

"CONSENTING ADULTS"

by

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TITLES OVER:

EXT. A SNOW COVERED HILL. BOSTON AREA - DAY

The FIRST SNOW of winter is being celebrated. SKIS and SLEDS have been dusted off and waxed and are now being tested before more serious slopes are attempted.

Among the crowd making their way up the hill are RICHARD PARKER, his wife, PRISCILLA, and their daughter, LORI. Richard and Priscilla are in their early thirties, a healthy, attractive couple, while Lori is a pretty thirteen year old.

Priscilla is carrying SKIS and wears a SKI SUIT. Richard and Lori, wearing JEANS and OLD DOWN COATS, tow a SLED. The Parkers soon join the crowd at the top. Priscilla snaps on her skis as Richard and Lori clamber onto the SLED. Richard and Lori push off and Priscilla follows.

Half way down, Richard and Lori hit a bump and are sent TUMBLING into the snow. Priscilla stops a few yards below them.

PRISCILLA

You guys okay?

Richard and Lori look down at her. Richard starts to laugh.

PRISCILLA

What's so funny?

RICHARD

You are, Priscilla. You look so wholesome!

PRISCILLA

I am wholesome.

She strikes a pose, wide eyes, a fixed smile. Richard and Lori laugh. Priscilla turns and skis off down the hill. Richard and Lori remount and hurtle after her.

People smile to themselves as the Parkers go by, shouting to each other and laughing.

TITLES END.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

It's snowing on prosperous Dark Street, a Cul de Sac in Brookline, Massachusetts. The CAMERA moves toward a house at the end. 'Happy Birthday,' is being sung.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A half eaten BIRTHDAY CAKE, with only the letter 'L' and the number '13' still remaining, stands on the dining room table.

Over in the fashionably decorated living room, Richard sits at a grand piano, playing 'Happy Birthday,' and singing along with Priscilla. Lori stands beside a sheet-covered object, her present, looking at her parents and smiling.

Her handsome father still has the rough edges from the Pennsylvania steel town of his youth... but only just. Priscilla is a pretty, fresh-faced New England woman who tends to wear simple, elegant clothes and almost no make up. Shy but not weak, a little reserved, she has a pleasant self-mocking manner and an infectious laugh. These are parents a child can be proud of.

The song ends. Lori takes a corner of the sheet and pulls it away to reveal a PROFESSIONAL SYNTHESIZER. Lori is speechless.

RICHARD

Happy birthday.

LORI

I can't believe this, dad. It's amazing! Thank you!

She gives him a hug.

LORI

And you too, mom. Thanks a million.

Lori comes to her and Priscilla hugs her and rocks her from side to side. Now she kisses the top of her head and releases her. Lori sits down at the synthesizer and starts to play. Richard and Priscilla exchange proud glances.

SAME PLACE - LATER

Richard is at the piano, Lori at the synthesizer. They play a duet they have composed together. Richard is clearly a professional, Lori a highly talented student, self-possessed and bright. Richard peers at his sheet music.

RICHARD

Lori, should this be C or C sharp?

LORI

C sharp.

RICHARD

I like that.

They continue to play. On the piano are various AWARDS Richard has won for composing JINGLES for TV ADS.

A squeal of BRAKES draws Richard's attention to the window.

POV OF STREET FROM PARKER HOUSE

A MOVING VAN parks across the street. A Jeep Cherokee skids to a halt behind it. A shapely WOMAN steps out, pierces the snow with high heels, and swings into the house. Now a Jaguar draws up, with a cigarette boat attached, and a MAN jumps out wearing only shorts and a sweatshirt.

MAN

You'll never do it like that, you pussies! Get on it and ride it off!

The first of two Harley Hogs careens out of the van, down the gangplank, and crashes onto its side. The man leaps onto the truck, straddles the second bike, and rides it into the garage.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Priscilla comes and stands next to Richard at the piano. An enormous mirror, one of many, is unloaded from the truck. For a brief moment, Richard and Priscilla glimpse themselves in its reflection.

EXT. DARK STREET - DAY

Richard, wearing loose black sweats, emerges from his house. At exactly the same time, the new man on the block emerges from his house, wearing a skin tight sweatsuit with lime green panels. He's not as handsome as Richard but he has a charming, contagious smile and a forthright manner.

MAN

Mind if I run along with you?

RICHARD

Be my guest. Richard Parker.

EDDY

Hi. Eddy Otis.

They shake hands as they run. Eddy wears a thin GOLD I.D. BRACELET with, 'Eddy O,' etched on it and carries a COMPACT CELLULAR PHONE.

EDDY

Where's your beautiful daughter today?

RICHARD

She goes to a boarding school for gifted children. She only comes home every other weekend.

EDDY

I heard her playing the piano
Saturday. You must be very proud.

RICHARD

(laughing)
You could say.

EDDY

Let me guess. You're in something
to do with the arts. Maybe
graphics. Maybe advertising?
No, definitely advertising.

RICHARD

(laughing)
I'm a composer. I write jingles.
For ads? How did you guess?

EDDY

I used to sell insurance. You
get a feel for stuff like that.

RICHARD

And what do you do? I won't even
guess.

EDDY

I give financial advice.

RICHARD

Yeah? Like what?

EDDY

Okay: Health Clubs.

RICHARD

Good investment?

EDDY

Lousy. Go for drug and alcohol
rehab joints. The best investment
op of the nineties. People are
sheep, you see. You tell 'em they
can't quit on their own and...

(he snaps his fingers)
... suddenly everybody needs help.
The human mind. What can you say?
I do it all: insurance, money
management, investment... How's
your tax situation?

RICHARD

I don't know. My wife takes care
of that side of things.

Eddy shoots him a look. They run on.

INT. PARKER RECORDING STUDIOS - DAY

Richard and Priscilla enter, she heading for her office, he toward his studio.

RICHARD

He said they didn't know anyone, they were lonely... What could I say?

PRISCILLA

Morning Jo, any bookings?

JO

No, but Jimmy Schwartz is in the studio and you asked me to remind you to call the bank.

RICHARD

I know how you feel about neighbors, but... It's just drinks.

PRISCILLA

I don't drink.

RICHARD

Since when?

PRISCILLA

I decided to quit a month ago. I thought I was getting fat. You didn't notice?

RICHARD

Which? The fat or the not drinking?

Priscilla swipes at him in a friendly fashion and they go their separate ways.

Richard walks into the studio where a commercial for Life Insurance is already playing on three crisp monitors above a bank of keyboards. JIMMY SCHWARTZ, an ad exec, awaits him.

JIMMY

How's my genius today?

RICHARD

Brilliant as always.

JIMMY

So this is it.

Richard looks at the screens. The usual pampered, whining consumers with their petty problems.

INT. PRISCILLA'S OFFICE - DAY

Priscilla is on the phone to the bank. As she talks, she idly turns a model YACHT around on her desk, admiring it's sleek lines.

PRISCILLA

Yes, there is a slight recession, but Richard is the best composer north of New York and we're doing...

(she smiles)

Richard said that?... Yes, well I am... So, how about it? Do we buy the digital sampler or don't we?... You're an angel, Gus... Six months... Absolutely... No you wouldn't.

She laughs and hangs up. She rotates the yacht, putting her eye at deck level, imagining herself on board.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Richard and Priscilla cross the street, Priscilla softly humming. Richard leans on the bell.

INT. OTIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Where the Parker house is chic, the Otis house is distinctly odd. There are mirrors everywhere and the furniture, though expensive, was made for a hotter climate than this. Eddy is at a bar, serving drinks to Richard and Priscilla. His energy and self-confidence are overwhelming.

EDDY

... scuba diving in Jamaica for the weekend. Anyway, on our way to the airport--to come back and move houses--we get caught up in a riot. Swear to God. A riot! Fascinating.

He has a loud extrovert laugh which defies you not to join in.

EDDY

Well, I'm so busy protecting my wife, I don't see them steal all the luggage. Hence the outfit when we arrived. Everything else was packed!

(to Priscilla)

Have you ever been in a riot, Priscilla?

Priscilla laughs and shakes her head. To her surprise, she likes this man. He obviously enjoys life to the full, without

inhibition or fear. She takes a fruit juice from him.

Richard notices that the books in a nearby bookcase are UPSIDE DOWN. Then a movement in one of the many mirrors catches his eye. He turns and looks up.

Eddy's wife, KAY OTIS, is descending the stairs. She's in her early thirties but she looks younger.

She is exceptionally beautiful.

KAY

Sorry I'm late.

Her voice is deep and soft and, in marked contrast to her hyperkinetic husband, she moves languidly, her slim waist a fluid pivot.

KAY

I'm Katherine but everyone calls me Kay.

She shakes their hands, leans against the bar, asks Eddy for a drink, and lights a cigarette. Richard studies her:

A woman born for tight pants and late night drinks, for cynical remarks, brave deeds and no regrets--and if you don't like it, the hell with you. It's so overplayed it's touching.

Richard takes a deep breath, almost a sigh, and looks away.

INT. OTIS HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

As Kay leans over to put a plate in front of Richard, he glimpses her breasts for a second. He looks up guiltily. Kay gives him a friendly smile. Priscilla pours herself a half glass of wine.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Priscilla looks flushed and excited as Eddy plays a video showing him hangliding.

Richard and Kay are over by the piano, Richard doodling with a blues tune.

KAY

I always wanted to be a blues singer. Guess I was born a couple of decades too late. Do you know Little Esther Phillips?

RICHARD

There's not a song she ever recorded I couldn't play right now. Recognize this?

He plays a bar.

KAY
"Lady Without Hope."

RICHARD
How about "Bad Mannered Blues"?

Kay smiles as he plays it.

KAY
And best of all?

Richard plays the opening chords of, "Don't Put No Headstone On My Grave." His eyes flick over her body. Is it possible to be slim and voluptuous at the same time? She catches him wondering and starts to sing. Her voice is strong and deep and full of emotion and sex.

KAY
Don't put no headstone on my
grave... All my life I've been
a slave... And I don't want the
world to know... Here lies the
fool that loved you so...

The raw passion of it is so powerful and unexpected that Priscilla freezes, her glass extended toward Eddy for a refill. Kay, now entering the second verse, turns her face toward Richard and smiles at him from far away like a woman toying with the slow approach of an orgasm.

Richard has been happily married for fourteen years, but nobody can be everything to anyone and small unsatisfied vacuums form in the soul. Without his knowing it, or wanting it, Kay enters him like a long missed drug.

At the end of the second verse, Kay loses her nerve and laughs. Eddy and Priscilla clap. Richard stares at Kay as Eddy raises his glass.

EDDY
To neighbors in general and you
guys in particular!

Priscilla joins the toast. As Eddy drinks, he observes Richard over the rim of his glass and something calculating enters his eyes. But when the glass comes down, the smile has returned.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Richard makes love to Priscilla, holding her tight.

RICHARD
I love you, Priscilla. I love
you.

Priscilla opens her eyes for a moment, a little surprised. What brought this on?

RICHARD
Say something back. Say something
passionate.

PRISCILLA
(sincerely)
I love you too, very much.

EXT. DARK STREET - DAY

Richard rides out of his garage on a fancy racing bike and circles, waiting for Eddy who now emerges from his garage on his racing bike.

EDDY
Yo, Dickyboy!!

