The stage entrance. Pogue and Sarah weave through a flock of models preparing for the grand finale:

SARAH

I recognize him. His name's Hendrix. (Intently.) He's FBI.

Pogue begins to turn, but Sarah stops him. A soft voice we haven't heard from her before:

SARAH

Be careful. I need you.

Seeing how vulnerable she is, Pogue nods then turns away as Sarah and the rest of the models return to the stage. The crowd applauds wildly. Meanwhile, Pogue enters...

INT- HALL OF MAMMALS - NIGHT.

...a dark hall filled with brightly-lit dioramas. Pogue moves casually past an African scene of GAZELLES being stalked, and looks back to see...

...HENDRIX following, moving past a diorama of the stalking LEOPARD. Hendrix has two prominent features: a boxer's

crew-cut and a perpetual sneer. Pogue comes to a scene of VULTURES eating a carcass, and hurries on into...

INT- SKELETON ROOM - NIGHT.

...an exhibit room filled with prehistoric skeletons. Pogue weaves through them, moving faster, passing several MUSEUM WORKERS meticulously assembling some bones on a skeleton.

Hendrix is still on Pogue's tail. His jaw set. He breezes past the skeleton which shatters as he accidentally nudges its ribcage. He continues on, and we hear the thunder of the skeleton collapsing behind him.

Pogue, seeing a row of doors ahead, makes for one. Enters.

INT- BACKSTAGE ROOM - NIGHT.

A small backstage area. Dark. Vacant. Pogue crosses quickly to the facing door. Opens it, and...

INT- STAIRWELL - NIGHT.

...begins to exit when a GUN is lowered at his head. Hendrix. Aiming right between Pogue's eyes.

POGUE

This isn't the way out?

Hendrix shakes his head grimly.

POGUE cont.

Well, I'll just...

Click. Hendrix cocks the trigger. Backs Pogue into...

INT- BACKSTAGE ROOM - NIGHT.

...the backstage room, and kicks the door shut.

HENDRIX

I told Novak I'd kill her if she went to the police.

POGUE

I'm not the police.

HENDRIX

That's why I'm gonna' kill you instead.

Pause.

POGUE

Your logic's impeccable.

Pogue notices Hendrix's tie, the knot mangled into a large clump.

POGUE cont.

Who did that?

Insecure, Hendrix glances down at it. Lightning-fast, Pogue spins, and knocks the gun away with a roundhouse kick! A frozen pause. Pogue takes a moment, surprised by, and admiring, his own instinctive speed. Hendrix is amazed too.

Coming to themselves, Hendrix dives toward the gun and Pogue races through a third door...

INT- STAGE.

...opening onto a vacant stage. A theater curtain takes up one side. Pogue dashes through the break in it, and...

INT- LECTURE ROOM AUDITORIUM.

...finds himself on an auditorium stage, facing one hundred scholars. They all look up at him, and begin to applaud. A beaming LEADER announces into the podium microphone:

LEADER

He made it after all!

The Leader proudly shakes Pogue's hand, and motions him toward the microphone. Pogue looks back toward the break in the curtain. Decides to stay with the Leader.

POGUE

Thanks.

With that, the auditorium lights are dimmed; a slide appears on the large screen behind Pogue; and the Leader hands him a slide-changing-CLICKER.

Pogue looks for a way out, but Hendrix appears at the back of the auditorium. An evil smile on his face.

The first slide appears: "December 18, 1988." Pogue looks up at it. Turns to the microphone:

POGUE

December 18, 1988.

A date like any other...

(Dramatic pause.)

Or was it?

Pogue clicks. The next slide. A map of Northern Africa, with a red line showing a route of some kind.

POGUE cont.

This is the path we took.

A good path. A path of many moods.

The Leader hands Pogue a long pointer. Thanking him, Pogue points toward the beginning of the red line at the coast:

POGUE cont.

We started... Here. And...

He runs the pointer along to the end of the line.

POGUE cont.

...We made it. Here.

(For good measure.)

Many thought we wouldn't make it.

He clicks. A slide of an African tribesman, eating something and laughing at the camera.

POGUE cont.

This is one of the people who laughed at us.

Sitting with the audience, the Leader looks at his assistant: not exactly what he expected.

POGUE cont.

Later, he died of dysentery.

The next slide: a pit of some kind.

POGUE cont.

His tribe buried him here.

The next slide: the same pit but now--with people beside it, and scaffolding in it--we see that it's actually an archaeological dig.

POGUE cont.

Too deep?

Maybe. But these were a simple people. With simple customs.

But much joy..

The auditorium audience exchanges curious glances.

Pogue clicks. Several archaeological treasures: some ancient tools, a broken vase.

POGUE cont.
This, I think, is...
self-explanatory.

Click. The next slide: "1210 B.C.--1180 B.C."

POGUE cont.
These dates are very important to
remember. They reflect a different
time, a different place. Exotic?
Yes and no. Who's to say who's the
savage? Not me... Not me.
(A pause.)
There's a joke that goes, "Why
don't..."

But Pogue sees Hendrix at the back of the room getting
restless. Beginning to move up the aisle.

POGUE cont.
I think it was my illustrious
colleague, Dr. Howard, from the
University of Geneva, who said it
best.

Hendrix moves to an empty seat near the front. Sits.

POGUE cont.
But I should let Dr. Howard tell
his own story.

As Hendrix reaches into his coat for his gun, Pogue sharply
whips his pointer toward him:

POGUE cont.
Doctor...

Hendrix looks up surprised. A rabbit caught in a headlight
beam. Pogue begins to applaud for Hendrix. He gestures for
the other scholars to join in. They gradually do.

Hendrix scowls at Pogue. Stands. Begins to back out of the
auditorium.

POGUE cont.
Where are you going Doctor?
Oh yes, Dr. Howard wanted to lead
us on a walking tour of the
neolithic exhibits. Please.

Pogue moves into the audience, helps several scholars to
their feet.

INT- SKELETON ROOM - NIGHT.

Hendrix retreats. Makes his way through the forest of prehistoric skeletons. A second later, the mass of scholars enter the sculpture room. Pogue leading the way:

POGUE

There he goes. Doctor!

Hendrix looks back. Sees the one-hundred scholars following him. He picks up speed. Pogue encourages the scholars:

POGUE cont.

Please. The Doctor's on a tight schedule.

The Scholars pick up speed, chasing Hendrix who races past the skeleton again, now being reassembled, and again accidentally nudges its ribcage; we hear it collapse.

Pogue smiles, watching the scholars go.

EXT- POGUE'S APARTMENT BALCONY - NIGHT.

The night sky. A bright full moon. Pogue's stoic dog stands on the apartment balcony, snapping at the moon, trying to catch it in his mouth.

INT- POGUE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Apartment messier than usual. Glass on the floor from the shattered windows. Pictures removed from the walls. A chair overturned. Someone has searched it. And whoever it is, is still there.

It's Pogue, jacket off. He digs through his closet, finding a LARGE PICKLE JAR filled with coins. Shoulders slumping at the job ahead, he unscrew the top and begins to search through.

CUT TO LATER:

A pile of coins. Pogue slides the last into the pile. No "Coin of Royal Power.

CUT TO LATER:

Pogue sifts through the clutter in his desk drawer, looking for the coin. It's taking longer than it should: each new document and trinket brings Pogue closer to who he is.

A BOTTLE of SCOTCH in the top drawer; he smiles nostalgically (Pogue as hard-boiled detective). Under it,

he finds a MEDAL OF HONOR from the police department with his name on it. A flicker of pride, and Pogue moves on to...

A certificate: A DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE from the police department. His pride evaporates. He reads below: "For striking a superior officer." Pogue quickly moves on.

A tape marked "Testimony" in a small hand-held recorder. And a tangle of surveillance equipment: a pair of EYEGLASSES connected to a small TRANSMITTER DEVICE; Pogue flips a switch on its side and the transmitter cries with acoustical feedback. He talks into it: "Hello, hello" and hears it echoed through the glasses.

He shoves this stuff into the pocket of his coat hanging on the desk chair, and comes to...A GUN.

He turns it over and over in his hand. It feels both natural and unnatural. He raises it as if to shoot, but the barrel flops open, bullets rattling to the floor.

CUT TO LATER:

Pogue finds some car keys, connected to a Mercedes Benz medallion. Curious, he goes to the back window of the bedroom, and looks down on...

EXT- CAR PORT - NIGHT.

...the apartment's car port, and a glittering, mint-condition MERCEDES parked there.

Pogue smiles, awed. Unfortunately, a neighbor unlocks the luxury car and drives it off, revealing a deteriorating, piss-yellow Mercedes behind it. His car.

INT- APARTMENT.

Pogue's smile sinks.

CUT TO LATER:

Search over, Pogue slumps on the couch, scanning the apartment, demoralized. Nothing found. His eye catches on the WASTE BASKET. What the hell. One last stab. He digs through the discarded paper, food, and finds...

A large crumpled ENVELOPE. It's his address on it, but instead of his name is written "Baby"! Pogue eagerly begins to make a note of the return address on the envelope--"984 Ocean Blvd. Santa Monica"--when he freezes, hearing something in the bathroom.

A klunk!

Pogue quickly turns off his desk light. Reaches for the gun on the desk. It's not there! Somewhere under a pile of papers and files. He frantically searches for it, lifting files, paper, coins. Finds it! But there's no bullets. He quickly scrambles under the desk for the scattered bullets.

Loading one in, he starts toward the bathroom, his dog creeping along the floor beside him.

INT- BATHROOM.

Dark. Gun poised, Pogue flips the light switch. No one. Only the cleanser again spilled on the floor. Relieved, Pogue puts the gun away, and as he picks the cleanser up, we see a dark figure slip from the living room into the bedroom!

INT- BEDROOM.

Pogue returns to the dark bedroom. Exhausted, he sits on the edge of the bed. The figure scoots up behind him, throwing her hands over his eyes:

JUDY

Guess who?

Pogue almost jumps out of his skin:

POGUE

JUDY!

JUDY

Surprise!

POGUE

What are you doing here?!

JUDY

(Points to her watch.)
Eleven-thirty on the dot.
(Grinning.) Ready?

POGUE

I'm--! For what?

Judy clears her throat. Begins to sing:

JUDY

"Happy Birthday to you..."
(She flings a stocking at him.)
"Happy Birthday to you..."
(Another stocking.)
"Happy birthday dear Po-ogue..."

She interrupts her singing, noticing the SUSPENDERS Sarah gave to Pogue:

JUDY cont.

(A criticism.)

Cute.

(Then finishes:)

"Happy birthday to you."

(Frisly pink panties sail past.)

In the dim moonlight coming through the window, Judy is naked except for a L.A.P.D. t-shirt.

JUDY cont.

Hope you don't mind, I borrowed a shirt.

POGUE

This isn't a good idea, Judy.

JUDY

(Laughing.) That's not what you said last night.

This pulls Pogue up short. Oh! He glances at the bedpost. The handcuffs are gone. Pogue backs up as Judy advances.

JUDY cont.

(Playful.)

I don't look as good tonight?

POGUE

That's not the point.

JUDY

What is the point?

POGUE

The point is...

Pogue thinks about it, and...

A passionate kiss. Judy and Pogue all over each other, speaking in steamy whispers:

JUDY

Say it, Pogue. Say it.

POGUE

What?

JUDY

Like last night.

POGUE
Last night. Right.

JUDY
What's wrong?

POGUE
Let's pretend there was no last
night.

JUDY
You animal.

Pogue growls, relieved. In the midst of passion:

JUDY cont.
Oh baby... baby.

Pogue's eyes open wide. He stops:

POGUE
What?

Judy gives him a weird look. Pogue realizes how he sounds:

POGUE cont.
Skip it.

Backing away, Judy reaches behind her, and pulls out the
pair of HANDCUFFS, rattling them. A serious stare:

JUDY
You know what to do?

Pogue takes a second, then tries to nod with some certainty.

JUDY cont.
(Overcome.) Then do it.

He reaches for the handcuffs. But Judy stares at him, as if
he performed a major social gaffe:

JUDY cont.
What are you doing?

Pogue stops, obviously not the right thing. He changes
tacts, moving his hand against the bedpost, ready for Judy
to handcuff him.

But Judy just stares at him. All passion gone.

EXT- VENICE BOARDWALK - NIGHT.

Judy angrily huffs down the circular staircase from Pogue's apartment. Wearing the L.A.P.D. t-shirt. Shoes in her hand. Pogue follows, apologetic:

POGUE

Judy, listen--

JUDY

Next time, try not to confuse me
with your other girlfriends!