Once again, Eddy is the fashion leader. Tight lycra bike pants, special shoes, etcetera.

RICHARD
Yo, Eddy. Looking sharp as
usual...

EDDY
Mr Cool, that's me, bubi.

ANOTHER STREET - DAY

They round a bend and start descending a long hill. At the bottom is a busy intersection.

EDDY
The way I look at it is this.
Money is blood. It's no big deal
but if you want to live you gotta
have a lot of it to pump through
the system. For example, most
people will never know what it's
like to drive a boat at fifty
miles an hour or go to Jamaica
for the weekend or see the Grand
Canyon from a hot air balloon or
even ride a two thousand dollar
bike down a steep hill toward a
busy junction... Get what I'm
saying? Without money, you
shrivel up.

Eddy is now riding so fast it's becoming dangerous.

RICHARD

Yeah, well, you should talk to Priscilla about that. I'm sure she'd agree with you.

EDDY

I will.

Richard glances at him. Eddy smiles his charming smile and pedals even faster.

EDDY

I've got this trip planned to Mexico to see the Mayan pyramids. Why don't you and Priscilla come along?

RICHARD

Well, I'm sure we'd love to, but...

EDDY

And don't worry about money. If that's a problem, I can take care of it.

In other words, 'If your life is bloodless...'

RICHARD

No, that's not a problem.

(nervously)

Listen, you think... (maybe we should slow down?)

EDDY

(interrupting)

Good, we'll have fun. Watch this.

He puts his feet up on the handlebars and steers with them as he shoots toward the intersection at about thirty miles an hour. Richard brakes.

RICHARD

Be careful!

Eddy flies across. Richard stops, looks both ways, and follows. They ride on, Eddy swiping at Richard and laughing.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

Richard, still sweating from his ride, stands near Priscilla who, until a moment ago, was neatly cutting a grapefruit.

RICHARD

I didn't exactly say we'd go, I just didn't say we wouldn't.

PRISCILLA

They've been here one month and now we're going on vacation with them?

RICHARD

It's only a three day trip and besides I didn't say... Christ, Priscilla, it seems like all I ever do is work.

PRISCILLA

But we hardly know them. I'd feel..

RICHARD

I know, I just thought...

PRISCILLA

I'd feel awkward. I mean...

RICHARD

I thought it might be fun, that's all. But you're totally right. We don't know them, it is absurd. I'll make an excuse. I'm sorry.

Richard heads for the door, drying himself with a towel.

PRISCILLA

I didn't even know they had pyramids in Mexico.

RICHARD

That's what he said. Mayan pyramids.

PRISCILLA

You really want to go?

RICHARD

I really don't care one way or the other. I just need a break.

PRISCILLA

How can you not care about Mayan pyramids?

He turns in the doorway. Priscilla smiles at him warmly and then shrugs as if to say: Okay, so let's live a little.

EXT. PYRAMID IN MEXICO - DAY

A crumbling pyramid rises from the jungle. Four tiny figures crawl up it. Eddy's loud, confident voice is heard.

EDDY

With five thousand? Put one in the bank, one into bonds, and play the stock market with the rest.

Eddy and Priscilla are ahead of Richard and Kay. Kay is above and in front of Richard.

PRISCILLA

Would you help me?

EDDY

D'you have a computer?

Kay is wearing big khaki shorts and a shirt cinched tight at the waist. Richard's face is level with her calves as she scrambles from block to block.

KAY

Eddy always has to be doing things. Sometimes I just like to sit down and... appreciate, d'you know what I mean?

RICHARD

Yeah, you're tired.

She laughs and sits down. Richard shouts up to the other two.

RICHARD

Kay's stopping. I'll keep her company.

EDDY

Don't do anything I wouldn't do.

His laugh echoes over the jungle. Richard looks awkwardly at Kay. From where he stands, he can see the undersides of her thighs.

KAY

(smiling)

Well, that gives you quite a lot of latitude, doesn't it?

Richard ignores the remark and clambers up to sit next to her.

RICHARD

Why didn't you pursue a singing career? There's a lot of worse voices out there.

KAY

Well, you know, I guess Eddy got all the self-confidence...

RICHARD

I could help you. I'd get to play some blues and you'd... I have a degree in music, you know...

She gives him a deep, unsettling look.

KAY

I'd love that. God, you really are a nice guy, aren't you?

Richard laughs. Kay pulls a miniature bottle of gin out of her pocket and takes a hit before handing it on to Richard.

KAY

Now we're on the subject, why didn't you go into the music business?

RICHARD

I am in the music business.

KAY

You know what I mean.

RICHARD

Yeah, well, actually that was the plan. Then I met Priscilla in college and she got pregnant and we needed money so I started doing jingles. Then we bought a house. Then I figured if we bought a studio, I could record albums in my spare time. Now we both have to work around the clock to pay for the studio that we bought so I could make records and escape the jingles. We live well; but, God, the debts, I can't tell you...

KAY

Maybe you should talk to Eddy.

RICHARD

Yeah, maybe...

Kay starts singing a Billie Holiday song. You'd have to be a stone not to appreciate this woman.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

A convivial atmosphere prevails. Richard is cooking. Kay is playing the piano. Eddy and Priscilla are working on her computer and drinking wine. Eddy quietly dials a number on his CELLULAR PHONE. The phone rings in the kitchen and Richard picks it up.

RICHARD

Yes, this is Richard Parker. Who is this?..

(softer)

The payment didn't arrive?.. Well I'm sure it's on the way. Please don't stop the card... No, no, it's on the way, I'm sure... What?! But that's impossible! I only owe four or five thou...

He looks into the sitting room. Eddy is on his CELLULAR PHONE grinning at him.

EDDY

Gotcha!

He laughs, puts the phone down, and goes back to work with Priscilla. Richard stares at him a moment, half amused, half pissed.

INT. BOXING GYM. BOSTON - EVENING

Eddy is hitting the heavybag. Richard secures the bag with his arms. His hair is now cut like Eddy's.

EDDY

With your debt problems, I'm surprised Priscilla doesn't sell some of her investments. She was up to fifteen thousand last time we went over it.

RICHARD

(surprised)

Fifteen thousand? From five?

EDDY

She has a head on her shoulders, what can I tell you?

RICHARD

That five was left her by her uncle... she used to go sailing with the guy and he wanted her to buy a boat with it. It's kind of a passion with her. She has a specific boat in mind and everything... even has a model of it on her desk. I couldn't take it and she knows it.

EDDY

So how much do you owe?

RICHARD
Oh, it's nothing much... It's...
Forget about it.

EDDY
No, seriously, how much. Maybe
I can help you out here.

RICHARD
Immediate debts, credit cards,
bank loans: about twenty-five
thousand.

EDDY
Is that all? We can get you that
in an afternoon.

RICHARD
How?

EDDY
Leave it to me, bubi. Three to
six weeks, okay?

RICHARD
I don't understand. How? What
kind of interest?

EDDY
No kind of interest. I don't lend
money to friends. A gift.

RICHARD
But...

EDDY
(mock pompous)
"Our greatest glory, Dickyboy,
consists not in never falling but
in rising every time we fall."

He laughs his big, throaty laugh, grabs Richard around the neck
and plants a sweaty kiss on his puzzled brow.

EDDY
And watch those frownies. A line
today is a wrinkle tomorrow.

INT. RICHARD'S ATTIC STUDY/POV ACROSS STREET - NIGHT

Richard is at his desk. 'BLUE NIGHT,' a show featuring the
blues, old and new, is on the RADIO.

FRANKIE H
 ... and this is Fat Frankie H
 welcoming you to Blue Night with,
 'Nothing Stays The Same Forever,'
 by Percy Mayfield...

As the song begins, Richard slowly turns and looks across the way to the Otis house and a lit window:

HIS POV

Kay lies on her back on the bed in the heavily mirrored master bedroom, reading a magazine. Her knees are bent and her skirt has fallen back, exposing her thighs. She idly sways her knees together, apart, together, apart... Is it in time to the same music Richard is listening to? Could be. Hard to tell. Eddy enters. Kay snaps her legs shut.

A discussion? An altercation? Kay gets up and leaves. Another bedroom light comes on. Kay enters, sits on the edge of the bed, and buries her face in her hands. Richard looks away, ashamed.

INT. PARKER RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Richard crosses the lobby to Priscilla's office. As she speaks on the phone in a calm but determined voice, she spins the yacht back and forth, holding the tip of the mast between finger and thumb.

PRISCILLA
 Yes, I would go to court for three
 hundred dollars... Why? Because
 you can afford it and because of
 the principle of the thing; but
 I wouldn't expect you to
 understand that.

She puts the phone down and grins at Richard.

PRISCILLA
 Pretty tough, huh?

EXT. STUDIO AND TREMONT STREET - DAY

Eddy stands in a doorway, protected from heavy rain. He is watching the exit to the studio's parking lot. Richard drives out and turns toward him.

Eddy cuts between two parked cars. Richard is doing about fifteen miles an hour.

INT. CAR - DAY

Eddy LAUNCHES himself at the car.

PRISCILLA

Watch out!

EXT. TREMONT STREET - DAY

Too late. Eddy jumps up, hits the roof with a loud bang, rolls off the back, and lies still in the road. Moments later, Richard and Priscilla crouch beside him. His eyes are open.

EDDY

I was just coming to see you guys
and... I feel like such a fool.

PRISCILLA

Are you okay?

EDDY

I don't know. My neck hurts.

SAME PLACE - LATER

Eddy is lifted into an ambulance.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

It's a weekend in the spring. Richard is at the piano with Kay rehearsing her. Through the window, Priscilla can be seen in the garden, dragging the summer furniture out.

ACROSS THE STREET - SAME TIME

Eddy comes out of his house wearing a NECK BRACE. He has to turn his whole body one way and then the other to check for traffic. He hops onto the sidewalk and toddles up the path toward Priscilla. A piece of paper flutters in his hand.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

Priscilla leads him in.

PRISCILLA

How is it?

EDDY

Not too good really, Priscilla.
Oh, it itches so bad.

He starts to cross the room toward Richard and Kay.

EDDY

As a matter of fact...

He reaches up and UNDOES THE NECK BRACE.

PRISCILLA

Be careful!

EDDY

... I don't think I can stand it
any more.

He throws the neck brace aside and then WHIPS his head around,
making a ghastly WRENCHING noise in the back of his throat.

PRISCILLA

Aaagh!

Eddy holds the piece of paper up to Richard's face. It's a
check for THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS from State Farm Insurance.

EDDY

Your insurance company. Neck and
back scares the shit out of them!

Richard is stunned into silence for a moment. Then:

RICHARD

You're not serious?

EDDY

Was that clever or what!? They
settled out of court. What did
I say?--three to six weeks. Was
I right or was I right?

Eddy laughs and does a little jig. There's nothing wrong with
him at all.

RICHARD

But... How did you?..

EDDY

I'm in the business, man. I have
a pet doctor. It was easy. I'm
gonna take five, okay?

Richard shrugs.

RICHARD

Of course, Eddy, but...

Eddy looks at a shocked Priscilla.

EDDY

Yes, it was a scam, Priscilla.
I'm terribly, terribly sorry.

He hangs his head in mock shame.

PRISCILLA

You broke the law? For us?

EDDY

What are friends for?

PRISCILLA

I don't know, but... Eddy, I'm
not sure we can take this money.
I mean we certainly app...

Laughing, Eddy grabs Priscilla in a great big hug.

EDDY

I love this woman!
(exaggerating her
virtuousness)
"Eddy, I'm not sure we can take
this money."

Priscilla is further shocked by the physical contact. Eddy
holds her at arms length.

EDDY

So would you rather give up the
sailboat?

PRISCILLA

To be honest, that's what I was
planning to do anyway. I mean
they're our bills and...

EDDY

Priscilla, please... don't insult
me, okay? I did this for you,
now whaddaya say? Come on.

Priscilla looks at Richard--who shrugs--and then back to Eddy.

PRISCILLA

I guess we say thanks. I mean,
I'm amazed. I don't know what
to say.

Eddy turns and looks at Richard. Grins.

EDDY

What a wife! Speechless. I love
it.

EXT. THE OPEN ROAD - DAY

A spring day in Upstate New York. Two Harleys thunder down the
road, Kay and Priscilla on one, Eddy and Richard on the other.

Eddy is singing at the top of his lungs. Priscilla looks
across. Richard smiles at her and then realizes she's not
looking at him but at Eddy.

EXT. LAKE ONTARIO. WATKINS FISHING LODGE - DAY

A lodge and two cabins. Richard, Priscilla, and Kay lounge on the bikes, Eddy collects keys and a couple of fishing poles from LUKE WATKINS, a man in his early sixties.

EXT. THE LAKE - DAY

Priscilla is fishing. Richard drives one of the Harleys around in circles learning how to ride it. Nearby, Eddy splits logs with an axe. Kay reads a book and sunbathes... Oh, what a marvelous, ravishing provocation she is. Between blows of the axe, Eddy secretly observes Richard eyeing her as he circles.

Priscilla gets a bite and, with her usual quiet determination, quickly drags the fish ashore. It's a huge catfish. Richard drives up. He and Kay stare at the fish as it flops around. Priscilla remains calm.

PRISCILLA

Eddy, come here and decapitate this fish immediately.

Eddy walks over and obediently does so. Richard and Kay flinch. Eddy and Priscilla don't.

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

A big fire burns. The four drink wine and eat fish. The moon is swollen and the lake is still. Glancing at Richard, Priscilla sees him staring at Kay.

INT. RICHARD AND PRISCILLA'S CABIN - NIGHT

It's blue outside. Richard wakes up. Hearing angry voices, he eases himself out of bed.

EXT. THE LODGE - NIGHT

An oil lamp burns on the lodge porch. As he approaches the big windows, Richard sees Eddy arguing with Watkins and his WIFE. The man is big and strong like a lumberjack while his wife has that mean, suspicious look you often find on the faces of the rural poor. The front door opens and Kay comes out. She sees Richard and hesitates mid step.

RICHARD

(softly)

Everything okay?

Kay takes his arm and leads him away toward the lake.

KAY

He insists we go drink with these jerks; then he gets into an argument with them.

(more)

KAY (Cont'd)
I tell you, sometimes he's not
exactly a day at the beach.

She squeezes his arm and shivers. Richard feels her breast
against his arm.

RICHARD
How long have you been married?

KAY
Five years. And you? Thirteen?

RICHARD
Fourteen.

KAY
(softly)
And have you been faithful all
those years?

RICHARD
Yes. How about you?

KAY
I guess I'm old fashioned that
way. I guess we both are, aren't
we?

She looks up at him with an almost challenging look. Richard's
lungs cease operation.

KAY
(smiling)
Oh-oh, I think I'd better go to
bed now...

She laughs warmly. Richard remains frozen.

KAY
Good night, Richard.

RICHARD
Good night.

She sways off through the trees. Richard watches her fluid
figure fade into darkness.

EXT. RAINY STREET - NIGHT

Richard, Priscilla, Eddy, and Kay dash through the rain.
Richard glances at Kay running along beside him, smiling as the
rain courses down her face.

INT. MAHONEY'S BAR - NIGHT

A loud Irish bar where an aging female singer with dyed red hair sings the last bars of a Sinatra number. An old piano player accompanies her with efficient flourish.

Richard, Priscilla, Eddy and Kay hurry in to shelter from the rain. Priscilla goes to make a phone call. Richard waves his arm for drinks and is ignored. Eddy beckons with a single finger and is served instantly. The singer concludes her song to light applause and makes her way to the bar. The piano player plays on.

Eddy has his back to Kay and Richard. Kay is flushed and happy. Richard seems worn. Kay cocks her head to one side.

KAY

'You're A Dirty Man.'

RICHARD

What?

KAY

'You're A Dirty Man.' Laura Lee.

Richard listens to the piano.

RICHARD

It's in your key...

He tilts his head toward the empty mike.

KAY

Watch me!

But she's terrified and doesn't move.

RICHARD

I'm watching.

Richard gives Kay a little push. She starts tentatively walking away. Then her pace picks up.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Drinks in hand, Richard and Eddy watch Kay sing.

KAY

You're a dirty, dirty man... And you got a dirty mind... You're a dirty, dirty man... You and that other woman... Are two of a kind... But you forgot one thing, baby... While you were doing me wrong:... That I'm a good house keeper...

(more)

KAY (Cont'd)

And I'm gonna take my broom and
sweep... All of the dirt, yes
I am... Out in the street...
You're a dirty, dirty man...

All the loud drunks shut the fuck up and listen as this
glorious, clean, perfumed yuppie sings this weird and filthy
song in this weird and filthy bar; and the alcohol turns to
honey in their veins and the breathless hush of youthful memory
falls over them like a blanket. Only one man doesn't have his
eyes on Kay.

Eddy contemplates the spellbound Richard and then leans in close
to his ear.

EDDY

(softly)

You want to fuck my wife, don't
you?

Richard snaps his head around. Eddy's face is two inches away.

RICHARD

No! Certainly not! I mean, I
like Kay a lot but...

Eddy grins, mocking him.

EDDY

Yes?

He laughs.

EDDY

Don't look so scared. It's no
big deal. Most men want to fuck
my wife. As it happens, I'm not
entirely immune to that kind of
thought myself...

He looks at Priscilla, still on the phone down at the end of
the bar. The rain has caused her long clothes to cling to her
body and her face is flushed and animated. Eddy turns back to
Richard, raises his eyebrows and grins.

EDDY

I mean, nobody wants to blow their
marriage, God forbid, and one does
appreciate their faithfulness...
but just one night... oh, wouldn't
that be sweet?

RICHARD

(laughing)

You're amazing...

EDDY
(whispering)
And so safe.

Richard laughs again--a little less convincingly this time--and then turns back to watch Kay ooze into the third and last verse. After a moment, Eddy continues in the same soft tones.

EDDY
Let me ask you something. Do you ever wake up in the middle of the night and just... do it... you know, like half asleep?

RICHARD
I guess most everyone does.

EDDY
I was thinking the other day... I was thinking how alike you and I are--in terms of size and shape and so on... particularly since you cut your hair that way.

RICHARD
(distracted)
Yeah, I guess so.

EDDY
And then I was thinking: I wonder what would happen if each of us got up in the middle of the night, crossed the street, and crept into the other man's bedroom?

Richard has his attention on the song.

RICHARD
I don't get it.

EDDY
Well, would they know the difference? Being half asleep and all...

Richard looks at Eddy and laughs.

RICHARD
Very funny.

He watches Kay sing the last line. Everyone claps. Richard feels Eddy's eyes on him. He turns and stares at him. He realizes that Eddy is totally serious.

EXT. OTIS HOUSE - DAY

Richard, Priscilla, Lori, Eddy, and Kay play softball in the big back garden. Priscilla, looking younger and happier, winds up and pitches to Kay who smacks the ball into the outfield.

Richard cannot keep his eyes off Kay as she runs lithely from base to base. (Never has slow motion been used to better erotic effect.) Finally she leaps over the last base, rushes right at him, and flings her arms around him, laughing.

For Richard, oppressed by the weight of his desire, it's like being burnt. Over Kay's shoulder, he sees Eddy watching him. He does not see that Priscilla also has her eyes on him.

INT. BOXING GYM - DAY

Richard hits the bag as Eddy holds it. Both men wear gloves.

EDDY

I'll bet you a thousand dollars
we could pull it off.

RICHARD

Eddy, enough already with this
thing.

EDDY

You say 'enough' real quick, don't
you? Enough? Are you sure?

He lets go the bag and starts feinting punches at Richard who retreats, defending himself, laughing.

EDDY

I'll tell you something. I don't
know when I've liked a guy as much
as I like you, but the truth is
you're a wimp. You think you can
be alive without taking risks?

He keeps on jabbing lightly at Richard.

RICHARD

I think there's many different
ways to...

EDDY

No, you do; so you end up living
this fifty percent existence when
there's a hundred out there to
be had.

Suddenly Eddy backs Richard up against a wall, holds him there, and puts his face only inches away:

EDDY

You're full of fear. Your life is choked. You do jingles when you'd rather be doing albums. You do it for money... but you're always in debt... You want to make love to my wife, but you're afraid we'll get caught... This is how you die, step by step, these little things you deny yourself... this cowardice.

RICHARD

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

EDDY

It's that. Who cares if we get caught? Big deal.

He lets go of Richard, sighs, suddenly depressed.

EDDY

Ah, forget it. You've lost your juice, so what? It's your life. Let's go get a drink.

He walks away. Richard is shocked to realize that he agrees with a lot of what Eddy says. He has lost his juice.

INT. RICHARD'S ATTIC STUDY - NIGHT

Richard tries not to look across the street. Kay enters the master bedroom and takes off her dress. Her underwear would raise your temperature if it was dangling empty on a hook.

From the way she moves around on those high, high heels, Richard can tell that, like him, Kay is listening to 'Blue Night' on the radio: 'Pouring Water On A Drowning Man.'

RADIO SONG

"You push me when I'm falling and kick me when I'm down... How much more... how much more can I stand?... You're pouring water on a drowning man..."

The phone rings.

RICHARD

Hello?

VOICE

Hi, this is Doctor Ruth Westheimer. I hear you have a liddle problem, ya?

The imitation is so perfect, Richard is speechless for a moment.
Then:

RICHARD
Very funny.

EDDY
The way you feel, if you don't
get this out of your system, it's
gonna ruin your marriage. I'm
serious. Don't let it become an
obsession.

Richard turns away from the window, guiltily.

RICHARD
Leave me alone, Eddy. Please.

EDDY
I can't leave you alone. You're
my friend. I hate to see you
suffering like this when the
solution lies right across the
street.

Richard switches off the desk light. Now he can look again.

RICHARD
Apart from the fact that it's
wrong, we would get caught. We
are not that alike.

Kay sways her dress over to the closet and hangs it up. Moves
out of sight, snapping her fingers.

EDDY
(softly)
Why do men kid themselves? Didn't
you ever whisper in your wife's
ear when you were making love?

RICHARD
What if I did?

EDDY
Then you know. In their heart
of hearts, women want exactly what
we want. If we get caught? In
the heat of the moment?
(lower:)
They'll love it. Priscilla will
love it.

RICHARD
You wanna bet?

EDDY

Oh, always... How much?

RICHARD

I didn't mean literally.

EDDY

Of course not. You've seen the way she looks at me.

RICHARD

What are you talking about?