She rushes to her car, skids off. Pogue's shoulders slump: A long day. Suddenly he hears... Ringing. Coming from his apartment. Pogue turns, charges up the stairs...

INT- APARTMENT.

He bursts into his living room, picking up the phone. But it still rings. From his office/bedroom!

He dashes in, but where's the phone? He looks around. Listens helplessly as an unseen ANSWERING MACHINE picks up. A FEMALE CALLER, not Sarah:

FEMALE CALLER (V.O.)

Pogue, do you ever listen to your
messages?

It's coming from the desk. The bottom drawer. Locked! Pogue searches the desk top for the keys as the female caller continues:

FEMALE CALLER cont.

It's Paula. I'll be home tonight;
I have the baby.

Pogue freezes at "Baby." Then dives for the drawer, tears it from its hinges.

FEMALE CALLER cont.

Let's talk this out.

And "click"--just as Pogue yells into the phone:

POGUE

HELLO!

No answer. Pogue kicks the desk, but then quickly rewinds the answering machine tape and grabs a pad and pen to take down numbers. A new source of clues.

MALE CALLER #1

Hey stranger. You drop off the face of the earth or what? Give me a call.

Click. Pogue looks down at the answering machine: Great. Very helpful.

MALE CALLER #2

Hi, Pogue. It's me. Call me sometime. I'm at the new number.

Click. Pogue rolls his eyes.

MALE CALLER #3

Pogue, it's crucial you call me today. I'm at the office.

Click. The 'Baby' message comes on again: "Pogue, do you ever listen to your messages? It's Paula..." Pogue drops his head into his hands.

FADE OUT.

EXT- VENICE BEACH - MORNING.

An idyllic beach scene: sand, surf, beach towels, sunshine. And it's all painted. Backing out, we see it's an updated backdrop for the Mona Lisa mural; the L.A. scene replaces the traditional Renaissance mountains.

POGUE NARRATION

It's Tuesday morning.
Your name is M.L. Pogue.
Maurice Leonard.
Pogue is fine.

Stanley has just started painting Mona Lisa herself, saving the face for last, while Mort sits beside him, warming up with scales.

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

Same as the first morning: Pogue is sitting up in bed, listening to the tape. His memory lost. His face says it all: I'm not ready for this!

POGUE NARRATION

It's called Korsakoff Waking Syndrome. A recurring amnesia. Every time you go to sleep, you lose your memory.

What?! Hearing this, Pogue begins to snap off the recorder to rewind when the phone rings. He picks up.

POGUE

Hello.

SARAH

Pogue, it's me. Sarah.

No idea who she is, but trying to sound cheery:

POGUE

...Hi.

SARAH

Did you get rid of him last night?
Was there any problem?

A pause. Still cheery:

POGUE

...Could you hold on one sec'?

Receiver to his chest, Pogue scrambles through the "Post-it" reminders on his desk: "CAR KEYS" attached to the Mercedes keys; and "NAMES TO REMEMBER" with the crib-sheet Doover helped him start. Each drawer has a post-it note to remind him what's inside.

Suddenly, Pogue hears "Sarah" being mentioned on the still-running tape. He spins toward it, ears cocked:

POGUE NARRATION

--Sarah Novak. Afraid that Philip Cornell intended to kill her for what she knew about his operation, Sarah hired you to protect her.

Oh. Pogue snaps off the recorder and turns back to the receiver:

POGUE

I'm fine. Sarah, are you safe?
Does Cornell know where you are?

SARAH

(Confused.)
Pogue? Cornell thinks I'm dead!

POGUE

Right...
One second.

Back to the recorder:

POGUE NARRATION

...But Sarah made a deal with the FBI, and they made it look like she was dead after a failed bomb attack, so she could testify against Cornell.

Pogue prepares to go back to the receiver, but then hears:

POGUE NARRATION cont.

But now a FBI man named Hendrix is blackmailing her, threatening to tell Cornell she's still alive unless she gives him a valuable coin that Cornell stole from the Natural History Museum, and Sarah stole from him and gave to you to hide...

Pogue's eyes narrow at the complexity: What?

POGUE NARRATION cont.

But you hid it with either someone called "Baby" or a place that has something to do with "Babies."

Pogue double-takes at this absurdity. The second phone in the living room rings. Pogue returns to the receiver:

POGUE

Sarah, can I get back to you?

SARAH

Pogue? Are you alright?

POGUE

I'm fine. I'll get back to you.

SARAH

No, I'll come by tonight.

He hangs up, and rushes to the door to the living room, opening it. An ironing board falls out. The closet. Pogue shoves it back in, hurries through the second door...

INT- LIVING ROOM.

...and grabs the phone in the living room:

POGUE cont.

Hello.

LANDLORD (V.O.)
I want my money, Mr. Pogue!

POGUE
Who's this?

LANDLORD (V.O.)
YOUR LANDLORD! And don't tell me
you've forgotten again!

Pogue sees a checkbook on the kitchen bar:

POGUE
How much is it?

LANDLORD (V.O.)
(Tired of telling him.)
EIGHT-HUNDRED!

POGUE
Fine. I'll send you a check.

LANDLORD (V.O.)
NO! I'm coming over this second!

The Landlord hangs up in a huff. Pogue writes a check as he struggles to dress, putting on socks, shoes. There's a loud KLUNK! Pogue looks up: What was that? A second later, his sad dog comes through the dog door.

Petting him, Pogue reaches into his closet for a belt, and sees a pair of b/w checkered suspenders. Without even thinking, he puts them on.

The doorbell. Pogue seals the check into an envelope, and goes to the front door, opening it. Standing there, polished and threatening as ever, is...

Philip Cornell. His two bodyguards screen what he does from a NEW TENANT in the background who moves his Bekins Boxes to his door:

CORNELL
Please excuse the early hour, Mr.
Pogue. Have you decided to
cooperate?

Motioning to the envelope:

POGUE
Here it is.

CORNELL
(Smiling, taking the envelope.)
Good.

The Bodyguards relax. Pogue glances at them:

POGUE
Sorry about the lateness.

CORNELL
Don't be sorry, Mr. Pogue. The
important thing is you signed it.

POGUE
I signed it.

CORNELL
I'm in your debt, Mr. Pogue.
Remember, if there's anything you
need, just call.

Gesturing toward the front door:

POGUE
The door seems to stick.

Cornell isn't sure what this has to do with him, but he
answers politely:

CORNELL
Oh?

POGUE
Just so I'll know. It's the first
of the month?

Cornell pauses, looks at the date on his watch:

CORNELL
No, the eighth.

POGUE
Oh. Is it always the eighth?

Cornell handles Pogue carefully:

CORNELL
No... Today's the eighth.
Tomorrow's the ninth.
(Gestures with a flipping hand: And
so on.)

Pogue knits his brow, confused. And equally confused, Cornell nods his good-bye and backs away. Pogue closes the door.

Cornell turns toward the stair when the New Tenant shouts after him:

NEW TENANT

My door could use a coat of paint.

Cornell stops, doesn't turn. As Bodyguard #1 hands Cornell a steamed towel from a zip-lock bag, Bodyguard #2 goes to the New Tenant and punches him in the stomach.

EXT- VENICE BEACH - DAY.

Mort plays a soft jazz tune and Stanley continues to work on the detail of Mona Lisa's outline, as Pogue starts down the stairs, coat under his arm, and followed by his dog.

Pogue crosses to his car, and opens the passenger door for his dog to jump in. The dog hops up onto a bench next to the car. Pogue sighs, and picks him up.

STANLEY

Hey Pogue.

POGUE

Hey.

MORT

Pogue, got that five bucks you owe me?

Pogue thinks about it.

POGUE

Sure.

With the dog still in his arms, Pogue reaches into his coat pocket, pulling out a tangle of eyeglasses, transmitter, recorder, and the envelope with the "Baby" address: "984 Ocean Blvd." Post-it notes flutter to the pavement: "Two-way surveillance glasses"; "Your testimony."

Pogue struggles to pick them up, and shoves the hardware into the glove compartment. He gives Mort a fiver, and puts the dog in the seat, and climbs in himself.

EXT- RETIREMENT HOME - DAY.

"984 Ocean Blvd." The address plate on "King Arthur's Retirement Home." A fairy book castle that, on closer inspection, is actually a cheaply-made facade covering a

drab dorm building. Pogue's noisy and smoking Mercedes pulls up.

INT- CAR.

Pogue checks the address against the one on the envelope. The same. He begins to get out, but a whine comes from the backseat. His dog.

Pogue opens the window a few inches for him, and leaves. The dog tries to stick his nose through, but keeps smushing up against the glass. He whines.

INT- RETIREMENT HOME - DAY.

Pogue enters. An OLD MAN using a walker waves:

OLD MAN
Maurice, good to see you.

Pogue waves back. A young WORKER nods as he passes:

WORKER
Maurice.

Curious, Pogue continues on to the ADMITTANCE DESK. A young NURSE sits there:

NURSE
May I help-- Oh, Maurice. Go on in.

Pogue starts toward the admittance doors, then turns back to the Nurse:

POGUE
What number is it again?

NURSE
Naughty, you've been away too long.
Number 32.

Pogue doesn't move.

NURSE cont.
Problem?

POGUE
No-no. Whose room is that?

The Nurse looks at him weird:

NURSE
Mrs. Pogue's, of course.

INT- RETIREMENT HOME HALLWAY - DAY.

Pogue walks hesitantly toward room #32 at the end of the hall. A happy GRANNY, with apple cheeks and curly grey hair, comes toward him. Smiling. Pogue returns the smile. Ventures:

Mom? POGUE

She gets closer. Warmly:

Son? GRANNY

The two smile tenderly, and hug. A Norman Rockwell homecoming.

POGUE
How're you doing, Mom?

GRANNY
Just wonderful, son.
I made some brownies.

She hands him a small sack of brownies.

POGUE
They look delicious--

But a YOUNG MAN comes up to them. Interrupts:

YOUNG MAN
Mom?

The Granny turns to him:

Son? GRANNY

Smiling, they hug. Pogue backs away, embarrassed. Slips the brownies into the son's hand.

Pogue continues on to room #32, and is about to knock when he hears:

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)
Maurice.

...Booming from an open doorway across the hall. Pogue spins toward...

INT- RECREATION ROOM.

...The home's Rec Room. A dozen old ladies, watching tv, smile expectantly up at Pogue. Pogue smiles back, queasily, uncertain which is his mother.

OLD WOMAN (O.C.)
Maurice.

Pogue turns to the voice. A bridge game. Four senior citizens smile up from their cards. The odds reduced.

SHIRLEY POGUE
Stop standing there and come kiss
your mother!

Shirley Pogue. Late seventies. Pear-shaped, but solid. If Retirement Homes had football teams, she'd be a linebacker. Pogue goes to her, kisses her on the cheek, genuinely glad and relieved to see her.

SHIRLEY cont.
You know Mrs. Rochester. Mrs.
Gowens. Mrs. Hurly.

The Bridge Players all twitter their hellos. And continue their hand. Pogue pulls up a chair beside Shirley, whispers:

POGUE
Mom, I need your help.

SHIRLEY
Are you getting married, dear?

POGUE
(Knitting his brow.) No.

SHIRLEY
Why not?

POGUE
I haven't met anyone.

SHIRLEY
From tiny kernels great oaks grow.
Pass.

POGUE
Thanks, Mom.

Shaken by this, but willing to press on:

POGUE cont.
Mom, who's Baby?

She caresses his cheek:

SHIRLEY
You're my baby, Maurice. My only
baby. Clubs.
(Notices the suspenders.)
Suspenders suit you, dear.

POGUE
Thanks, Mom.
(Shows her the envelope.)
Does this mean anything to you?

SHIRLEY
That's your address.

POGUE
Yes. Did you send me something?

Shirley realizes, shrieking:

SHIRLEY
Oh, Maurice! I completely forgot!

POGUE
What?

She throws down her cards.

SHIRLEY
Your birthday! I forgot to send
you a present!
(To the other woman.)
It's Maurice's birthday!

The women gleefully congratulate him: "How sweet!/Happy
Birthday!"

POGUE
(To the women.) Thank you.
Mom, that's not--

SHIRLEY
(Calling to the room.)
It's my baby's birthday!

Everyone's thrilled. They get up to shake his hand. Pogue
tries to be polite, and waits patiently as they sing Happy
Birthday.

INT- RETIREMENT HOME COURTYARD - DAY.

A black-and-white baby picture of Pogue. Very cute.