EDDY

Dick... Richard... I'm just trying to do the decent thing here. I don't have to. I can take care of my needs any way you like.

RICHARD

What do you mean by that?

Across the street, a half naked Kay draws the curtains. Eddy laughs softly.

EDDY

'Night, bubi.

He hangs up.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

Richard plays the piano. Kay sings. The second verse finishes. Kay sits down to his left and plays along four handed during the instrumental break. Now her right hand drops down between his arms and taps out a little melody.

KAY

You know what your trouble is?

RICHARD

Yes and no.

KAY

You think too much.

Richard stares at her. What is she trying to say? How much does she know? She extracts her hands and stands up again. She starts to sing the third verse without missing a beat. The sleepy look comes back on her face.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Richard is running alone. However, Eddy now appears in the background and catches up.

RICHARD

Hi.

EDDY

Hi.

They run in silence for a while.

EDDY

You know what really hurts me about all this? It's like a one way street with you. I risked my life so you could pay off your puny debts; now I want some fun and what happens? My fairweather friend goes cautious on me.

RICHARD

I'm sorry, but I just can't do it. I respect Kay. I respect Priscilla.

EDDY

Is this how you show your respect? By letting your life get smaller and smaller? Haven't you noticed how much more alive Priscilla is since we became friends? That's because we do things. We're not afraid. We live. Besides, how about a little respect for me?

(vehemently)

I risked my life for you!

RICHARD

I do respect you. But in the end, you are you and I am me...

EDDY

You're absolutely right. I got balls and you don't. I'm a giver and you're a taker.

Eddy starts to speed up. Richard struggles to stay with him.

RICHARD

Yeah? Well in this particular case it's a hell of a lot easier for you to give than it is for me. I still sleep with my wife.

Eddy stops running. The two men face each other.

EDDY

What's that supposed to mean?

RICHARD
Forget it. You know what I'm
talking about.

For a moment, Richard thinks Eddy's going to hit him. Instead,
he just stands there, wounded.

EDDY
Boy, when you stick the knife
in... If you knew what me and
Kay have been through. You've
no idea...

He gives up.

EDDY
What a friend you turned out to
be. What a friend...

He jogs away. The relationship is over.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

Richard and Priscilla have breakfast. The mood is gloomy.
Beyond them, out in the street, Eddy and Kay and ANOTHER COUPLE
come out of the house, laughing. Dressed for the beach, they
all pile into Kay's Jeep and scream off.

PRISCILLA
Why don't we go to the beach?
Just you and me.

RICHARD
I don't know. I'm not really in
the mood...

PRISCILLA
Jimmy Schwartz invited me to crew
on his boat today. Would you like
to come along?

RICHARD
Uh-uh.

PRISCILLA
What shall I tell him?

RICHARD
Tell him I'm busy doing his stupid
AGNC commercial.

PRISCILLA
(sadly)
Okay. See you later then.

Richard nods and then looks back to his paper just as Priscilla
starts to lean down to kiss him goodbye.

Hurt, she leaves without kissing him.

LATER

Richard is bored and restless. He looks out the window.

A big truck is parked outside the Otis house. Men carry a large white fabric tube toward the back garden.

KITCHEN - LATER

Richard is on the phone.

RICHARD

Lori?... No, I miss you, that's all. How are you?... Oh, okay... Oh, I'm sorry... No, do your homework, please... Yes, the weekend after next... Okay, bye. I love...

But the line has gone dead.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

Priscilla taps away at her computer. Richard sits at the piano but doesn't play. Priscilla looks toward him; then beyond at something big and white RISING UP across the way.

SAME PLACE - NIGHT

Richard and Priscilla are by the window of the living room. A huge white MARQUEE stands in the Otis' garden. Music pumps out of it as fancy cars drive up.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The phone has not rung to invite the Parkers to the party and now it's almost over. Priscilla puts down her book.

PRISCILLA

Do you want to tell me what happened between you and Eddy?

RICHARD

He thought I had a thing for Kay.

PRISCILLA

No! Whatever gave him that idea?

RICHARD

It's not quite that simple. You see...

PRISCILLA

Did you sleep with her?

RICHARD
No, the thing is...

PRISCILLA
I don't want to know.

She walks away. Richard chases after her.

RICHARD
Priscilla, please, don't be
jealous, there's no...

PRISCILLA
I am not jealous. It's just that
something went missing from this
marriage and for a while it came
back. Now it's gone again and...

RICHARD
We were happy before they came!

PRISCILLA
We were content before they came.

Richard stands there, open mouthed. She's right, that's exactly
what they were: content. And no, it wasn't enough, hence his
attraction to Kay.

Perhaps Priscilla was hoping he'd argue. They stare at each
other, appalled by this mutual admission.

When Priscilla speaks it is sadly but with firm conviction.

PRISCILLA
I love you, Richard, I really do,
but we've become boring. We never
take any risks. You never take
any risks.

RICHARD
What do you mean by that?

PRISCILLA
See? Don't ask me! Be a man!
Do whatever you have to do! Just
get it out of your system before
this marriage suffocates me.
Let's live for Christ's sake!

She turns and rushes up the stairs to bed. Richard watches her
disappear from sight. And then he walks to the front door.

EXT. DARK STREET, EDDY'S GARDEN - NIGHT

The tent glows like a big lampshade as Richard strides across
the street toward it.

INT. THE MARQUEE - NIGHT

All but one of the guests have gone but the band plays on. Eddy sits at the far end with Kay. Next to her is a strange looking MAN. Obviously a BURN VICTIM, one side of his face is MALE MODEL HANDSOME while the other is DISFIGURED. He is in his mid thirties, has RECEDING BLOND HAIR, and is not easily forgotten.

Eddy sees Richard as he starts to cross the room. He gets up and walks toward him. They meet in the middle of the dance floor. Richard admits defeat with a gesture of his hands.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY

Fingers turn the pages of a yachting magazine. On the cover is a wholesome looking woman in a captain's hat. It could almost be Priscilla. Richard watches her reading. It's Saturday morning and they are having breakfast. The SCORE is ominous but sensual.

EXT. OTIS HOUSE. GARDEN - DAY

Richard, Priscilla, Eddy, and Kay play softball. The women run and sweat and laugh. Richard watches one and then the other. Such fine women. Kay pitches. Richard hits. Priscilla runs to the outfield. Richard's discarded BAT bounces in the grass and then lies still.

TWO SHOWERS - TWILIGHT

The women shower in their respective houses. We see one face, then the other.

EXT. OTIS HOUSE - EVENING

Richard and Eddy barbecue some steaks. Smoke swirls around them. In the background, Kay and Priscilla set the table.

A HALF FULL GLASS OF RED WINE - CANDLELIT NIGHT

The lip of a bottle comes into focus. Red wine cascades out of it into the glass.

PRISCILLA

Enough! Enough!

The four friends sit out in the summer night. Kay's glass is also full.

EDDY

A toast! Friends and neighbors!

Everyone drinks. The women look tired but happy.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Priscilla sleeps deeply. In the darkness, Richard checks the time. The glowing green numbers of his alarm clock tell him it's two a.m. He slips out of bed, takes his clothes from a chair, and exits.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. STAIRS & HALLWAY - NIGHT

Richard sneaks down the stairs, dressed now, and quietly opens the front door. He looks back up the stairs, once, and is about to start down the path, leaving the door ajar, when he sees the RED LIGHT blinking on the BURGLAR ALARM. In FIVE SECONDS it's going to go off.

Richard rushes back in and PUNCHES THE COMBINATION just in time. He stands in semi-darkness, breathing heavily. Is it worth all this? He could always just... But no.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Eddy emerges. Richard emerges. He and Eddy cross the street. Both men wear jeans, sweatshirts, and sneakers.

RICHARD

I forgot the burglar alarm! I
nearly set the damn thing off!

Eddy laughs softly and then they pass each other and each man heads for the other's house. Richard sees Eddy enter his house. He almost calls after him; but instead:

INT. OTIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Richard eases open the front door and closes it quietly behind him. A STREET LIGHT cuts the room into oblongs. Richard moves quickly to the nearest phone, lifts it up, and starts to dial.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - NIGHT

Eddy takes the receiver off the hook.

INT. OTIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Richard listens to the busy signal over at his house. Eddy must have suspected he would try to ruin the evening by waking Priscilla. Absurdly, Richard feels ashamed. He tiptoes toward the stairs and starts up. One step, two step. Three--and there is an enormous CREAKING noise from the stair beneath him. Richard FREEZES... and then sits down.

No, he can't go through with it. What can he do? He hates himself and yet... And then something warm and soft TOUCHES HIS BACK.

Richard JUMPS VIOLENTLY. The Otis' CAT slinks down the stairs and settles in the living room, PURRING. Now Richard looks

toward the front door as a SHADOW falls over the GLASS PANEL in the middle. Eddy opens the door and looks up at Richard who now stands, guiltily. An odd moment. Then:

EDDY

(whispering)

I switched off the electricity at the fuse box so there's no chance of her turning the lights on.

RICHARD

I was just catching my breath.

Eddy waits for Richard to move. Unwillingly, Richard starts up the stairs.

EDDY

Watch the...

Another CREAK. Richard again FREEZES. Eddy puts up his hands: Wait.

EDDY

Don't worry. I got you.

Richard puts a foot down. Eddy gives him the thumbs up sign. And the next step? Thumbs up again. And this one? No. Richard skips that step and continues up.

Soon he is at the top. He looks down at Eddy, waiting there below him, his face bathed in the harsh orange light from the street.

Eddy gives him two thumbs up but doesn't move.

Richard has no choice. He takes off his clothes and leaves them in a pile on the landing. He looks back once more. Eddy still stands there. Richard opens the door and enters the master bedroom.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

It's very dark in here. Richard stops by the door. As far as he can remember there's nowhere to sit down. Step by tentative step, he moves closer to the bed. Now he eases himself onto the mattress (there's a slight moan from the springs) and lies on the edge, as far away from the sleeping Kay as possible.

For a while the two of them lie there, she sleeping on her side, one hip rising up, facing away from him, he rigid on his back. Both are lined by the faint glow of the street light filtering through the drapes. Richard closes his eyes. He can feel her body radiating heat at him. And her scent... that scent...

He lets out his breath as slowly as he can in as silent a sigh as he can--and at that very moment, to his horror, KAY ROLLS TOWARD HIM.

She slides her THIGH over his groin and throws an arm over his chest. The movement pushes back the sheets to reveal her naked body pressing against him. The arm moves down, the hand brushing his belly on its southward journey.

RICHARD

Kay, I...

But her LIPS silence him and her perfume defeats his will. Richard returns her kiss and abandons himself to fate.

EXT. PARKER HOUSE - LATER

Eddy exits the Parker house and stands in shadow, waiting.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kay and Richard come. A moment later, she rolls off and lies on her side, facing away again. Richard is convinced she knows it was him and opens his mouth to speak. But now he hears her breathing in the pitch darkness and he can tell she is sleeping again--or if she isn't she wants him to think she is. He slides out of bed.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Eddy, arms extended like the wings on a plane, emerges from the shadow and banks left and right as he and Richard meet in the middle of the street.

EDDY

Did we get caught?

He circles Richard.

RICHARD

I don't think so...

EDDY

I don't think so, either, amigo.
I think we got away with it. How do you feel?

RICHARD

I don't know.

Eddy laughs, comes out of a left turn and heads for home.

RICHARD

Listen, Eddy. Did Kay know about this?

EDDY
(singing)
Fly me to the moon...

Eddy glides through the gate and disappears around the back of the house.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY

Priscilla is already eating when Richard comes downstairs.

PRISCILLA
Hi.

RICHARD
Hi.

He sits down and starts to butter some toast.

RICHARD
(cautiously)
How are you today?

PRISCILLA
A little hung over but otherwise
just swell.

She puts on a doll-like smile and cocks her head on one side. Richard smiles. How pretty his wife is. How could he have betrayed her like that?

PRISCILLA
(all in one)
Wanna come sailing with me and
Jimmy need I ask?

RICHARD
I'd love to, but I've still got
that "DDR" jingle to do, so...

Priscilla gives him a friendly peck on the cheek and marches briskly out. Eddy was right. They did get away with it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Richard watches Priscilla drive away. Now he looks toward the Otis house. The drapes are still drawn. He goes to the piano, plays for a few moments, and then stops. There's no escape.

RICHARD
How could I have done that? Jesus
Christ.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Richard makes himself lunch. He goes to the window and looks out. The drapes are still drawn at the Otis house.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Richard stops working at the piano and checks his watch. It's four p.m., and still the drapes are drawn. Richard goes to the phone and dials.

EDDY'S VOICE

The great Eddy O... Had to go...
So...

Beep. Richard puts the phone down without saying anything.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. LIVING ROOM AND KITCHEN - NIGHT

Richard watches as Priscilla HUMS contentedly while she cooks. He is in the living room, hovering by the window. Finally he sees:

RICHARD'S POV

Eddy's Jaguar comes down the street, towing the cigarette boat. Eddy parks, gets out, and enters the house alone.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. LIVING ROOM AND KITCHEN - NIGHT

Priscilla watches Richard from the kitchen as he goes to the drinks cabinet and pours himself a large whiskey. What was that? It sounded like a scream. Richard puts his head to one side and listens. Priscilla stops humming. Richard pours another drink. On his face can be read a dreadful foreboding. And now... SIRENS. Richard rushes to the window and STARES OUT as:

RICHARD'S POV

Three POLICE CARS scream to a halt outside the Otis house.

EXT. DARK STREET - NIGHT

Richard sprints across the street.

INT. OTIS HOUSE - NIGHT

Richard pushes past a COP.

RICHARD

What happened? I'm their best friend!

Without waiting for an answer, he bounds up the now familiar stairs and barges past ANOTHER COP and into the master bedroom.

INT. THE MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Everything happens so fast that what we see is glimpsed only in a swift PAN. Kay lies in the bed. The BAT Richard used in the softball game lies next to her. Her head has been smashed.

There's blood sprayed all around.' A MEDICAL EXAMINER is already making an examination of the corpse. Eddy kneels by the bed, wracked with sobs. He turns and sees Richard.

EDDY

You!!!

He leaps at Richard and grabs him around the throat. Richard's shirt rips as Eddy is pulled off. Richard falls to his knees in shock. A DETECTIVE leans down and opens his shirt at the back. Recent scratches can be seen either side of his spine.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Medical Examiner scrapes some skin from beneath Kay's nails and deposits it in a paper bag.

INT. BOSTON COUNTY JAIL. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

GEORGE GORDON, the famous criminal defence lawyer, is flanked by his paralegal, MARTHA, and Richard's personal lawyer, MAX ROTH. Now an old man, twisted with arthritis, Gordon commands enormous respect in Boston. He consults notes as:

GORDON

Samples taken from the victim's body prove you had sex with her within half an hour of her death. Otis claims you had an obsessive fixation on his wife. And the murder weapon has your prints on it.

RICHARD

We played softball that afternoon.

Gordon moves to a different position. He is in constant pain. Martha, an earnest middle aged woman with frizzy hair, hands him a statement.

GORDON

Yes... Meanwhile, Mister Otis says your story about crossing back and forth in the night, etcetera, is nonsense and states that immediately after dinner, at around nine p.m., he departed for Lake Ontario, leaving his wife behind. It's a five hour drive and Luke Watkins, the owner of 'Watkins Fishing Lodge,' states that Otis woke him at two a.m. to get the keys.

RICHARD

It's a lie.

GORDON

(continuing)

The time of death has been put between one and three a.m. If Eddy is telling the truth, the closest he could have been to his wife when she was killed was somewhere around Syracuse in Upstate New York...

RICHARD

I repeat: he's lying. When can I see my wife?

George Gordon examines Richard through half closed eyes; then he drops his head forward and moans. There's a profound cracking noise from inside his scrawny neck.

GORDON

I know that--unfortunately--you told the police about... er... "Eddy's idea" but did you tell anyone else? Before all this happened?

RICHARD

It's not the kind of thing you go around bragging about.

GORDON

How do you want to plead?

RICHARD

(shocked)

Innocent, of course.

GORDON

You're facing life without possibility of parole. If I were you, I'd consider some kind of plea.

Richard looks from Gordon to Max, absolutely stunned. Max wishes he was home in bed.

RICHARD

He doesn't believe me.

Richard turns back to Gordon.

RICHARD

I was caught stealing hubcaps when I was sixteen and that's the worst thing I ever did. I've been married fourteen years. I don't even cheat on my taxes.

(more)

RICHARD (Cont'd)

I have a thirteen year old daughter who I love. I... I know you hear this all the time; but I really didn't do this. Look at me.

GORDON

No, you look at me. This is not liberty and justice for all, my friend, this is real, and pleading guilty is not something you do because you're guilty, it's something you do to minimize the sentence. You're a white man with no record and we might get you a second with a mandatory fifteen. Otherwise, unless we can break Eddy's alibi, you could be in deep, deep shit; to be precise, a lifetime of shit--so you think about this and let me know how you feel in the morning.

INT. POLICE CELLS - NIGHT

Richard is in shock as he is led down a narrow passage between two rows of cages and is pushed into a cell. Mercifully, he is alone. He lies back on a filthy blanket and stares at the ceiling.

RICHARD

This can't be happening. This can't be happening.

VOICE

Man... it's happening.

In the gloom, Richard has failed to note that only bars divide the cells. Lying where he is, his face is only inches from that of the man in the next cell.

INT. COURT - THE NEXT DAY

Standing next to Gordon, Richard already has that criminal look: the rumpled clothes, the greasy hair, the unshaven face and hollow frightened eyes.

GORDON

My client will be entering a plea of not guilty.

The JUDGE starts to speak. Richard whispers to Gordon.

RICHARD

Where's Priscilla?

GORDON

She'll see us in chambers.

He turns back toward the bench.

JUDGE

... in consideration of which,
I am setting bail at one million
dollars. Will you be seeking a
bail hearing?

GORDON

Yes--and a continuance.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

A TV NEWS CREW, several REPORTERS, and some PHOTOGRAPHERS
scramble to interview Gordon and his client as they are hustled
along within a protective phalanx of COPS.

GORDON

If you want to go this route,
we've got to get you out on bail.
We have to prove you can live in
the real world without killing
anyone. Can you handle a million?

RICHARD

I doubt it.

GORDON

At the bail hearing, we'll see
if we can get it down to five or
six. Could you handle that?

RICHARD

Maybe. What's a continuance?

GORDON

There's a saying among defence
lawyers. "Age your case like fine
wine." Continuances are the means
by which we age them.

RICHARD

Why d'you do that?

GORDON

A little time helps the witnesses
lose confidence. "Was it really
three a.m.? How can you be sure
after so long?"

They turn onto another corridor. The PRESS come after them,
squawking questions and falling over themselves.

GORDON

And there's another reason. Have
you seen the papers today?
"Yuppie Sex Murder." "Jingle Man
Rings Final Bell."
(with contempt)
The press... Vultures, Richard.
Vultures.

He flaps his scrawny arms at the reporters.

GORDON

If there was a trial today, every
potential juror in Boston would
have those headlines rattling
around in their miserable little
heads. And let me tell you
something, my insulated friend,
there's another world out there,
a world in which people still read
The Reader's Digest, do you follow
what I'm saying?

They are pushed through a row of guards and enter:

INT. DEFENCE CHAMBERS - DAY

Priscilla, accompanied by Max Roth, sits at a table waiting for
Richard. Priscilla's eyes are red from crying. She stares at
her husband in agony as he drops into the chair opposite.
Richard takes her hand, opens his mouth to speak, but then:

RICHARD

I don't know what to say. "Sorry"
seems so...

He shrugs hopelessly.

RICHARD

(to Max)

D'you mind?

Max moves to another corner of the room. Priscilla is holding
herself together with the greatest difficulty.

PRISCILLA

Are you okay? Are they treating
you okay?

RICHARD

Don't worry about me. How's Lori?

PRISCILLA

I got a call from the school.
She can't take it, they can't take
it. She's coming home tonight.

RICHARD
Christ, I am so sorry, Priscilla.

Priscilla looks at him a moment and then buries her face in her hands and moans, almost as if she was in physical pain. Gordon sits in a nearby chair, watching dispassionately.

PRISCILLA
I don't know what to do! What am I supposed to do?

RICHARD
We have to raise bail. I have to get out.

PRISCILLA
What do I tell Lori?

RICHARD
Tell her the truth.

A big tear swells in Priscilla's eye and rolls out onto her cheek.

PRISCILLA
Tell her the truth... How do I tell a thirteen year old girl that her father, who she adores...

RICHARD
Please don't cry, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA
This is like a nightmare. Help me understand. Help me.

Richard takes a deep breath. Then:

RICHARD
It seemed like everyone was pushing me to do it, even you, and I just wasn't...

PRISCILLA
Even me? What are you talking about?

RICHARD
"You never take any risks," "Be a man!" "Get this out of your system." Don't you remember?

PRISCILLA
But why would I want you to kill her? I liked her.

Richard stares at her, astonished. George Gordon raises his eyebrows.

RICHARD
(quietly)
I didn't kill her, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA
But you just said...

Silence. Richard is in complete shock. Priscilla wipes the tear away.

RICHARD
After fourteen years of marriage,
do you really think I could have
killed her? Don't you know who
I am?

Priscilla is silent.

PRISCILLA
But you just said...

GORDON
Mrs Parker. To the best of your
knowledge did anyone other than
your husband come to your room
on the night of the murder?

PRISCILLA
No. Of course not.

Priscilla didn't think before replying and now there it is, out in the open like a sentence of death: there was no swap. At first, Priscilla doesn't understand the sudden hush in the room. Then she looks at Richard and: '

PRISCILLA
That was your story?

She stares at him, appalled. He nods.

PRISCILLA
I didn't know. I thought... I'm
so sorry.

She looks around for help. Could she change her story? Would she get away with it?

PRISCILLA
I thought it was something the
newspapers dreamt up...

RICHARD
No, unfortunately not.

PRISCILLA

It never occurred to me that...
I mean how could you possibly
think you'd?..

She frowns, trying for the first time to work out the details
in her head.

RICHARD

I know... I know... But it's
the truth. Eddy duped me into
doing it so he could kill Kay and
pin it on me. It was like a dare.
I know, it's pathetic, but...

He shrugs: it's the truth. And even knowing it's the truth,
it sounds implausible. Priscilla stares at him, horrified.