SHIRLEY (O.C.)

Seven pounds, nine ounces. Nurse said you were the prettiest thing she ever saw.

Shirley and Pogue sit in the retirement home's small courtyard, looking through a PHOTO ALBUM. Pogue examines the pictures: a tourist to his own past.

POGUE

Mom, when I was a baby, was there some place I would go?

SHIRLEY

In your diapers.

POGUE

No, some hiding place?

But Shirley is on to a new page.

SHIRLEY

Even as a baby you had the straightest teeth. They all came in perfect.

Pogue frowns. Not much help. He watches the pages pass, affected by the flow of his life: grammar school... high school... first girlfriend... driving lessons... Shirley turns another page, but Pogue stops her, a photo description catching his eye:

"Maurice, Paula, and Baby."

The photo is of himself, and... no one. It's been cut in half, "Paula and Baby" cut out. He takes the photo out of the album:

POGUE

(Anxious.) Mom? Where's the rest?

But the Nurse interrupts, chirping:

NURSE

Nap-time, Shirley.

Shirley stands. Pogue tries to follow her into the home:

POGUE cont.

Mom?

But the Nurse stops him:

NURSE

Visiting hours are over.

SHIRLEY

I promised I'd never say anything bad about her.

POGUE

Who?! Paula?

Smiling coyly, Shirley mimes "locking" her lips and throwing away the key. The door slams closed behind her. Pogue tries it, but it's locked. He looks closer at the photo.

Noticing that Shirley has left her EYEGLASSES behind, Pogue grabs them and holds them over the photo, magnifying the background. On the side of a building is a seal. Pogue can just make out:

olice Aca

CUT TO:

EXT- POLICE ACADEMY - DAY.

The Los Angeles Police Academy. A quaint series of older brick buildings adjacent to Dodger Stadium.

Pogue gets out of his car, leaving the window open again for his dog, who whines. John Dolby steers toward him, waving. Jovial:

DOLBY

What're you doing here, Pogue?!
Nostalgic for the old Academy?

Pogue chuckles, no idea who this man is. He quickly scans the dozen names on his CRIB-SHEET, coming to: "John Dolby: District Attorney--> wheelchair."

POGUE

Good to see you... John. How's the
District Attorney's office?

DOLBY

Fine. (Gestures to the gun in his
lap.) Rosenheim wanted to get in
some target practice.

Pogue glances at his crib-sheet:

POGUE

You mean my old friend Donald, the
Assistant D.A.?

Dolby turns--wheelchair whirring--to look at Pogue weird:

DOLBY

That's right.

POGUE

I'm looking for Paula, John. Do you know where she might be?

DOLBY

You sure you want to see her?

(Laughs.)

None of my business.

He motions for Pogue to follow. Pogue winces. It doesn't bode well.

DOLBY cont.

Just watch out for Willis. He's never forgiven you, slugger.

Pogue mouths to himself: Slugger?

EXT- ACADEMY PATH - DAY.

KRAKKK! The loud echoing sound of gunfire. Pogue and Dolby move toward the outdoor firing range when a woman exits the Academy diner, carrying a tray of lunch meats. It's the CATERER from Pogue's party. Recognizing him:

CATERER

Hey.

(Chuckling, flirtatious.)

Haven't seen you in a while.

Not recognizing her, but agreeing:

POGUE

A long while.

Still charmed, the Caterer continues on, laughing to herself. Dolby and Pogue watch her go, then trade a puzzled and appreciative look. Dolby points into the firing range:

DOLBY cont.

Paula's on lane five.

POGUE

Thanks, John.

DOLBY

Pogue.

(Looks around, lowers his voice.)
Have you been "seeing" anymore of
Sarah?

Pogue looks around too and whispers:

POGUE

Sarah Novak?

DOLBY

Uh-hum.

POGUE

No.

Relieved, Dolby pats his arm:

DOLBY

Good.

POGUE

But she's coming by tonight.

Dolby's face falls.

DOLBY

You need to get some help, Pogue.

POGUE

I wish I could.

DOLBY

You can't fight this on your own.

POGUE

Sarah's afraid of bringing in
anybody else.

Growing deadly serious:

DOLBY

Pogue, listen to me. Sarah is
gone.

POGUE

Just till tonight.

DOLBY

No, she's not coming back.

Pogue is surprised:

POGUE

How do you know?

DOLBY

It's a fact of life.

Pogue looks at Dolby like he's crazy. Starts off:

POGUE

Okay, John. Thanks a lot.

EXT- FIRING RANGE.

BAM-BAM-BAM! Holes being blasted through the chests of paper shadow targets. A HORN blows. Silence, as the fifteen shooters stretch and reload. Pogue follows the lane numbers down to LANE FIVE...

Paula. A female cop. Reloading her gun. Pretty, petite, not as tough as she lets on. Wears her uniform with pride. Pogue stops behind her, not sure what this woman is to him: sister, cousin?

POGUE

Paula?

She doesn't even turn:

PAULA

Not now Pogue.

Donald Rosenheim loads a gun in the neighboring lane:

ROSENHEIM

You two going to fight?

PAULA

Shut up, Rosenheim.

ROSENHEIM

It's nice to see you together anyway.

PAULA

We're not together.
(Notices the suspenders.)
Not bad. You must be seeing somebody.

Over a loud speaker:

LOUD SPEAKER

Thirty seconds.

Paula raises her gun, waiting for the horn.

POGUE

(To Paula.)
I just visited Shirley.

PAULA

She still mad at me?

Pogue quickly lies:

POGUE

Noo. She said to say Hi.

PAULA

I'm trying to shoot here, Maurice.

ROSENHEIM

You're fighting. I can hear you fighting.

POGUE

Shut up, Rosenheim.

ROSENHEIM

You two should've never got married.

POGUE

Paula, all...

But Pogue stops, registering Rosenheim's "married" just as the horn blasts. Pogue's stunned face is replaced by...

...The identically-positioned TARGET head, as Paula gleefully blasts holes through it! The horn blasts again and the shooting stops. But before Pogue can say anything, the silence is replaced by...

A baby crying.

Paula turns toward the cry, coming from the SPECTATOR GALLERY above and behind the range. Pogue follows her gaze, preparing himself for further wonderful revelations.

INT- SPECTATOR GALLERY.

The baby. Adorable in a sailor outfit, and ear muffs for the gunfire. He gradually stops crying as... Paula rocks him, and Rosenheim tickles his chin. Paula is a completely different person now, her face softening.

ROSENHEIM

Awww. He looks just like his daddy.

PAULA

(Smiling.) You think?

ROSENHEIM

Are you kidding? Spittin' image.

PAULA

What do you think, Maurice?

Pogue. Standing in the doorway of the gallery, his face white, staring at the baby. Paula places the baby in a stroller:

PAULA cont.

I always thought he looked more like me. But, yeah, I see it.

Pogue kneels in front of... his son? He stares at him. The baby stares back. A mirror image. Meanwhile, a loudspeaker announces:

LOUDSPEAKER

Thirty seconds.

Rushing to shoot:

PAULA

Can you watch him for a second?
(Pogue only stares.)
Maurice?

POGUE

(Looking up.) Huh?

PAULA

Take him for a walk or something.

Pogue nods. Paula and Rosenheim exit toward the range. Pogue stares at his son. The baby stares back, deadpan. Pogue raises an eyebrow. The baby raises an eyebrow. Pogue rubs his eyes. The baby rubs his eyes.

BABY

Dah-dee.

A horn, and BAM! Gunfire.

EXT- PARKING LOT - DAY.

A row of perfectly aligned police cars. And behind them...

Pogue hunts through the stroller BABY BAG while the baby watches amused. Diapers. Handi-wipes. Toys. Pogue pulls them apart. Rattles them. No coin.

The bag exhausted, Pogue turns to the baby, who smiles up at him. A heart-crushing smile. Pogue momentarily beams with fatherly pride. Then he reaches for the baby's...

TEDDY BEAR. The baby doesn't let go. Pogue pulls a little harder. The baby tightens his grip. Finally Pogue yanks it away, and the baby begins to cry! Scream!

Pogue looks around, quickly gives him back the teddy bear. But he still screams! Pogue pushes the stroller back and forth. Makes funny faces for him: "Look-look." No good. Pogue stands, does a clown dance. Joins his arms, imitates an ocean wave. The baby quiets down, fascinated.

Pogue stops his dance, but the baby starts crying again. So Pogue dances more. The baby smiles.

WHILE:

At the other end of the lot, Dolby steers toward his car. He stops. Not sure if he saw what he just saw. He whirrs his chair to a better angle. Looks down the row of police cars. Sees Pogue dancing. Doesn't see the stroller.

Dolby shakes his head: Poor guy. Continues on.

MEANWHILE:

LIEUTENANT WILLIS, a short greying officer, equal parts anger and nervousness, storms toward Pogue and grabs the stroller. Startled, Pogue grabs it back. Willis hisses:

WILLIS

Don't push your luck, Pogue. It was a sucker punch.

Pogue still hangs onto the stroller. Willis begins to lunge at him but Paula intercedes, calming:

PAULA

Willis.

WILLIS

(To Paula.)
Stay away from him!

Paula quickly steers Willis and the stroller away. Over his shoulder to Pogue:

WILLIS

I don't want you near my wife! And
I sure as hell don't want you near
my son! I'll kill you if I see you
with them again!

Pogue watches them go, not sure if he's relieved or
disappointed. He picks up the teddy bear from the ground
and stares at it. He was just getting used to the idea of a
son. Rosenheim comes up behind him, his voice low:

ROSENHEIM

I got a clue.
(Pogue is confused.)
Who's sleeping with my fiance.

POGUE

(Catching up.) Oh?

ROSENHEIM

She came home last night...

Rosenheim unsnaps his briefcase, pulls out a t-shirt in an
evidence bag.

ROSENHEIM cont.

...Wearing this.

A L.A.P.D. t-shirt.

ROSENHEIM cont.

A man's. Not mine. Look at these
initials.

He shows Pogue the tag. Initials inked in and circled.

ROSENHEIM cont.

"M.P." Someone with the initials
M.P.

Pogue apprehensively glances down at his own COAT under his
arm. The collar tag has an identical "M.P."

ROSENHEIM cont.

What do you think? Someone in the
department called M.P.?

Pogue tucks his coat tag away:

POGUE

Well... not necessarily.

ROSENHIEM

I came up here to check the roll-call. (Thinking.) Michael. Matt. Who else?

At that second, Paula calls from her car across the lot:

PAULA

Maurice!

Pogue tries to wave her away.

ROSENHEIM

(Still thinking.) Manuel. Mickey.

PAULA

(Louder.) Maurice!

Yelling anxiously to Paula:

POGUE

One second!

ROSENHEIM

What's their last names?

PAULA (O.C.)

Maurice Pogue?!

POGUE

I'M COMING!!

PAULA

Your car payments haven't been!

Pogue slumps: "What else?"

ROSENHEIM

I'm not a suspicious person, Pogue, You know that. But when I think about Judy with somebody else... I could kill.

POGUE

Le'me check into it.

ROSENHEIM

Thanks, Pogue. You're a pal.
(Looks him over. Pogue still holds the teddy bear.)
Nice suspenders. But lose the bear.

EXT- CAR PORT - DAY.

Pogue's Mercedes pulls into the apartment car port, and... dies. It's a perfect metaphor for Pogue, who is exhausted, sitting behind the wheel. Ten years added to his life. He listens to the end of the tape on a hand-held recorder:

POGUE NARRATION

Philip Cornell is after you to change your testimony. He has given you until tomorrow morning--I mean this morning--to decide.

He turns it off, and gets out of the car, his dog following him...

EXT- VENICE BOARDWALK - DAY.

...toward the apartment. Pogue's angry Landlord charges at him:

LANDLORD

Where were you this morning, Mr. Pogue?! I WANT IT NOW!

Pogue pulls out his gun and points it straight at him:

POGUE

No.

LANDLORD

(Barely able to stutter it out.)
Fine. Fine.

The Landlord turns and runs. Stanley, observing it all, laughs:

STANLEY

That's the way to handle him.

Mort interrupts a Gershwin tune on his clarinet to high-five with Stanley. They miss again. Meanwhile, Pogue cockily raises his gun, and blows away the imaginary smoke: the bullets fall out. As he picks them up:

MORT

Pogue. Know anyone named Sarah?

POGUE

(Surprised.) Yeah.

MORT

(Pointing toward the beach.)
She's waiting for you.

POGUE

Thanks.

STANLEY

Hey Pogue...

(He points toward his mural.)

How's it look?

Pogue stands back. Looks at the mural. A third done. Stanley fills in the detail of Mona Lisa's clothes: a striped bikini top and sunglasses hanging from her neck.

POGUE

Great.

(Stanley is pleased, until Pogue adds:)

What's it going to be?

Stanley stares at Pogue. A slow burn.

Not sure what he said wrong, Pogue backs away toward the beach. Stanley turns to his creation, judging it. Beaten, he reaches for his paint roller.

EXT- BEACH - DAY.

Sarah sits on the sand. Very beautiful in the sun. Pogue approaches, smiling, pleased with her appearance: seeing her for the first time (again). In the background, Stanley whitewashes his mural, starting over.

POGUE

Hi.

Sarah smiles, takes off her sunglasses. Gestures to his suspenders:

SARAH

Very you.

POGUE

Thanks... I think.

SARAH

You look happy. Good day?

POGUE

(Still smiling.) Nope.

EXT- BEACH PLAYGROUND - DUSK.

A playground in the sand, sun setting in the background. Sarah sits halfway up a slide. Pogue straddles the bottom

facing her. Nice and casual. Their guards dropped. Pogue tries to decide the best way to ask:

POGUE

Sarah?

SARAH

Hmmm?

POGUE

Tell me about yourself.

She smiles:

SARAH

Ask me something.

POGUE

When this is over, what'll you do?

Sarah thinks about it. Shrugs.

SARAH

Probably start over. I seem to start over every few weeks. I want to catch my breath. That's what I like about you, Pogue.

POGUE

What?

SARAH

All this doesn't seem to phase you.

Pogue listens eagerly to any observations about himself.

SARAH

No matter what life throws at you, you adjust. I'm a panicker. I start throwing baggage overboard. Not you. That's why I need you.

POGUE

Sarah...
(Phrasing it in his head.)
...how serious are we?

Sarah smiles:

SARAH

I guess that depends. I get serious very quickly...
I think you do too.

POGUE

Do I?

SARAH

Don't you?

Pogue knits his brow, trying to puzzle this into his personality. Meanwhile, his dog comes up to him and tries to lick his hand, but keeps missing.

POGUE

How much do you really know about me, Sarah?

Pogue steers his hand to the dog's tongue, and holds the dog's head in place by petting gently. Sarah watches this, smiles:

SARAH

I know enough.

POGUE

I put my mother in a home. I beat up my ex-wife's husband. I cheated on my best friend. I keep borrowing money from a blind man. Everyone I know, I use or let down.

SARAH

You haven't let me down.

Pogue grimaces.

POGUE

Sarah, I've got to tell you something. I've hit a snag with the coin. It's--

But before he can continue, Sarah slides down the slide, gracefully coming to a stop under Pogue. Very close.

SARAH

Let's not talk about it.

POGUE

There's something else. I--

SARAH

(She stops him.)
Kiss me.

Pogue looks at her, and they kiss. Tentative. With some teenage nervousness. They pull apart. Pogue's eyes open slowly. And Sarah's eyes don't open at all. Breathless.

Pogue looks at her. Maddeningly beautiful. Her lips parted slightly. Hair falling across one eye. He can't help himself; he kisses her again, more urgently.

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

The door bangs open! Pogue rushes into his dark bedroom ahead of Sarah, quickly sweeping his recorder and the post-it reminders into his night stand, just as...

Sarah rushes in after him. Laughing, she jumps on his back, and pulls him, tumbling onto the bed. They kiss. Sarah looks up, noticing with curiosity several post-it notes stuck to Pogue's back--"Read this"; "Your wallet." She pulls them off.

But then she feels something sticking into her side. Reaching under the covers, she pulls out Judy's HANDCUFFS. She holds them up to Pogue, surprised. Pogue coughs:

POGUE

Oh that's where those were.

Poge throws them aside, and they kiss. Serious. Passionate. And Sarah whispers:

SARAH

Like it's the first time.

Pogue raises an eyebrow: It can't help but be. They reach for each other's clothes. Rushing. Kissing. Urgently undressing. Until a thought hits Pogue. He stops.

POGUE

Ahh... One sec.

He grabs something from the desk and rushes into the bathroom, closing the door.

INT- BATHROOM.

Breathing hard, he quickly and quietly narrates into the recorder:

POGUE

When you hear this it'll be
Wednesday morning-- the woman
sleeping next to you--her name is
Sarah Novak.

He turns it off, and races back to...

INT- BEDROOM.

...Sarah on the bed. They resume. Kissing wildly, tearing at their underclothes. Until Pogue stops, has another thought. Rushes toward the bathroom. Sarah groans in frustration.

INT- BATHROOM.

The recorder:

POGUE

Don't let her down... because...

He doesn't know how to finish, so he turns off the recorder, and begins to return to...

INT- BEDROOM.

...The bed, but he makes a u-turn, and scrambles back into the bathroom. Sarah tries to grab him but misses.

INT- BATHROOM.

Pogue clutches the recorder, knowing now how to finish.

POGUE

...Because I think you're in love with her.

He puts the spilled scouring powder back in its place and...

INT- BEDROOM.

...returns to the bed. Not having any more of this, Sarah rolls on top of Pogue, pinning him down. They begin to make love. Meanwhile...

EXT- CAR PORT - NIGHT.

...Hendrix sits in his PICK-UP TRUCK, watching Pogue's apartment window. Crossing one half of his tie over the other, then back again.

FADE OUT.

EXT- VENICE BOARDWALK - MORNING.

The next morning. Mort plays an angelic classical piece while Stanley works on his mural, grumbling to himself. It's looking good. The second pass at it has improved it, deepened it. He starts on Mona Lisa's face.

INT- POGUE'S APARTMENT - MORNING.

Sarah's face. Her eyes open. She looks over at Pogue sleeping contentedly. She smiles. Then notices the Walkman headphones on his head and the recorder gripped in his hand. Curious, she slips them off, then onto her own head and pushes "play."

POGUE NARRATION

...The woman sleeping next to you--
Her name is Sarah Novak.

Sarah looks at Pogue, confused. Then...

POGUE NARRATION cont.

Don't let her down because...
I think you're in love with her.

She stops the recorder, smile spreading across her face. She reaches for Pogue. Caresses his face softly. Pogue's eyes open. He looks up at her:

POGUE

Sarah...

They exchange a smile. Then Pogue suddenly looks past her, realizing. Surprised that he remembers her name:

POGUE cont.

"Sarah"?

He sits up straight, stunned.

CUT TO LATER:

Pogue, alone in the bedroom, talking on the phone:

POGUE

Of course it's a good sign. I go to sleep, I wake up, and I remember everything from the day before.

INT- DR. DOOVER'S OFFICE - DAY.

Dr. Doover, in his office, examines a PATIENT's throat while on the phone:

DOOVER

I'm not saying it isn't a good sign, Pogue. We just can't tell a thing from that.
(To the Patient.) Cough.

Both the Patient and...

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - DAY.

...Pogue cough.

POGUE

Why not?

DOOVER (V.O.)

You still don't remember anything
from the day before yesterday? Or
the day before that, right?

Pogue is silent. He doesn't.

DOOVER (V.O.)

All I'm saying is you need a
breakthrough: a memory of something
before your amnesia.

Sarah opens the door to Pogue's bedroom:

SARAH

Scrambled or poached?

INT- DOOVER'S OFFICE - DAY.

Examining the Patient's ear, Doover hears Sarah:

DOOVER

What's that?

Thinking Doover is referring to something in his ear:

PATIENT

What's what?!

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - DAY.

Pogue answers Sarah:

POGUE

Scrambled.

She blows him a kiss and leaves.

INT- DOOVER'S OFFICE - DAY.

Over the phone, confused:

DOOVER

Scrambled?

Doubly-confused, with an edge of panic:

PATIENT
What's scrambled?!

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - DAY.

Hearing the Patient's question:

POGUE
The eggs.

INT- DOOVER'S OFFICE - DAY.

Doover repeats, calming the Patient:

DOOVER
The eggs.

But the Patient is hardly calmed; he's not sure what it means, but it doesn't sound good.

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - DAY.

Over the phone:

DOOVER (V.O.)
Whoever she is, Pogue, she's
exactly what you need. Someone to
help you get on with your life.

POGUE
(Smiling.) Thanks, Doctor.

INT- DR. DOOVER'S OFFICE - DAY.

Doover notices that the Patient is hyperventilating:

DOOVER
Got to go.

INT- POGUE'S OFFICE - DAY.

Pogue hangs up. He turns toward the door, but a thought occurs to him, and he pulls a pad of paper toward him. "Baby" is scribbled on it a dozen times. He free-associates:

POGUE
Baby...? Baby...?
Baby Ruth? Baby powder.

We notice Pogue's dog, lying on the bed behind Pogue. The dog raises his head. Begins to lie back down.

POGUE cont

Baby grand...

Then perks up again. Lies back down.

POGUE cont.

Baby blue. Baby face

The dog looks up twice. Pogue turns slowly, lackadaisically in his chair, drifting:

POGUE cont.

Cry baby... sugar baby.

Pogue notices his dog look up. Thinking nothing of it, Pogue continues to turn... drifting, when... He stops, freezes! And spins back toward his dog.

POGUE cont.

Baby.

The dog's ears perk up! Pogue can't believe it. He jumps to his feet, scrambles for the trimmed picture from the photo album: "Pogue, Paula, and Baby." He concentrates on his hand in the picture. Hanging from it--just a glimpse--is a leash! Pogue calls to his dog:

POGUE cont.

Fido.

(Nothing. The dog doesn't move.)

Spot. Rusty. Pete.

(No to all of these.)

Baby.

The dog gets up and comes to him. Pogue is thrilled. He kneels down, pets Baby excitedly. Zeroing in on the LEATHER COLLAR around Baby's neck, Pogue frisks it for the coin. Nothing inside.

An attached LICENSE TAG and CHARM jingle into view. The charm reads "Love Shirley." Pogue turns to the tag. It's two pieces of metal held together by a plastic frame. Pogue tears through the plastic, and finds something sandwiched between...

A tiny tightly-folded jewelry envelope. Pogue unfolds it. Handwriting on the outside. Pogue reads:

"Sorry to drag you into this. If anything happens to me, it's yours.

--Sarah."

Pogue rips open the envelope. Something gold rolls out into his hand. Pogue stares down in awe at the stunning "Coin of Royal Power."

EXT- VENICE STREET - DAY.

Pogue's car rockets down a street.

INT- CAR - DAY.

Sarah excitedly examines the coin as Pogue drives and Baby looks stoically on from the back seat.

SARAH
It's incredible.
(Turns to Pogue.)
You're incredible.

Pogue smiles, thrilled to not let her down.

POGUE
What time is he supposed to call?

SARAH
Two. I may have to meet him alone.

Nodding, Pogue reaches into the glove compartment, and takes out the surveillance EYEGLASSES and TRANSMITTER.

SARAH
What's that?

POGUE
A two-way radio. Wear it when you meet him.

He slips it into her breast pocket.

SARAH
(Pointing out the window.)
Over there.

EXT- LAX MOTEL - DAY.

The car pulls up to a cheap motel--The Voyager--under LAX's landing path. Airplanes scream overhead. Pogue and Sarah get out, both reaching for coins for the parking meter:

POGUE/SARAH
I got it.

Thinking the other will get it, they both turn away. Then turn back, realizing the other isn't getting it. They smile at their mirror image.

POGUE

You get it.

Sarah grabs Pogue and kisses him, reaching into his pocket and pulling out a quarter.

SARAH

You get it.

She flips the coin in the air.

CUT TO LATER:

Dust on a telephone booth. Sarah wipes it away so she can see...

Pogue, sitting in the car with Baby. Pogue thinks she's waving to him, and waves back. Smiling, Sarah writes in the dust with her finger: "i love you." Pogue smiles.

The phone rings. Sarah quickly picks up. Pogue turns up the transmitter, but a 747 screeches overhead, drowning out the conversation. Sarah raises a thumb: everything's alright. But the tension doesn't leave Pogue's face as he watches her through the "i love you" on the glass.

A vague thought hits Pogue. He reaches into his shirt pocket for something. The "What's New?!" fashion show program with the note:

"meet me at eight --sarah"

Something bothers Pogue. The handwriting. Very feminine, with curlicues and stars crowning all the "i"s. Identical to the writing on the phone booth.

He reaches for the tiny envelope, the one the coin was in. He reads the outside again: "Sorry to drag you into this. If anything happens to me, it's yours. --Sarah."

Slowly, Pogue aligns the program and the envelope.