PRISCILLA

I don't know what happened,
Richard, and maybe it'll sort
itself out in a day or two, but
please... please think of some
other defence. Think how this
is going to affect Lori.

RICHARD

Do you want me to lie? Do you
want me to plead guilty?

PRISCILLA

All I know is that Lori is a
fourteen year old girl who...

RICHARD

(continuing right over
her)

Because it's not going to "sort
itself out in day or two." This
is it. I'm in big trouble here
and...

PRISCILLA

How could you have done this,
Richard? How could you have done
this to Lori, to our family?

RICHARD

(continuing as before)
... I'm going to have to...

Suddenly Priscilla can contain herself no longer and stands up,
her chair crashing to the ground behind her. Richard reaches
for her but she snatches her arm away and rushes from the room.

RICHARD

Priscilla!

As Richard makes to follow, Gordon grasps his arm with surprising firmness and shakes his head. Richard sits down and presses both hands to his ears to try and extinguish the awful, almost animal sounds of Priscilla's misery as it finally bursts from her and bounces and echoes back along the corridor and into his repentant heart.

INT. EXERCISE YARD - DAY

A makeshift heavybag hangs in a corner of the yard. A group of prisoners take turns hitting it. Among them-- becoming one of them already--is Richard.

When it's his turn, he steps forward and punches the bag relentlessly.

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

Richard takes his turn at the phone. He dials home.

INT. PARKER HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY

The phone rings. Lori is grazing at the refrigerator. She picks it up.

LORI

Hello?

RICHARD

Lori! It's me. Listen, please
don't hang up. Just let me...
Hello?

Lori stands with the receiver to her ear, frozen, silent.

RICHARD

Lori?... Lori?

Tears begin to pour down Lori's face but still she makes no sound.

A MALE HAND with a gold ID bracelet comes into frame, gently takes the receiver from her, and puts it back on the hook. Lori looks up at:

Eddy with Priscilla behind him, pale and weirdly detached.

EDDY

(kindly)
Come with me. Come on.

EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY

Eddy sits Lori down at a table beneath a shade tree. He takes the chair opposite hers and looks at her with earnest sincerity.

EDDY

What's happened here is awful. I've lost my wife, you've lost your father, and Priscilla has lost her husband. It's terrible. Terrible... But I want you to know I'm a friend and I'm going to be here for you... for both of you. Okay?

So moved is he by this little speech that he is forced to wipe tear from his cheek. He takes one of her hands and squeezes it reassuringly. Lori watches him, unconvinced.

EDDY

Things will get better, Lori, I promise.

LORI

(tentatively)

What are those pills ma's taking?

EDDY

The doctor prescribed something for her nerves. I don't like them either. Whadaya say? Shall we try get her to quit? Huh? Shall we make that our little project? Hm?

Lori nods... and unobtrusively removes her hand from his.

INT. PRISON VISITING ROOM - DAY

Priscilla is glazed with the unearthly calm of Valium. Her face is pale and drawn, her eyes glassy. It's shocking to see her like this and yet tragedy suits her, transforming her wholesome prettiness into real beauty.

PRISCILLA

Everyone told me I shouldn't come but I couldn't let anyone else do this for me.

Richard, sitting the other side of a metal table, is nervous and concerned. Max Roth and George Gordon inhabit another world.

PRISCILLA

I suppose I never was a very strong person and now I don't seem... God, it's so lonely out here... I just don't have the strength to be the good wife and the good mother; so I'm going to be the good mother.

(more)

PRISCILLA (Cont'd)
I want to get Lori away from this.
I want my name back. I want a
divorce.

RICHARD
Priscilla, please... No... Not
now...

Priscilla starts to crack up. Her lower lip trembles and tears
fill her eyes.

PRISCILLA
(desperately)
Lori's in hell, Richard. I can't
save both of you. What do you
want me to do? Help me.

INT. CELL - DAY

Richard looks defeated. Sitting opposite him are Max Roth and
George Gordon. Richard is reading a piece of paper.

RICHARD
You know the amazing thing is,
we weren't even unhappy. Now I
sign this and I'm not married
anymore? It's incredible.

GORDON
What this does is define the
financial terms of the divorce
to the satisfaction of the
bondsman. Along with your car
and musical instruments, this pays
my initial fee and secures the
bond.

ROTH
She's being very generous acting
so fast.

RICHARD
I know but even so... I do one
stupid thing - just one - and four
weeks later I've got no house,
no business, no wife, no child...
I mean, it's...

GORDON
Look, you sign this, you get out.
You get a job, you stay clean,
you come to court in a nice suit
just like Joe Six-pack on the
jury.

(more)

GORDON (Cont'd)

You don't sign this and in about a year you come in the court through the back, dressed in prison blues and manacles. You're a pervert animal chained up to protect society. The choice is yours, my friend, but either way, let's get on with it.

Richard looks at Gordon. The tone is so harsh. Then again, so is the situation. Richard signs.

EXT. CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING. BOSTON - DAY

Richard and his two lawyers emerge into the sunlight.

ROTH

I gotta rush. I'm late for my eleven o'clock.

He shakes Richard's hand.

ROTH

Good luck.

RICHARD

Thanks.

Roth runs down the steps to his Jaguar.

RICHARD

What do I do now?

GORDON

You have twenty-four hours to remove whatever personal effects you want from your house. What's left will be auctioned to pay for your defence.

RICHARD

Then what?

Gordon checks his watch.

GORDON

Do you have any friends?

RICHARD

Of course.

GORDON

Do you have any friends who'd put you up for a year?

Richard thinks. Shakes his head.

RICHARD
Priscilla was my friend. I guess
I never figured...

GORDON
Then I suggest you find yourself
a modest apartment. Call me in
a day or two and don't, I repeat,
don't get into any trouble.

He shakes Richard's hand, slaps his arm encouragingly, turns
and starts away. Richard, totally adrift, watches his bent
figure crab up the steps and disappear.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - DAY

Richard stands by the window, looking out at the house across
the way. Like his, Eddy's house has a 'For Sale,' sign outside
and is clearly empty.

Richard turns back into the house. Some furniture remains and a
couple of paintings. All Richard's awards stand on the floor
where his piano used to be. It's like someone came to the house
and stripped it of character. It's a dead, empty place, an
echo, a mockery.

UPSTAIRS

Richard enters his attic office. Here nothing has changed.
It's a pocket of life. Here are all the little things a man
squirrels away to remind himself how good life has been.

Richard slumps down at the desk. On a shelf in front of him
are photographs of Priscilla, himself, and Lori. Many, many
pictures of Lori. Richard stares at them. He does not cry.
Looking down he sees the corner of a photograph protruding from
beneath some documents. He eases it out.

It's a photograph of Kay. Richard stares at her. Then he gazes
up at his wife and his daughter, looking at him from twenty
frames.

RICHARD
(softly)
God forgive me.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Richard puts the photographs in a box, one by one.

INT. PARKER HOUSE - TWILIGHT

Richard comes down the stairs. He is carrying two cardboard
boxes one on top of the other. As he crosses the hallway, a
figure becomes visible standing in shadow near the living room.

FIGURE

Please don't get me wrong...

Richard drops the boxes with a crash and reaches for a light switch, illuminating a MAN in his late twenties, hands held up in front of him as if to ward off evil.

RICHARD

Who the fuck are you?

DUTTONVILLE

My name...

He's so afraid, he can barely talk.

DUTTONVILLE

... is David Duttonville. I'm a private investigator.

He looks more like a corporate lawyer. His suit is so crisp, his shirt so clean, his hair so cut, that everything, including Richard, seems smudged in comparison.

DUTTONVILLE

I, er... Do you mind if I sit down? You scared me.

RICHARD

I scared you?

Duttonville slumps onto a chair pulled into the hall. He's one of those men whose left arm always has an attache case at the end of it. As Richard starts picking up the boxes, Duttonville puts his case on his lap and fiddles with the combination lock.

DUTTONVILLE

The door was open. I thought you were still in the... er...

RICHARD

I made bail. What d'you want?

DUTTONVILLE

My company, Duttonville Research, has been hired by three insurance companies to investigate a total one point five million dollar double-indemnity claim by Eddy Otis on his wife, Kay Otis.

Richard's mouth drops open and he sits down on another chair. Now they both sit in chairs in the hallway.

DUTTONVILLE

We were hoping you might be able to help us.

RICHARD
One and a half million dollars?

DUTTONVILLE
Yes, that's the point. It is rather a lot to take out on a would-be lounge singer who never earned a cent in her entire life. However, there's no law against it and she had a policy on him in the same amount. Eddy's explanation is that they loved each other so much he figured if either of them got killed, they'd need a lot of compensation. It's a funny attitude but the world's a funny place.

RICHARD
(to himself, amazed)
He went back in there and smashed her to death for money? Simple as that? What an incredible thing to do.

(to Duttonville)
I even think he liked her.

DUTTONVILLE
You're saying he killed Kay Otis?

RICHARD
Aren't you?

Duttonville shrugs. Maybe.

RICHARD
Of course he killed her, but what an amazing set-up. The whole thing, just to... One point five million dollars... Eddy, Eddy, Eddy...

He gets up, finds two beers in the refrigerator, opens them, and brings them back. Duttonville waits for a glass. Doesn't get one. Drinks out of the bottle once, to be polite.

DUTTONVILLE
I've checked his alibi. It's gonna hold.

RICHARD
I wonder how much he paid those people?

DUTTONVILLE
Me too.

But there's precious little sincerity in the remark and Richard knows it.

RICHARD

What about Eddy? Where did he come from? Who is he?

DUTTONVILLE

I was hoping you knew.

RICHARD

He said he was a financial adviser.

Duttonville laughs.

DUTTONVILLE

Great. Now I know. I'm on this for a week. There's a limit to what you can do in a week. I need something solid. Do you have anything?

RICHARD

Only what I've told everyone already. Did you tell the cops about this?

DUTTONVILLE

They weren't that interested. I think they feel comfortable with you.

RICHARD

Comfortable?

DUTTONVILLE

(standing)

You know what I mean. They got a good case. Look, if you do think of anything, here's my card.

He hands Richard a card with several numbers on it, one a car phone. Richard puts the card in his shirt pocket. Duttonville exits with his attache case.

Richard looks around the house where he and Priscilla lived in married bliss and brought up their beautiful and talented daughter. Then he picks up the cardboard boxes and leaves.

INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - DAY

A SINGLE in one of those complexes dominated by health-crazed yuppies and desperate divorced people.

5.

There's a sauna down there somewhere where one of the desperate once got lucky with one of the healthy... or so it's rumored among the older set.

Richard stares down into the sterile courtyard, a PHONE pressed to his ear, watching a man watching a girl watching her poodle.

Dear God, rescue me from this bed of joyless copulation, this birthplace of empty vows, this necropolis of dreams.

RICHARD

Jimmy, we did over a hundred commercials. We won a dozen awards. Today it's taken ten calls to get through to you. What is that?

INTERCUT:

INT. JIMMY SCHWARTZ'S OFFICE - DAY

Jimmy Schwartz's quiet, beautifully decorated office overlooks Boston. It is a striking contrast to Richard's little bachelor unit.

JIMMY

I'm sorry, I was embarrassed.

RICHARD

Why? I mean...

JIMMY

I can't help you, Richard.