The writing is as different as writing can be!

Pogue and Baby look up at the woman in the phone booth, simultaneously. A strange hollow suspicion. She hangs up, and starts toward the car.

INT- CAR - DAY.

She gets in:

SARAH

Santa Monica Pier in a half hour.
No one else. Just me. He says, if
he sees you within a mile he won't
show.

(Noticing Pogue is tense.)
What's wrong?

POGUE

Nothing.

Pogue starts the car. Pulls out. The two are tense beside
each other. There's been a change in mood and Sarah's not
sure why.

SARAH/BETH

Can't wait to get this over with.
Can you?

Pogue nods. His hands tighten on the steering wheel and he
looks over at her. Who is she?

EXT- SANTA MONICA PIER - DAY.

Dramatic clouds on the skyline. "Santa Monica" on a neon
arch. Pogue's car pulls under the sign and down the pier.

INT- CAR - DAY.

Pogue pulls the car over to the pier's CAROUSEL. A silent
moment. Sarah's mood has darkened too. She begins to get
out.

POGUE

You'll need the coin.

She turns back. Pogue tosses her the folded envelope.

SARAH

(Somber.) Thanks.

POGUE

Anytime.

Pogue eyes the glasses in her breast pocket, and then pulls
away. Sarah watches him go.

EXT- PIER - DAY.

Pogue's car. Parked on a street under the pier. Pogue
races up a stairway, one ear to the transmitter, Sarah's
voice gradually becoming clearer:

SARAH (V.O.)
You're late.

Then a gruff man's voice:

GRUFF MAN (V.O.)
You get it from him?

SARAH (V.O.)
No problem.

At the top of the stair, Pogue watches Sarah through the turning carousel, her reflection broken and turning in the mirrored axis. Unable to see who she's talking to, Pogue cautiously starts toward a nearby AMUSEMENT STAND, hearing:

GRUFF MAN (V.O.)
Let's see it.

SARAH (V.O.)
Not here.

Pogue slips among the antique PEEPSHOW MACHINES in the stand, and sees, in the fractured mirrored carousel reflection, that the gruff voice belongs to... Hendrix:

HENDRIX (V.O.)
He didn't catch on?

SARAH (V.O.)
Nope. Any more questions or can we go now?

Pogue's face turns grim, hollow suspicion turning to deep anger. Sarah climbs into Hendrix's PICK-UP TRUCK, and the two pull out. Recovering, Pogue sprints down the stairs to his car, jumping in!

Skidding off, he sees the pick-up truck turn down toward the Pacific Coast Highway. To catch up, Pogue makes a u-turn, and speeds against one-way traffic onto the Highway.

EXT- BEACH CLUB - DAY.

Hendrix's truck turns into the parking lot of a private club on the beach. Blue awnings. Picturesque palm trees. Pogue watches from the left turn lane as Hendrix and Sarah start up some stairs toward the back of the Club.

Pogue turns in. Parks. And follows them up, reaching to turn up the transmitter, but a CHUBBY MAN in a tennis outfit bumps into him, thrilled to see him:

CHUBBY MAN

Hey!

Pogue hides his face from Sarah and Hendrix:

POGUE

Hi.

CHUBBY MAN

How've you been?

POGUE

Good. You?

CHUBBY MAN

Great. Still with the...?
(Pauses.)

POGUE

Yep. You?

CHUBBY MAN

(Laughing.) You know me? How
'bout a drink next week?

POGUE

Sounds good.

CHUBBY MAN

I'll call.

Pogue continues to follow Sarah and Hendrix. The Chubby Man rejoins his wife, asks her:

CHUBBY MAN

Who was that?

EXT- TENNIS COURTS - DAY.

Behind the club, six perfect tennis courts, pink as rose petals on the beach. Sarah and Hendrix climb down a flight of stairs toward one. A man hits tennis balls from a machine on the court. He stops, goes to Hendrix and Sarah. They talk.

EXT- CLUB TERRACE - DAY.

Pogue watches this from a terrace above the court, unable to make out who the man is. He begins to turn up the transmitter again when someone taps his shoulder:

CLUB OFFICIAL

May I help you sir?

Perfect composure, smile:

POGUE

Yes you may. The gentleman on court... (Pogue looks.) ...six. I think he's a friend of mine, but I'm not certain.

Reaching for an intercom:

OFFICIAL

I'll call down.

Pogue grabs the Official's hand. Smiles:

POGUE

I want to surprise him.

Pogue nudges him. The Official smiles, reaches for a list:

OFFICIAL

Court six? That's...
(Runs his finger down the list.)
...Doover. Dr. Anthony Doover.

Pogue's eyes narrow, things beginning to fall into place.

OFFICIAL cont.

Is he your friend, sir? Dr.
Doover?

Pogue takes one last look down at Doover, Hendrix, and Sarah. Doover gives Sarah a congratulatory hug, and high-fives with Hendrix.

POGUE

No. My mistake.

Pogue leaves.

EXT- TENNIS COURT - DAY.

As the balls continue to shoot between and around them:

DOOVER

Smile, Beth. You did it.

But Beth--the person we've known as Sarah up till now--doesn't smile. Hendrix laughs:

HENDRIX

She's got a guilty conscience.

BETH

Shut up.

DOOVER

Why? Because of Pogue?
(Reaches out, examining Pogue's
clothes on her.)
Looks like you two are getting
quite close.
(Beth pushes his hand away.)
Don't worry. You're only helping
him, making him think Sarah's still
alive. He'll probably be cured if
he thinks he saved you from the
"dreaded Hendrix." Now let's see
it.

Beth reluctantly reaches into her pocket, and hands him the
folded envelope. Excited, Doover fumbles with it, opens it
greedily. Pulls out...

Baby's dog charm.

Silence, except for the phwap-phwap of balls shooting past.
Doover is crushed. He steps away, to cover the depth of his
disappointment, to compose himself. While...

Beth is floored; she takes the envelope, reads the note from
the real Sarah on the outside, and realizes her slip-up!
Furious, Hendrix slaps Beth hard.

HENDRIX

She tricked us!

Doover takes a deep breath, returning to sanity:

DOOVER

No, no. He tricked us. It's
Pogue's hand alright. He saw
through our little charade.

HENDRIX

How?

DOOVER

He found out Sarah really is dead,
or checked out our phony FBI story,
or discovered... (To Beth.)
...you're an actress, I don't know.
But you're going back to him, Beth.

HENDRIX

But he knows! He knows I'm not
FBI! He knows--!

DOOVER

(Smiling.) As to that... what he knows today is one thing, but, as they say, tomorrow's another day. (To Beth.) Take his tape before he wakes up. We'll start fresh.

BETH

No.

They turn to her.

DOOVER

Excuse me?

BETH

It's over. I'm not doing it anymore.

DOOVER

(Exchanging a glance with Hendrix.) May I ask why?

BETH

You're a doctor! You should be helping him, not...

Doover turns angry:

DOOVER

Listen. You're a cheap failed actress who couldn't get a part or even pay your rent when I met you. That little item is worth seven million dollars! Seven million! You're telling me you'll turn your back on that!

BETH

Watch me.

Beth turns and starts off the court. Doover and Hendrix turn to each other, grimly. A ball hits Hendrix in the side of the head.

EXT- VENICE BOARDWALK - DUSK.

Stanley still slaves away at his Mona Lisa, and it shows. A true Los Angeles Da Vinci, although it's still only a third completed. Pogue returns home, lifeless and tired: an emotionally-draining day. He takes off his suspenders and throws them in the car. Stanley turns to him, almost challenging:

STANLEY

Well? Does it look like it now?

Pogue glances at the mural, without stopping:

POGUE

Like what?

Stanley almost throws his brush at Pogue, but Pogue is already past, followed by Baby. Stanley's shoulders slump, and he reaches for his roller, preparing to start again.

Meanwhile, Mort interrupts a New Orleans number, stopping Pogue at the base of his stairs:

MORT

Got that five bucks you owe me,
Pogue?

POGUE

Yeah...
(Begins to reach into his pocket.)
Hey, I paid you.

MORT

Oh. Right.
(Changing the subject quickly.)
"How do you find a blind man in a
nudist colony?"

POGUE

How?

MORT

It ain't hard.

Pogue doesn't respond. Starts up the stairs.

MORT cont.

You're not in much of a laughing
mood. Neither were your friends.

Pogue freezes.

POGUE

What friends?

MORT

The guys in your apartment.

Pogue reaches into his coat. No gun. He left it behind.
Pogue comes back down the stairs. Backs away. Baby
follows. When:

ROSENHEIM (O.C.)
HEY, POGUE!

Pogue spins. A CAR stops beside him. Rosenheim leans out the window:

ROSENHEIM cont.
Where were you all day?

Pogue looks nervously up the stairs:

POGUE
Out.

ROSENHEIM
Every time I phoned, someone hung up.
(Lowers his voice.)
Another clue.

POGUE
Don, I really--

ROSENHEIM
No one in the L.A.P.D. has the initials M.P.

POGUE
I--
(Threatened.) You sure?

ROSENHEIM
Yep. Now, look at this.

Rosenheim takes a small evidence baggie out of his briefcase, a tiny fleck of paper inside. He hands the paper to Pogue. Wet. Blue stained. Some blurred numbers on it.

ROSENHEIM cont.
I saw Judy tear up a letter. I managed to get that out before she flushed it down the toilet.

Pogue frowns, wipes the wetness from his hands.

ROSENHEIM cont.
It says: 119... and it looks like either a five or a three. What do you think? Part of a phone number or a license plate?

Pogue covertly looks back toward his address plate at the bottom of the stairs. "1195"!

POGUE

Hmmm...

Pogue leans back against the wall as if thinking. Covering the address.

POGUE cont.

Prob'ly a phone number.

ROSENHEIM

Or an address.

POGUE

Let me look into it.

ROSENHEIM

Thanks. We need to go over your Cornell testimony.

POGUE

Uh, not now, Donald. How 'bout tomorrow night?

ROSENHEIM

Right, funny man. You testify tomorrow at two.

Mort, clarinet under his arm, tapping his white cane, tries to get by Pogue.

MORT

'Scuse me.

But Pogue can't chance moving away from the address. He scrunches up against the wall, and Mort, frustrated, struggles past, tripping over a yelping Baby and falling out of frame.

Pogue and Rosenheim rush to pick him up. Mort nods his thanks and moves off.

POGUE

Tomorrow morning. We'll go over it tomorrow morning.

ROSENHEIM

Alright. Nine o'clock.

ROSENHEIM

Judge Block's upset about the court date we missed. Says, if you're not on the stand tomorrow, he's throwing the whole case out.

POGUE

I'll be there.

Rosenheim gets in his car and pulls away. Turns the corner. Pogue looks up the stairs. Time to make himself scarce. He turns up the boardwalk, but sees...

Hendrix's truck rocketing toward him! Fifty-miles an hour!

Pogue spins in the opposite direction, races toward the mouth of an ALLEYWAY, slipping into it just as the truck skids past, sparks flying as it grazes the building!

INT- ALLEYWAY - NIGHT.

Pogue runs up the alley, but it's a dead end. Brick buildings, security-locked shops. Nowhere to hide. Nowhere to climb. Pogue hears the truck fish-tail and rev back toward the alley!

Pogue takes the coin from his pocket. Looks around. Only seconds before Hendrix is on him. Where to hide it? He looks toward a PARKING METER--one of three--in the alleyway. Why not?

He hesitates only a second--is this the smartest thing?--then drops the coin into the quarter slot, and turns the knob. "The Coin of Royal Power"--the most valuable coin in the world--gives Pogue twenty minutes of parking in L.A.

EXT- APARTMENT TERRACE - NIGHT.

Pogue is hit in the face by a vengeful Hendrix:

HENDRIX

How's my tie?

POGUE

(Inspects it.)

Have you thought of a clip-on?

Hendrix hits him again. Doover comes up onto the terrace:

DOOVER

That's enough.

POGUE

(To Hendrix.)

Now you're in for it.

DOOVER

(Stern.)

Where's the coin, Pogue?

Pogue is silent. Hendrix motions him toward the apartment door.

POGUE

I wouldn't go in there if I were you. There's some guys with guns in there.

HENDRIX

Open it.

POGUE

I really wouldn't advise it.
(Off Hendrix's incredulous look.)
This may sound crazy, but I care about you.

Disgusted, Hendrix pushes Pogue aside, raises a massive foot, and kicks the door open. And freezes. Hendrix and Doover stare in at...

Cornell and his two Bodyguards--a perfect tableau--guns coolly pointed at them. Hendrix drops his gun, as Doover glances back at Pogue, but...

Pogue is gone.

OVER THE SIDE OF BUILDING: Pogue hangs from the edge of the terrace, the street twenty feet below. Listening, he hears scuffling. Glancing over the edge he sees...

...Cornell and his Bodyguards leading a disarmed Hendrix and Doover across the terrace and down the circular stairs. Pogue is puzzled by this:

POGUE

(To himself.)
My landlord?

Counting to two, Pogue easily pulls himself back onto the terrace with a acrobatic back-flip. He starts into the apartment, then stops, amazed by the maneuver he just pulled: Where'd that come from?

INT- APARTMENT - NIGHT.

Pogue goes to a kitchen cabinet. Looks for something heavy: a crow-bar or...? He finds a STEAM IRON. Weighs it in his hand. It'll have to do.

EXT- ALLEYWAY - NIGHT.

The PARKING METER in the dead-end alley. Pogue approaches it, tightening his grip on the iron, preparing to raise it, when...

COP
(Friendly.) Sir?

A SQUAD CAR parked in the shadows, two COPS inside, sipping coffee. Pogue lowers the iron.

COP cont.
Seen a pick-up truck racing by here?

POGUE
No.

COP #2
(Looking at the iron strange.)
Just out for a walk?

Pogue looks at the iron too. Raises it up and down, lifting weights:

POGUE
Power-walking. Cheaper than barbells.

The cops nod: Good idea. Pogue eyes the parking meter, frustrated. Begins to turn up the alleyway, but asks matter-of-factly:

POGUE cont.
When do they empty the meters?

COP
Tomorrow. Why?

POGUE
I saw some kids messing with them.
What time?

COP #2
3:30. Don't worry, sir, we'll be here all night.

POGUE
(Unconvincing.)
Great.

EXT- CORNELL'S MANSION - NIGHT.

Storm clouds. Above Cornell's immense Spanish mansion.

INT- CORNELL'S STUDY - NIGHT.

An enormous study. Spanish tiles and rug. Doover and Hendrix sit side-by-side, intimidated. Bad boys in the principal's office. Hendrix points at Doover:

HENDRIX

He paid me to scare Pogue--!

DOOVER

(A whisper.) Shut up.

HENDRIX

To make him turn over the coin!

The Bodyguards trade a glance with Cornell: the coin.
Trying not to look impressed:

CORNELL

What coin?

HENDRIX

"Royal something." It's supposed
to be worth a lot.

The smallest crack in Cornell's composure.

CORNELL

How do you know Mr. Pogue has this
coin?

Doover is silent.

HENDRIX

When Pogue was brought into the
hospital, he mumbled something
about the coin being with "baby."

DOOVER

Would you shut up!

CORNELL

"Baby?" What's "Baby" mean?

Hendrix shrugs. Cornell composes himself:

CORNELL

Anything else you can tell us?

HENDRIX

No, except I think I deserve something. I mean, for my trouble.

CORNELL

You certainly do.
(Turning away, over his shoulder:)
Not on the rug.

As the Bodyguards begin to lift Hendrix and Doover's chairs off the rug, Cornell takes a hot towel from a steam cabinet and exits, wiping his hands. We follow him out, and hear a fussy Hendrix:

HENDRIX (V.O.)

Watch the tie.

INT- VAULT - NIGHT.

The massive door opens on a vault, florescent lights bursting to life. Walls covered with coins, large and small. The playground of a crazed coin collector.

A GLASS CASE stands in the center of the room, a place of prominence. We close in on it and discover: the case is empty, the coin gone. A hand with no thumb rests on the glass. Cornell stares down into it, eyes burning.

EXT- CAR PORT - NIGHT.

Beth Holly. She looks up at Pogue's apartment, overwhelmed with her task. How to explain, how to apologize? Instead she turns to his car in the car-port.

INT- CAR - NIGHT.

She reaches into the glove compartment, and finds his hand-held recorder. A tape inside. She pushes 'record':

BETH

Pogue, I'm sorry. I'm not Sarah Novak. I'm really Beth Holly... just a washed-up actress trying to become a model. I looked like Sarah, that's why...

And as she continues...

EXT- CAR PORT - NIGHT.

...Two FIGURE quietly creep toward the car. Cornell's Bodyguards. Smoothly and professionally they yank open the car doors and press guns to Beth's head!

INT- POGUE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT.

THE MALTESE FALCON plays on Pogue's tv, volume off. Bogart talks tough to Mary Astor.

Pogue watches as he sits back in his chair, finger tugging at his ear lobe, preparing his tape for the next day. Rattling it off:

POGUE

Okay, it's Thursday morning, and your name is M.L. Pogue. You're a private investigator...

He pauses, watching Bogart. Should he? Nahh. But why not? He records, more intently:

POGUE cont.

...A tough guy. A dangerous customer. Not afraid to use your fists when you have to. Or a gun.

Grinning, he grabs the fedora from the hat rack, and throws it on. Getting into it:

POGUE cont.

Dames throw themselves at you. They know when a man lives a bullet away from death. You use them and drop them like yesterday's laundry. (He stops, clicking of the recorder, depleted.) Or they use you.

Embarrassed, his thoughts filled with Beth, Pogue throws the fedora on the bed, rewinds the tape, and records much more conservatively:

POGUE cont.

Your name is M.L. Pogue. You've got a problem. Every time you go to sleep you lose your memory.

He snaps off the recorder, and repeats to himself brightly: Every time you go to sleep you lose your memory.

CUT TO LATER:

He puts a dozen ugly scoops of coffee into a coffee maker. He turns the volume up on the tv loud: a late night war movie. And turns on a Rossini overture on the stereo.

On his fourth cup of coffee, Pogue paces, reading from "Charge of the light Brigade", tv and stereo blaring in the background.

FADE OUT.

INT- POGUE'S BEDROOM - MORNING.

Sunlight streams into Pogue's apartment. White noise plays on the tv. An empty coffee mug lies on the floor. And... Pogue is asleep, fully-clothed, the discredited fedora smushed on his head.

His eyes open slowly. He sits up, bewildered, the hat coming up with him. Looks around his bedroom. Nothing looks familiar. He's lost his memory.

He sees the RECORDER beside his bed with the "Push this button" sign. He reaches for it but a voice stops him:

CORNELL

Good morning, Mr. Pogue.

The desk chair rotates, revealing Cornell. His Bodyguards appear in the doorway. Pogue stares at them, no earthly idea what this is about:

POGUE

Good morning.

CORNELL

I'm disappointed with you.

Pogue points to himself. Cornell nods, and turns over an envelope. The rent check confettis out:

CORNELL cont.

800 dollars for a bribe? I thought I meant more to you than that. (Standing.) Now I hear you've been holding out on me. "The Coin of Royal Power." We know you have it.

A pregnant pause. Pogue looks at them all.

POGUE

You sure you have the right person?

Cornell laughs, shakes his head. He nods to the Bodyguards who grab Pogue and carry him...

INT- LIVING ROOM - MORNING.

...toward the front door, but Baby blocks it! Growling! In attack position! The Bodyguards stop, apprehensive.

Baby pounces! Unfortunately he flies right past them, landing in an open closet. Cornell shuts the closet door, and as they carry Pogue out, we hear:

POGUE (V.O.)

What happened to your thumb?

We hear a slug to the stomach.

EXT- SANTA MONICA COURTHOUSE - DAY.

A pretty government building.

INT- COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY.

Dolby wheels up to Rosenheim. Both are panicked.

DOLBY

Where's Pogue?

ROSENHEIM

I sent a man by his apartment.
He's gone.

EXT- CORNELL'S MANSION - DAY.

If anything, the mansion is even prettier during the day. One of Cornell's Bodyguards searches Pogue's car. Finding nothing, he turns and shakes his head to...

INT- MANSION STUDY - DAY.

...Cornell standing in the window. Disappointed, Cornell starts across his massive study... stops, noticing a drop of dried blood on the tiles. He takes a handkerchief from his pocket, wipes it away, and leaves the room.

INT- BASEMENT HALLWAY - DAY.

At the bottom of a stairway, Cornell crosses a basement hallway, and enters...

INT- CHANGING ROOM - DAY.

...a small changing room. Wooden benches, towels on racks. Bodyguard #2 enters from the facing door.

CORNELL

Anything?

BODYGUARD #2
(Shakes his head.) He's good.

Cornell moves past him and enters...

INT- SAUNA - DAY.

...the mansion's large sauna. Brightly tiled. Tiered seating. Through the light sauna steam, he sees Pogue sitting alone on one of the tiers, fanning himself with fedora. Approaches him:

CORNELL
I used to be a different man, Mr. Pogue, an impatient man. I did anything to get my way: violence, intimidation. Then I moved out here. California. A fresh start. I cleaned up my act. Became an entrepreneur. Look at me now. (Suddenly sad.) So why would you pull me back into the dirt, Mr Pogue? Make me do something I abhor? If you don't tell me where the coin is, I will have to kill you. But first I will kill...

He points dramatically toward a scared Beth in the doorway, the Bodyguard with a gun to her head...

CORNELL cont.
...Her!

Pogue shows no reaction in seeing her:

POGUE
Oh.

Impressed, Cornell nods to the Bodyguard: He is good.

CORNELL
I have a court date to keep. You have two hours to...
(Reacting to the steam.)
...sweat it out, as it were.

He leaves and the Bodyguard follows him out, closing the door. Alone, Beth runs to Pogue:

BETH

(Tumbles out.) Pogue, I'm sorry.
I was wrong. When Doover came to
me, I had no money, nothing, but I
didn't mean to get you into this.
Can you forgive me?

Pogue considers this:

POGUE

Sure...
(A pause.)
Who are you?

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

The courtroom. Large. Modern. Spectators and reporters
fill the seats. KIPPER, Cornell's high-priced defense
lawyer--splashy Thomas Wolfe suits; affected accent--goes to
Cornell's side, leads him to the defense table. Meanwhile,
Rosenheim, Dolby, and a LEGAL AID sit grimly at the
prosecution table.

JUDGE BLOCK, a bulldog-faced civil servant, goes to the
bench. A Bailiff announces:

BAILIFF

All stand. The honorable--

JUDGE BLOCK

What's going on, Mr. Rosenheim?!

ROSENHEIM

(Reluctant.) We've hit a snag,
your Honor. Our witness is
missing.

JUDGE BLOCK

(Angry.) Both of you, up here!

INT- SAUNA - DAY.

Pogue and Beth. Still trapped in the sauna.

POGUE

Let me get this straight. I'm a
detective with amnesia caused by an
explosion set by Cornell, the guy
I'm s'posed to testify against in
court right now on a murder charge;
and you're an actress who pretended
to be a victim killed in the
explosion to get a valuable coin
she gave me before my amnesia and I

hid in my dog's collar; but now you're sorry and want to help me get to court and find the coin again?

BETH

Yes.

Pogue takes only a second:

POGUE

Okay.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Judge Block fumes at Rosenheim. Kipper acts innocently befuddles. All in whispers at the bench:

ROSENHEIM

If we could just have another day to locate our witness--

KIPPER

Your honor--

JUDGE BLOCK

(To Kipper.) If I hear one more time how busy Mr. Cornell is, I will hold you in contempt.
(Looking at the courtroom clock.) You have until three o'clock, Mr. Rosenheim.

Rosenheim holds three fingers behind his back. Dolby sees this, looks up at the clock. Thirty minutes away.

INT- SAUNA - DAY.

Beth and Pogue look for some escape from the sauna, as the steam makes them sweatier. But there's no windows. No vents. And only one (locked) door.

BETH

You're a detective, Pogue. You've been in tough spots like this before.

POGUE

I can't remember.

BETH

That doesn't matter. You are who you are. Think.

Pogue thinks. Notices through some wooden slats a pile of black SAUNA STONES. Pogue grabs two cool stones. Gives one to Beth.

POGUE

Okay, I'll stand behind the door.

BETH

Good.

POGUE

You get him in here, and I'll--

But at that second, the sauna door swings open! The Bodyguard sits in the changing room, cocky, gun pointed at them.

BODYGUARD

(Shaking his head.) Uh-uh-uh. Just sit back down and get comfortable.

Pogue and Beth sit down. The Bodyguard turns his attention to a portable tv, leaving the door open. Pogue and Beth confer in whispers:

BETH

Now what?

They think a second. Beth brightens:

BETH

Pogue, you're a baseball pitcher!

Pogue looks at her like she's crazy.

BETH cont.