RICHARD

I'm not asking any favors. I'm the best composer in the area. I didn't...

JIMMY

I said I can't help you.

RICHARD

And I say I don't understand. Spell it out for me.

JIMMY

Put yourself in my shoes.

RICHARD

I wish.

JIMMY

Do you expect me to go to... Gerbers and say, "Listen, I want Richard Parker to do the jingle.

(more)

JIMMY (Cont'd)
 He's up on a rape/murder charge
 but it's not gonna reflect on your
 product?" You think it would do
 any good if I did say that?

RICHARD
 But I didn't kill her, Jimmy.

JIMMY
 You crossed the street...

RICHARD
 You were my friend...

JIMMY
 You crossed the street... now
 you're over there and I'm over
 here. That's the way it is and
 there's nothing I can do about
 it. I'm sorry. Good bye.

He hangs up. Richard stares at the phone in astonishment.

EXT. EXCLUSIVE RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Richard sits in a beat up old car. It's early morning. From
 a house across the way, Lori emerges. She is dressed for
 school. Priscilla and her PARENTS (country club types) kiss
 her goodbye.

Richard watches his daughter trudge off, head down.

In the doorway of the house, Priscilla's FATHER spots Richard
 in the car. He rapidly shuts the door.

INT. GEORGE GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

George Gordon and Martha, the paralegal with the frizzy hair,
 listen to Richard.

RICHARD
 He says he left around nine and
 arrived at the lake around two
 a.m.--right?

GORDON
 (wearily)
 Right.

RICHARD
 But I know he couldn't have left
 Boston until after two a.m. That
 means he couldn't have arrived
 at Lake Ontario until around seven
 a.m. when it would already be
getting light.

GORDON

Just.

RICHARD

And a Jaguar towing a cigarette boat is conspicuous, isn't it? Someone must have seen it--a fisherman, a farmer, a paperboy.

George sighs and exchanges glances with Martha.

GORDON

What's the name of that retired homicide detective we used on the Shearer case?

MARTHA

Sal Risher. He died.

GORDON

What of?

MARTHA

Heart attack.

GORDON

Was it quick?

MARTHA

He never got to the hospital.

GORDON

He had a brother.

MARTHA

How long shall I book him for?

GORDON

Put him on for a week. Let's see how he does.

(to Richard)

I hear the local constabulary were called out by Priscilla's father.

RICHARD

I just wanted to see Lori. I just wanted to watch her setting off for school. I didn't...

GORDON

Take my advice: stay away, don't do anything that could be misconstrued as weird.

RICHARD

Wouldn't it be weird if a father didn't want to see his only child?

GORDON

None the less... Besides, I don't think they're there any more.

RICHARD

D'you know where they went?

GORDON

If I did I wouldn't tell you; but I don't. I just heard one of the policemen say they'd gone so there wasn't any point in your going back there again.

RICHARD

Did you hear any rumors about Eddy?

GORDON

Not a whisper... and don't even think of looking for him. Did you find work yet?

RICHARD

Yeah... I found work.

RICHARD AT THE PIANO

Dressed in a tuxedo, he is playing 'Hava Nagila.'

The SHOT PULLS BACK.

INT. RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Richard is playing in a FOUR PIECE BAND at a wedding reception. The WEDDING GUESTS have raised the YOUNG COUPLE up on two chairs and holding them aloft, dance them around. Richard watches. The laughing couple could almost be younger versions of himself and Priscilla.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Richard walks along. A cold wind is blowing. The beach is as empty as his life.

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Richard plays piano in a blues band fronted by an old BLACK SINGER. This is music Richard enjoys and for the first time we realize what he could have become had circumstances been different.

His hair has grown a little longer and there's a kind of exhausted roughness to him that makes him attractive to the women in the audience. But as he leaves the stage at the end of the set, his response to his admirers is merely polite.

As he crosses to the bar, a COCKTAIL WAITRESS signals he has a phone call. He goes to a pay phone tucked away in a corridor.

RICHARD

Yeah?

INTERCUT:

INT. GEORGE GORDON'S STUDY AT HOME - NIGHT

GORDON

I have some news on Eddy's alibi.

RICHARD

What?

GORDON

Our investigator found someone who saw the car and the boat up by the lake.

RICHARD

(excited)

Yes? What time?

GORDON

Around two a.m.

RICHARD

But that's not possible!

GORDON

He's a councilman from Boston who likes to fish. He was staying in the other cabin and was woken by the sound of a car. He got out of bed and looked out the window. The jaguar and the cigarette boat were pulling up by the lodge. He's willing to swear in court that it was around two a.m.

RICHARD

I don't get it.

GORDON

Yeah, well now we rooted him out, the prosecution will probably use him. Things are getting worse. I'm sorry.

Richard is absolutely stunned. He puts down the phone.

EXT. CLUB - NIGHT

Richard and the band come out into a stark, chilly night. Cigarette smoke and hot breath. A laugh. Car doors and coughing engines. Carbon monoxide drifts away. Silence.

A battered American car remains.

INT. RICHARD'S CAR - NIGHT

Richard stares directly ahead at nothing. Why did the world turn on him? But his catastrophe is too vast to allow for self-pity. He turns the key in the ignition. The radio comes on with the engine.

FRANKIE H

...down at "The Blues Connection," covering the contest. Until then, as the little hand approaches the two and the big one snuggles up to the twelve, this is Fat Frankie H bidding you a sweet good night on Blue Night--and to take us out, here's Big Bill Broonzy with, 'All By Myself.'

By now Richard has turned onto the road alongside the club. He looks at the old fashioned clock in the car. Two a.m.

He does a U-Turn.

INT. CAR. EXT. OSWEGO COUNTY. UPSTATE NEW YORK - DAWN

Richard looks at the clock as dawn begins. It's six thirty. No one is around.

EXT. LAKE ONTARIO. WATKINS FISHING LODGE - DAY

Richard arrives at Watkins Fishing Lodge. He gets out and walks to the door. Before he gets there, Watkins comes out onto the porch.

Richard just stares at him. Recognition filters slowly onto Watkins' face. He's scared.

RICHARD

Why are you doing this to me?

MRS WATKINS (O.S)

Who is it?

WATKINS

Get my gun.

He holds Richard's eyes.

WATKINS

Get my gun and then call the police!

Mrs Watkins comes out with a rifle. Watkins checks the breach. It's loaded.

RICHARD

I've lost my house, my family... I haven't seen my daughter in three months... Maybe I'll go to prison for life.

WATKINS

(to his wife)
Call the police.

RICHARD

How do you sleep at night? Is it 'cause I'm a stranger? You can do this to a stranger? Is that it?

WATKINS

Call the police, goddamnit!

RICHARD

Before you go! Look!

He takes out his wallet. Flips it open.

RICHARD

See that? That's my wife. This is my daughter. Her name is Lori. Look, here's a photo of her playing the piano. I taught her. Here we are at the beach. We're real people.

He stands there, holding this wallet of memories above him. Mrs Watkins is frozen. Watkins aims the gun at Richard's head as if sighting on a far off deer.

RICHARD

What's the matter? Didn't he pay you enough to kill me?

Everyone remains where they are for about five seconds. Then Richard turns around and walks back to his car. He gets in and drives away.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

A banner says, 'HAPPY SILVER WEDDING ANNIVERSARY, IRV AND MURIEL.' Richard and the band play a slow song. A beautiful OLD COUPLE, surrounded by their family, dance together.

INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Richard, on the phone, stares at a photograph of Lori pinned to his wall.

RICHARD

So when's the trial?

GORDON'S VOICE

September the second. Five weeks away. Did you reconsider a plea?

RICHARD

Not yet.

ANOTHER ANGLE - LATER

Richard has the picture of Lori in his hand. What will she be like at thirty? What will he be like at fifty?--after fifteen years in the animal factory?

EXT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Richard comes out into the area behind the club. This is where the band hangs out between sets. The saxophone player, BO, a compulsive musician, sits in his old, smoke-filled car. The seat is tilted back as far as it will go and his sax is in there with him, plugged into his mouth like a giant brass dummy.

The RADIO is on and he is playing along to a blues number.

Richard nods at Bo, then walks past the car. He walks around, snapping his right hand, thinking, trying to figure an angle, trying to think if there's something, anything he missed.

Richard hears muffled applause coming from Bo's car. Then a voice starts to sing. Bo's muted saxophone softly joins it.

VOICE

... Don't put no headstone on my
grave... All my life I've been
a slave...

Richard stops walking. Stops clicking his fingers. Stops breathing. And listens. And listens harder. Because...

The voice sounds like Kay's.

KAY

... And I don't want the world
to know... Here lies the fool who
loved you so...

Richard walks toward Bo's car. Rips open the passenger door. Sits next to him.

KAY

... Don't send no flowers when
I'm gone... I just want you to
put me down and then move on...

The voice IS Kay's. There can be no doubt about it.

RICHARD

(a whisper)

What station is that? Is that
Blue Night?

Bo nods and continues to blow as Richard leans in toward the
radio. Kay sings like an angel.

FRANKIE H

And that was Olivia Kamen with
'Put No Headstone On My Grave,'
a song made famous by Little
Esther Phillips. We're at the
Blues Connection here in downtown
Cambridge and next up is...

INT. RICHARD'S CAR - NIGHT

Richard hits ninety across the Longfellow Bridge. Flies across
Commercial Avenue and onto Main. On the radio:

FRANKIE H

... just two more contestants
before our judges decide on the
winner. Up now a man who knows
the blues like you and I know how
to breathe...

On the radio an old BLACK MAN sings 'Got You On My Mind.'

EXT. THE BLUES CONNECTION - NIGHT

The song is just ending as Richard careens to a halt outside
the club.

INT. THE BLUES CONNECTION - NIGHT

The place is almost deserted. The owner, MAXIE, a bearded guy,
is at the bar drinking with a WOMAN and a FEW MUSICIANS. The
woman has her back to Richard. Richard stares at the empty
club, puzzled, and then walks closer.

RICHARD

Kay?

The woman turns. A hard-drinking BAND BANGER who was in her
prime in '65. Lipstick on loose teeth.

BANGER

I wish.

Richard looks at Maxie.

RICHARD

What happened to the contest?
I was just listening to it on the
radio.

MAXIE

That was last week. You musta
been listening to a repeat. Fat
Frankie's sick.

A ROUND OF DRINKS

arrive and Richard pays for them as:

MAXIE

... but when he went lookin' for
her to give her the prize, she'd
lit out. Didn't leave an address
or nothin'.

RICHARD

How did she look?

MAXIE

Oh, she looked good.

MUSICIAN

Rode a hog. I saw her out back.

MAXIE

Anyway, you wanna hear the song
again I know for sure they're
gonna play it Sunday night at
midnight.

INT. RICHARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Richard is hunched over a radio/cassette player. The tape is
already rolling.

FRANKIE H

... coming to you live tonight,
July twenty-sixth, Saturday night
or Sunday morning, depending on
your viewpoint. First off tonight
on Blue Night, we're gonna play
the winning entry in last week's
contest down at the Blues
Connection. But the winner, Miss
Olivia Kamen, never picked up her
prize. So, if you're out there,
Miss Kamen, why don't you stop
by? Anyway, here it is, that
Little Esther Phillips song, 'Put
No Headstone On My Grave.'