That's about the distance to home plate. Hit him with a pitch.

Pogue looks at her like she's crazy. Insisting:

POGUE

I thought you said I was a detective.

BETH

(Quick.) You were in a baseball league at night.

Pogue incredulously checks the distance to the Bodyguard, his face in profile, in the doorway. It looks impossibly far.

POGUE

How long ago?

BETH

A few years. I mean, last year.
You pitched I think three no-
hitters, struck out 25 batters.

Pogue examines her face.

POGUE

Left or right hand?

Beth takes only a second, guesses:

BETH

Right.
(Off Pogue's look.)
You think I'm making this up?!

Pogue feels the sauna stone in his hand. Looks at the
Bodyguard, involved in his tv.

POGUE

How many batters?

BETH

Twenty. Ten in one game.

POGUE

You said twenty-five before.

BETH

(Scandalized.)
What is this, Sports Quiz?

Pogue tightens his hand on the stone. Concentrates on the
gap in the door. Draws his arm back, winds up, and pitches.

The stone flies through the doorway... right over the
Bodyguard's profile, unnoticed! and through the open door on
the other side... into the steam in the hallway. There's a
light "thump" then nothing.

Pogue and Beth exhale. She hands him her stone:

BETH

Okay, you always leaned high on
your first pitch.

POGUE

This is crazy.

BETH

I'm telling the truth, Pogue.

Pogue looks at her. She sure seems to be. He concentrates, staring at the Bodyguard's forehead, thirty feet away. Brings back his hand. Winds up. And pitches...

It flies perfectly through the door... THUMP! The stone hits the Bodyguard in the side of the head. He slumps to the floor, unconscious. Beth rushes to the body:

BETH

You did it!

INT- CHANGING ROOM - DAY.

As Pogue kneels to take the Bodyguard's gun, Beth kneels across from him:

BETH

You forgive me, don't you Pogue?

POGUE

That's kinda' hard for me to answer uh...

BETH

(Prompting.) Beth.

POGUE

Beth. I don't know anything about you.

She kisses him. A powerful kiss.

BETH

You know enough.

Pogue shrugs and nods: I guess I do. Their hands meet across the body. Gun in hand, Pogue peers into the hallway, and waves Beth through after him.

INT- BASEMENT HALLWAY - DAY.

Pogue and Beth exchange a glance as they move past the body of the second Bodyguard, slumped over, the first pitched stone beside his head.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

The clock. Ten to three. Rosenheim exchanges a hopeless look with Dolby and exits the courtroom.

INT- CAR - DAY.

Pogue revs his Mercedes to life, rockets away from the mansion.

POGUE

Where am I going?

BETH

Left, to the courthouse.

Pogue skids around a corner, as Beth straightens his hair--throwing the fedora aside,--finds the black and white suspenders on her seat, and puts them on him. Seeing them for the "first time":

POGUE

These are nice.

BETH

Thanks.

Beth digs into the glove compartment for the recorder:

BETH cont.

You have to memorize your testimony, Pogue. The only way to keep Cornell off our backs is to put him in jail.

Beth finds the recorder, but unfortunately a button is still depressed: it's been running all night. Beth pushes 'play' but the tape doesn't move.

BETH cont.

Damn. We need new batteries!

She scrambles through her purse. None. Only the transmitter eyeglasses. Beth thinks. She reaches into the glove compartment and finds Pogue's transmitter. She puts the eyeglasses on Pogue's head.

POGUE

I can see fine.

BETH

No, listen.
(Whispers into the transmitter.)
Can you hear?

Surprised:

POGUE

Yes!

Pogue takes the glasses off to look at them, curiously, which unfortunately sends them into the path of a bus!

BETH
WATCH THE ROAD!

Pogue swerves the wheel, and...

EXT- SANTA MONICA COURTHOUSE - DAY.

...the car hops the curb, zips across a beautiful lawn, and skids to a stop on the first step of Santa Monica Courthouse, right at the foot of Rosenheim.

ROSENHEIM
Goddammit, Pogue, where were you?!

He pulls him out of the car and toward court. Pogue looks back toward Beth, but she waves him on:

BETH
Go. I'll get batteries.

INT- COURTHOUSE FOYER - DAY.

Pogue and Rosenheim rush toward court:

ROSENHEIM
Now remember, just stay calm; and don't be too detailed in your description. I'd rather let the jury's imagination run wild than have them question specifics. Nice touch with the glasses; they make you look respectable.

POGUE
Thanks.

ROSENHEIM
Oh, another clue. That L.A.P.D. t-shirt. The one with M.P. on the collar.

POGUE
(Playing along.)
Uh-huh.

ROSENHEIM
The Department hasn't made those shirts for two years.

Pogue doesn't know how to react:

POGUE

Nooo?

Cameras flash. Reporters shout. As Rosenheim pulls Pogue into...

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

...court. The buzz is electrifying. The spectators, the jury, the press, all stare at Pogue, as he rushes with Rosenheim up the aisle. Pogue's mother jumps up from her aisle seat, and hugs Pogue:

SHIRLEY

Kiss me!

No idea who she is, Pogue hardly has time to react before he's dragged along by Rosenheim... into the face of Judy who sneers at him. Pogue looks back at her confused, as he's rushed past... ex-wife Paula, in her police uniform:

PAULA

I still don't have a check.

Blank, Pogue nods sympathetically, and is pulled past the DEFENSE TABLE where Kipper nudges his client. Cornell turns. And his determination, his calm, melts away. It's the first time we've seen him so completely affected.

Dolby slaps Pogue's hand as he passes. Judge Block arrives at the bench:

BLOCK

So happy you could join us, Mr. Pogue.

POGUE

I'm happy too.

INT- COURTHOUSE CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

Beth races into a small courthouse Convenience Store. A vacant-eyed CLERK watches a boxing match on a small tv.

BETH

Excuse me, I need--?!

CLERK

Just a sec.

The Clerk points to an OLD LADY buying a pack of postcards. Beth presses the transmitter to her ear, hearing:

BAILIFF (V.O.)

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

POGUE (V.O.)

I do.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Pogue on the stand, wearing the glasses. Nervous. But making a good show of being self-possessed.

BAILIFF

Could you state and spell your name for the record.

POGUE

Maurice Pogue.
P.O.G... (Not sure.)

INT- COURTHOUSE STORE - DAY.

Into the transmitter:

BETH

U.E.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Repeating in the courtroom:

POGUE

U.E.

Rosenheim stands and begins, occasionally looking down at the yellow legal pad of his Aide, who takes notes.

ROSENHEIM

Mr. Pogue. Just a few questions for background. You're a private investigator, is that correct?

POGUE

Yes.

ROSENHEIM

And where is your place of business?

Pogue begins to speak. Stops. Doesn't know this.

ROSENHEIM cont.

For the record.

INT- STORE - DAY.

Beth's face goes blank too. She sees a payphone in one corner of the store. Into the transmitter:

BETH

Stall.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Repeating:

POGUE

Stall.

The Stenographer looks up at this response. Rosenheim looks up too:

ROSENHEIM

Excuse me?

INT- STORE - DAY.

Beth tears through the payphone's yellow pages.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Pogue recovers:

POGUE

I mean, 's't all possible to turn up the air conditioning?

The Judge nods to the Bailiff to comply.

BLOCK

Answer the question, Mr. Pogue.

POGUE

My address. You want my address.

INT- STORE - DAY.

Beth flips now through the white pages at warp speed. Into the transmitter:

BETH

Almost there.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Pogue looks around. How to stall?

POGUE

Before I give my address, let me
say one thing. For the record...
(Turning to the Stenographer.)
That's a fabulous pin.

Rosenheim reacts. The Judge reacts.

STENOGRAPHER

Thank you. It was a gift.

The defense attorney is on his feet:

KIPPER

Objection, your honor. Non-
responsive.

Among the spectators, Shirley comments to her neighbor:

SHIRLEY

He's such a well-mannered boy.

But the neighbor is too busy loading on another jacket from
the air-conditioning.

INT- STORE - DAY.

Beth reads the address from the phone book:

BETH

1195 Speedway.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

The Judge:

JUDGE BLOCK

Mr. Pogue!

POGUE

(Quickly responding.)
1195 Speedway.

Rosenheim looks twice at Pogue. Then charges ahead,
unconsciously noticing the address on his Aid's legal pad.

INT- COURTHOUSE STORE - DAY.

Beth continues to wait behind the Old Lady collecting her
change. She drops it. Coins roll everywhere behind the
counter. The Clerk bends over to retrieve them. Beth can't
believe it.

Coins collected, the old lady exits. Beth steps aside with exaggerated patience, then dives at the counter:

BETH

BATTERIES!

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Rosenheim asks:

ROSENHEIM

And, isn't it true, Mr. Pogue, you
used to work as a police officer?

INT- STORE - DAY.

The Clerk looks up from the battery display:

SELLER

What size?

BETH

"C."

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Hearing this:

POGUE

Si.

He realizes:

POGUE cont.

Yes...

(For good measure.)

...Amigo'.

Pogue raises his hands with a flourish like a flamenco dancer. Rosenheim decides to move on. Quickly.

ROSENHEIM

And you retired from the force two
years ago?

POGUE

Oui.

ROSENHEIM

(Eyeing him warily.) Now before we
move on, Mr. Pogue--

But Rosenheim stops. A thought occurs to him. He looks down at the Aid's legal pad. It reads: "Maurice Pogue." Rosenheim takes the pad and circles "M" and "P."

Pogue's address is below it. Rosenheim circles "1195." "L.A.P.D." and "2 years" below that. Another circle. Rosenheim looks up.

My God. Pogue is the one! The Judge interrupts:

BLOCK

Mr. Rosenheim.
Do you have a question?

Rosenheim nostril's flare. His jaw set, his eyes wild, he composes his voice:

ROSENHEIM

Yes, your Honor, I have a question.

INT- COURTHOUSE STORE - DAY.

The clerk unfolds a step-ladder, and climbs it slowly--he does everything slowly--toward some boxes, explaining:

CLERK

Back stock.

Beth smiles politely, hating him with all her soul.

INT- COURT - DAY.

Rosenheim. Intense. Determined.

ROSENHEIM

Mr. Pogue. You're a bachelor,
isn't that correct?

POGUE

Yes.

ROSENHEIM

You live alone?

POGUE

Yes

ROSENHEIM

Would you say you lead a...
'promiscuous' lifestyle?

Pogue is bewildered by the question. Dolby looks up from his wheelchair. The Defense Attorney interrupts:

KIPPER

Objection. What's the relevance?

ROSENHEIM

For background, your Honor, merely background.

BLOCK

I'll allow a little leeway.

ROSENHEIM

Again, Mr. Pogue, would you say you lead a promiscuous lifestyle?

POGUE

I wouldn't say 'promiscuous.'

ROSENHEIM

I'll rephrase it. You are attracted to woman, are you not?

POGUE

Yes, I--

ROSENHEIM

And not being married has not kept you from being sexually active?

Dolby can't believe it. The JOURNALISTS in the front row aren't sure what to write. Pogue hesitates.

ROSENHEIM cont.

Just a yes or no, Mr. Pogue?

POGUE

No.

ROSENHEIM

Thank you. Mr. Pogue, what is the seventh commandment?

Pogue doesn't know:

POGUE

The seventh commandment?

ROSENHEIM

Yes.

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

Beth also doesn't know:

BETH

Uhhh.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

But she's in good company because Judge Block also tries to remember, counting on his fingers. The JURISTS scratch their heads, unsure. The Journalists are blank. One leans to another:

JOURNALIST

The right to bear arms?

Rosenheim approaches the stand:

ROSENHEIM

Shall I help you out, Mr. Pogue?

(Pounding the stand.)

"Thou! Shalt! Not!...

Shirley tries to mouth it to her son: "Commit adultery."
But Pogue doesn't see.

ROSENHEIM cont.

"Commit! Adultery!"

I can see it's a commandment you
don't live by, Mr. Pogue.

Kipper interrupts without thinking:

KIPPER

Your Honor!

ROSENHEIM

Withdrawn!

Mr. Pogue, who were you with on the
night of May 1st?

Judy bites her lip, trying to count back in her mind, and...

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

Beth is a mirror image, also counting back.

INT- COURT - DAY.

Pogue answers Rosenheim:

POGUE

I don't remember.

ROSENHEIM

Come, come, Mr. Pogue. That was three nights ago. Would you have the court believe that you don't remember who you were with three nights ago?

POGUE

Yes.

Rosenheim reaches into his briefcase triumphantly and pulls out the evidence bag containing the L.A.P.D. t-shirt:

ROSENHEIM

I have evidence that you were with
a woman!

Judy sinks down in her seat, trying to disappear. Pogue looks around, no longer the crazy one.

JUDGE BLOCK

Mr. Rosenheim!

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

The Clerk finally finds the batteries in backstock, holding them up triumphantly. A nervous wreck, Beth grabs them, and shoves them into the recorder, while...

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

...The Judge scolds:

JUDGE BLOCK

Background is fine, Mr. Rosenheim,
but can we get back to THE CRIME?!
PLEASE!

ROSENHEIM

I'm sorry, your Honor. Of course.

Rosenheim calms himself and returns to his notes:

ROSENHEIM

Mr. Pogue, you have testified that the defendant was responsible for Sarah Novak's death, is that correct?

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

The batteries are in, the tape running, Beth excitedly tells Pogue:

BETH

I got it! Your testimony.

But Beth's own voice comes from the tape:

BETH NARRATION

"I'm sorry, Pogue. I'm not Sarah Novak..."

Beth realizes it's the apology tape she recorded in Pogue's car. Despairing, she rechecks the tape's label: "Testimony."

BETH cont.

Pogue, I can't believe it. I taped over it.

INT- COURT - DAY.

Pogue reacts:

POGUE

What?

Taken aback by his outburst:

ROSENHEIM

It's a simple question, Mr. Pogue. You've testified in the past that Mr. Cornell murdered Sarah Novak, correct?

POGUE

Yes.

ROSENHEIM

To the best of your recollection, Mr. Pogue, and drawing upon your extensive expertise in this area, has Mr. Cornell ever...
(Unable to help himself.)
...fucked his best friend's fiance?

Kipper jumps up, and Dolby yells from his chair:

KIPPER/DOLBY

OBJECTION!

JUDGE BLOCK

That's enough, Mr. Rosenheim!
Where is this leading?!

ROSENHEIM

I'll tell you where this is leading, your Honor...

Rosenheim points at Pogue:

ROSENHEIM cont.
To his FUCKING GRAVE!

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

Beth jerks away from the transmitter, suddenly hearing loud scuffling, punctuated by animal screams! She looks at the transmitter odd, as...

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

...The courtroom erupts! Rosenheim strains for Pogue's neck as a BAILIFF leans into him, using all his strength to hold him back:

ROSENHEIM
TELL THIS COURT, MR. POGUE! YOU
WERE WITH HER, WEREN'T YOU?!
(Pointing at Judy in court.)
THE SLUT!

Judy leaps to her feet, and starts forward:

JUDY
YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT SLUTS!
LET'S TALK ABOUT CYNTHIA!

The Court Reporter (Cynthia) stands and races from the court in tears.

JUDY
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, WE'RE
EVEN!

This makes Rosenheim even angrier. He turns to Pogue:

ROSENHEIM
So you did screw her!

He dives at Pogue, as the Bailiff and then Judy try to pull him away. The Judge angrily bangs his gavel, losing control. And, in the front row, Paula grabs the walkie-talkie from her police belt:

PAULA
Help in court five.

She starts forward to assist. Meanwhile, Pogue is distracted by what he hears over the glasses...

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

...Beth's tape continuing to play:

BETH NARRATION

"I'm really Beth Holly... a washed-up actress trying to be a model. I should've told you sooner, but I started to like being Sarah. And I started to like being... with you."

INT- COURTROOM.

The noise swirls around him, but all Pogue hears is:

BETH NARRATION cont.

"...I've lied to you throughout, Pogue, I know. But there's one thing that's not a lie... I love you..."

Pogue's face softens, but before he can respond, Rosenheim dives over the stand!, trying to strangle him, and Pogue is knocked backward...

...his head hitting the floor!

BETH NARRATION

"I love you. I'm not Sarah, but--"

And simultaneously Pogue sees...

EXT- ALLEY - NIGHT.

A CAR EXPLOSION! A burst of color and light, with no sound.

A familiar limousine pulls away from the explosion; in the closing limo window we briefly glimpse... a hand with no thumb, discarding a steamed towel!

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Pogue is overtaken by the sharp glimpse of memory. Rosenheim is finally dragged from him, and Pogue sits up, looking toward...

...Cornell at the defense table. Their eyes meet. Seeing the certainty in Pogue's eyes, Cornell realizes... he's in trouble. A Bodyguard offers a zip-lock bag, but Cornell is too concerned to take the towel inside.

Pogue begins to speak, but he quickly sees...

EXT- POGUE'S APARTMENT - DAY.

A coin. The Coin of Royal Power. Then...

EXT- VENICE ALLEYWAY - DAY

Someone unlocking a parking meter.

INT- COURT - DAY.

Pogue is aghast, noise echoing around him. He looks up at the courtroom clock. Three-thirty. Ten minutes until the parking meter is unloaded. Whispering:

POGUE

Beth--

But Rosenheim, swinging wildly, knocks the eyeglasses from his face! He reaches toward them on the floor, but Rosenheim holds his foot. Pogue tries to struggle out of his grasp, while...

A COURTROOM SKETCH ARTIST completes a drawing more suitable for the sports page: Rosenheim swinging at Pogue. We look up at...

...the actual struggle, help finally arriving in the form of a POLICE LIUTENANT moving up the aisle. He pulls Rosenheim away and easily cuffs him, as Rosenheim yells:

ROSENHEIM

I'll kill you if you touch her again!

The words have a familiar ring to the Lieutenant. We see why. It's Willis. Willis looks from Pogue (reaching again for the glasses) to Paula and back to Pogue. And Willis explodes...

He rushes at Pogue, trying to strangle him.

INT- CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY.

As Beth listens to the transmitter, trying to make sense of the chaos, the Clerk looks up from his similar-sounding boxing match and offers:

CLERK

Does your guy think he'll go the twelve rounds?

But Pogue's whisper breaks through the struggle:

POGUE (V.O.)
Beth?

BETH
Pogue?

INT- COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY.

Beth backs out of the store, listening intently:

POGUE (V.O.)
The coin. It's in the alley behind
my apartment. Last parking meter.

BETH
(Excited.) Your memory's back!
I'm on my way.

And she rushes from the courthouse. Meanwhile, we PAN
across the foyer to the courtroom doors which bang open!
A dozen Baliffs first drag Rosenheim out... then Judy...
then Willis... then Paula and then... Pogue's mother.
Shirley yells at Paula:

SHIRLEY
I knew you were nothing but
trouble. I knew it.

INT- COURTROOM - DAY.

Silence. The Judge drinks a glass of water, straightens his
robe, wipes the sweat from his forehead. Holding his anger
in check, he nods to...

...Dolby, who wheels toward the stand:

DOLBY
What do you remember of the night
of May 11th... the death of Sarah
Novak... its aftermath... and the
person responsible, Mr. Pogue?

Pogue. On the stand. Composed. Certain.

POGUE
I remember...

He hesitates, then beams:

POGUE
...everything.

EXT- ALLEYWAY - DAY.

A PARKING METER. All the coins clatter out into a rolling COIN-BOX being steered by a METER MAID. She locks up the meter and moves on to the last one in the row! when... Pogue's Mercedes skids up to her, BETH alone at the wheel:

BETH
There's some kids breaking into a meter!

Angry, the Meter Maid wheels in the direction Beth points. Around the corner. And Beth backs up the car a few feet, and plows into the parking meter.

It hits the pavement and a stream of coins spill out. Beth runs to the coins, peers into them. All grey and dirty, except... the shiny gold edge of... "The Coin of Royal Power."

Positively giddy, Beth digs it out, and flips it into the air... The coin soars and turns in slow-motion, as...

Beth looks back toward the running car (in real time). And looks up toward Pogue's apartment. Growing serious. Tempted to run off with the coin. A moment of truth.

The coin starts slowly toward earth, turning... And Beth catches it. Her face showing: she's decided.

I got it. BETH

EXT- COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY.

The courthouse doors bang open, and a chaos of reporters and spectators throb out onto the steps, swirling around Kipper and Cornell, whose two Bodyguards try to push the reporters away. We can tell from Cornell's face, he's devastated.

REPORTER
Why'd you change your plea?

KIPPER
The fact that we made a deal has no bearing on Mr. Cornell's guilt or innocence.

REPORTER #2

But it sure looks like a thumbs-down for his credibility.

Reacting to the "thumb" reference, the bodyguard starts toward the reporter, but Cornell stops him, and then goes after the reporter himself, wiping his towel at him! Several cops and reporters try to hold him back.

Meanwhile, a smiling Dolby comes out of the courthouse, and more reporters scrambling around him. Dolby waves for silence.

DOLBY

We will ask that Mr. Cornell receive the maximum sentence of life in prison. We will also bring charges against Mr. Cornell for the murders of a Dr. Anthony Doover and a Michael Hendrix. I'd like to add one more thing. This successful prosecution would not have been possible without...

He motions toward the door, but only Shirley Pogue stands there. She grabs a microphone:

SHIRLEY POGUE

Thank you. Even as a baby I knew Maurice was special. He had the straightest teeth--

EXT- POGUE'S APARTMENT TERRACE - DAY.

Pogue rushes up to his apartment terrace, excited:

POGUE

Beth! Beth!

No answer. He enters...

INT- APARTMENT - DAY.

...and calls into the living room, still excited:

POGUE

Hello? Beth?

No one there. A little slower, a little less excited, Pogue enters...

INT- BEDROOM - DAY.

...the bedroom. No one. A sinking feeling hits his stomach. A sad whisper:

POGUE

Beth?

He sits on the edge of the bed, exhausted, sad. Suddenly he looks up. A noise in the next room. He jumps up. Goes to it.

INT- LIVING ROOM - DAY.

The noise comes from the closet. Pogue opens it. His dog, Baby, looks up at him, panting. Pogue smiles. Pets him.

EXT- BOARDWALK - DUSK.

The bottom of the stairs. The Landlord stands there, but as soon as he sees Pogue starting down toward him, he runs off. Blind Mort remains, interrupts a sad blues number.

POGUE

Hey Mort.

MORT

Pogue.

POGUE

Have you seen Bet-- Sarah?

MORT

I haven't seen much of anything.
Got that five bucks you owe me?

Pogue begins to object, but instead nods, gives him the five. What the hell. Pogue starts off when Stanley interrupts:

STANLEY

Pogue?

He begins to gesture toward his mural (which we don't see), but then he thinks better of it:

STANLEY cont.

Never mind.

Pogue exits toward the beach. Stanley finishes whitewashing Mort's cane, as Mort comments:

MORT

I told you I like it.

Stanley starts to laugh. Mort does too. They high-five, for the first time successfully.

EXT- BEACH PLAYGROUND - DUSK

The sun sets on the vacant playground in the sand. Pogue approaches it. A woman hidden to him slides down the slide. Pogue races to her.

But it's not Beth. It's a mother with a baby daughter in her lap. Pogue walks off, alone.

EXT- APARTMENT TERRACE - DUSK.

Pogue comes up on to his terrace, sad. He looks up to see kneeling next to his dog a person in a fedora. The person turns. It's...

Beth. She works on the DOG DOOR, detaching the metal frame with its swinging rubber flap. She looks up at him:

BETH

Remember me?

Pogue suppresses a smile, pretends to think.

POGUE

Humphrey Bogart?

Beth goes to him, puts the hat on his head:

BETH

I'll give you a hint.

She kisses him passionately.

POGUE

It's coming back.

She kisses him again, this time longer. He thinks about it, then...

POGUE cont.

Almost there.

She rattles his teeth with a kiss. Recovering:

POGUE cont.

I'm cured.

Beth grabs Pogue's suspenders, and begins to lead him into the apartment, asking:

BETH

How much do you remember anyway?

POGUE

Enough to... vivi ogni momento al
suo massimo.

He grabs her ankle. She laughs, hopping, as Pogue pulls her into the apartment.

In the background, Baby raises his leg next to a potted tree, and of course misses, hitting a patch that's been hit before: damp, paint chipping. Finished, he follows Pogue and Beth, the "Coin of Royal Power" reattached to his collar.

He aims for the dog door; and we see that Beth has moved the flap two feet to the right so that, by aiming at it, Baby makes it perfectly through the actual opening!

We back off the apartment terrace, and down to the street, stopping on...

EXT- BOARDWALK - DAY.

...Stanley's mural. Stanley is no longer present, but his mural is stunning. A Los Angeles Mona Lisa. And Mona Lisa's face is that of Beth's.

We close on it in until nothing but the smile fills the screen.

THE END