KAY

Don't put no headstone on my
grave... All my life I've been
a slave...

Richard listens. That voice, that husky goddamn voice...

INT. GORDON'S OFFICE - DAY

The song continues as Richard plays it to George Gordon. This is a busy old man and listening to the blues is not his idea of a good time.

GORDON

Okay, okay. She's got a nice
voice. Turn it off before I break
down and cry.

Richard does so. He is pleased with himself.

GORDON

Do you have any other recordings?

RICHARD

Like what?

GORDON

Do you have any recordings she
made like before she died?

RICHARD

I told you, she never recorded
anything. That's my point.

GORDON

No, that's my point. We don't
have a comparison. A broad in
some club in Cambridge sounds like
a broad who got snuffed in
Brookline... according to you,
the accused snuffer. I go into
court with this, they'll laugh
in my face.

RICHARD

What about the initials? O.K.
K.O... Olivia Kamen, Kay...

GORDON

Oh, please, please, please...
Mister Parker, I'm an old man.
Does it fall to me at this time
of life to explain the fundamental
principles of the judicial system
to a man of your intelligence?
Evidence, dear boy! Evidence!

RICHARD

Find it, you old bastard! Find
it!

There's a deathly hush. Doubtless clients have yelled at George Gordon before, but not in recent memory. He raises his chin and stares down his nose at Richard. Then:

GORDON

(to Martha)

Help me up.

INT. BOSTON TAVERN - DAY

An anonymous but safely public place chosen by Duttonville, the insurance investigator, who, watched by Richard, listens to the end of the Olivia Kamen tape.

RICHARD

I'd know her voice if she sang
under water. This song? The way
she phrases the middle section?
No one's ever done it that way.
That was my idea.

Richard clicks off the tape.

DUTTONVILLE

So who got killed that night?

RICHARD

Who identified the body? Ask him.
Or ask the corpse...

DUTTONVILLE

We can't ask the corpse. It was
cremated. I checked on the way
over.

RICHARD

Then if Eddy wasn't the only one
to I.D. the body, I'll bet you
a thousand dollars the other
person was a doctor--and if you
call State Farm, I'll bet you find
the same name attached to a claim
Eddy made when he faked an
accident involving my car.

DUTTONVILLE

You never told me about that.

RICHARD

I'm telling you now. It's a long
story.

DUTTONVILLE

Let me get this absolutely clear.
You're suggesting that Otis went
out and... hired someone?...

RICHARD

Probably.

DUTTONVILLE

... who resembled Kay so you could
make love to her and he could then
beat her to death?

RICHARD

Yes.

DUTTONVILLE

He and this 'friendly' doctor then
identify the body...

RICHARD

You read the report. Her head
was totally...

DUTTONVILLE

(squeamishly)

Yes, yes, yes. Then he and the
real, living Kay split the one
point five million dollars and
she disappears...

Duttonville is still dubious.

RICHARD

He wouldn't sleep with Priscilla,
so there was no risk there. On
the way back, he asks me, "Did
we get caught?" and I say, "No."
Then he asks the woman, "Did we
get caught?" and she, not knowing
the consequences, says, "No."
If he still doesn't feel right
about it, he pays her off. If,
however, he feels lucky, on go
the gloves and out comes the
bat... With my prints on it.

DUTTONVILLE

And everyone gets what they want.
Except you.

RICHARD

Yeah, except me... and the girl,
whoever she was. And maybe you,
if you have any professional
pride....

Duttonville hesitates, thinking.

RICHARD

I go to trial in four weeks.

DUTTONVILLE

Look, I'm in partnership with my wife. We're freelance. Once or twice I've taken jobs on a speculative basis and, well, the outcome was not felicitous...

RICHARD

What about the insurance company?

Duttonville shakes his head.

DUTTONVILLE

I spoke to them. They're not interested.

RICHARD

But they paid out one and a half million. Don't they want to get it back?

DUTTONVILLE

Who says it still exists and if it does, how much is it going to cost to reclaim it? That's the first thing. The second thing is they'd rather swallow the loss than advertise how easy it is to cheat them. It puts ideas in people's heads...

RICHARD

If I could pay you I would but I can't. I even got fired from the band the night I heard Kay on the radio. I'm not asking much. Just... try.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - DAY

WEeping RELATIVES, the COFFIN, FLOWERS. And Richard on the organ, playing dismal music and checking his watch.

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR LOBBY - DAY

Richard has a stack of quarters. He dials Duttonville's car phone number. He looks like he hasn't slept for days. He's at the end of his rope.

INT. DUTTONVILLE'S BMW - DAY

Duttonville is driving his wife, a clean, efficient looking woman called ANNIE, and his two charming young SONS along a road on Long Island.

The sons are obviously big BASEBALL FANS. Each has a Boston Red Sox CAP on his head and each has a brand new BASEBALL BAT. They are starting to fight with the bats.

DUTTONVILLE

Listen, I told you you could take
the bats in the car on one
condition which was...

The phone rings. Duttonville picks up the handset. The phone keeps ringing.

DUTTONVILLE

Damn.

He puts it back down on the cradle and presses a button.

DUTTONVILLE

Hello?

Richard's voice comes over the SPEARKERPHONE.

RICHARD

What's going on? Where are you?

DUTTONVILLE

Ah, Richard! Listen, could I call
you back at a more?..

INTERCUT:

INT. FUNERAL PARLOR LOBBY - DAY

MOURNERS file by as Richard speaks.

RICH

No, you couldn't. I'm between...
sets. Talk to me now. Did you
find Kay yet?

Duttonville shoots a quick look at his sons in the rearview mirror and then:

DUTTONVILLE

Not a trace so far, but there was
a woman disappeared that night
in Boston... similar appearance
and everything... A... a woman
of ill repute named Trudy Seaton.

RICHARD
Yes? Good. Where are you?

DUTTONVILLE
Long Island. I decided to...

RICHARD
Long Island! I hope you're not taking a vacation, Duttonville, because three weeks from today my trial begins and I'm starting to fucking panic.

DUTTONVILLE
This really isn't a great time for me. Can I call you back later?

RICHARD
No. You're married, aren't you?

DUTTONVILLE
Yes, and as a matter of fact...

RICHARD
I bet she's got rosy cheeks and one of those wholesome New England smiles. And I bet you've got two kids who you're just crazy about and I bet you all get along real well except maybe the wife wishes you didn't do this private eye thing, but...

With this last remark he has clearly hit a raw nerve. The boys are enjoying this. Annie and Duttonville are not.

DUTTONVILLE
Look, Richard...

RICHARD
But... all in all, it's pretty damn good, isn't it? I know. I had all that shit once. I wasn't born a suspected sex killer, you see, I just made one, tiny, tiny mistake. It could happen to you, pal, it really could.

A couple of mourners stop to listen as Richard continues.

RICHARD
You ever cheat on your wife?

DUTTONVILLE
Certainly not.

RICHARD

Well I bet you thought about it once or twice. Right? That's all I did. I did not bash that woman to death with a baseball bat. I just...

The boys stare at their baseball bats, awe struck.

DUTTONVILLE

Richard. Shut up. I found the doctor who signed the death certificate. His name is Doctor Pettering and he also signed Eddy's injury claim.

RICHARD

Doctor Pettering... Eddy's 'pet' doctor...

DUTTONVILLE

Yeah. Seems he was a promising young doctor in Chicago but he got greedy and blew himself up. It was never proved, but it's thought he was manufacturing speed. He's got a...

RICHARD

... a burn down one side of his face? Blond hair?

DUTTONVILLE

Yeah, otherwise he's real good looking. You met him?

RICHARD

No, I saw him once. What else?

DUTTONVILLE

A month after the murder, he and Eddy went into partnership.

RICHARD

In what?

DUTTONVILLE

They call it 'A residential treatment center for addictive disorders.' It's on Long Island which is why I'm here.

RICHARD

(remembering)

"Drug and alcohol rehab joints. The best investment op of the nineties."

DUTTONVILLE

Yeah, they used to call them drying out clinics. Oh, and there's a third partner.

RICHARD

Who?

DUTTONVILLE

A partner in both senses of the word, if you catch my drift.

RICHARD

You mean a woman?

DUTTONVILLE

Are you sitting down?

PRISCILLA

sits up into frame.

PRISCILLA

...and up... and three... and four... and five. Well done. See you tomorrow.

INT. RECOVERY CLINIC GYM - DAY

Priscilla's exercise class, "Get Fit To Be Sober," finishes and her students leave the gym. Priscilla goes to a mirror and combs her hair out. Her eyes are bright and alert and she is clearly free of sedatives; but her melancholy remains.

INT. THE RECOVERY CLINIC. HEAD OFFICE - DAY

Eddy's office overlooks the sea. Through a GLASS DIVIDER, the multi-faceted DOCTOR PETTERING is seen unctuously welcoming the JUNKY OFFSPRING of a haute couture MAMA.

Eddy--proprietor of The Recovery Clinic and local citizen deluxe--strides around the office with a cordless phone, continuing his yupward mobility in characteristic style.

EDDY

Everywhere you look, man. Psychic this, spiritual that, crystal gazing, crystal healing, past life regression therapy, channelling, astrology, aura therapy, fucking aroma therapy, would you believe?

He strolls around jangling the I.D. bracelet on his wrist. He sees a check on his desk. He picks it up and looks at it.

EDDY

That's right, they don't think for themselves. The TV generation... Like sheep, exactly... Right, then someone tells 'em they got a private line to Rama-dama on Mars and...

He nods his head like an idiot.

EDDY

"Oh, yeah? What does he say?"
Cling-clang! It's money in the bank...

He takes the check to a small safe in an ante-room, crouches down, and spins the wheel.

EDDY

I'll tell you what I have in mind.
A chain of Psychic Boutiques.
Some of 'em we staff with our own
bullshit artists. Some of 'em
we rent to the true believers...

Priscilla, now wearing a simple, classic skirt over her leotard, enters and sits at Eddy's desk. Slim and strong, she has achieved the poise and natural beauty of a ballet dancer.

She frowns as:

EDDY (O.S.)

We provide the rental property
and the neon signs. Then once
a week, we go around and take our
cut... It's an epidemic, man!
Millions and millions and...

Eddy puts the check in the safe next to a large amount of CASH in one corner. On top of the cash is a .45 in a holster. Eddy closes the safe and spins the wheel. He looks over his shoulder. What he sees is:

Richard entering quietly to stand in the doorway behind Priscilla.

EDDY (O.S.)

I'll call you back.

Priscilla hears something in his tone and turns. Both she and Eddy go into temporary shock.

RICHARD

Gee, what a sight... the
enterprising couple working their
fingers to the bone...

As he strolls around, casually inspecting the place, Priscilla and Eddy sense the rage beneath the sarcasm.

RICHARD

The trial's in three week's time.
I thought I should...

He TAPS on the GLASS. Doctor Pettering looks up, irritated. Richard waves congenially, and turns away.

RICHARD

... spend a little time with my
family before it's too late. Make
the best of it, hey Eddy?

He laughs and walks around Eddy, inspecting him, unafraid.

RICHARD

You look different, Eddy. You
look smaller. The model citizen
is shrinking. In fact, you know
what? You look positively
downtrodden.

Richard moves on to Priscilla who tries hard to maintain her composure during this embarrassing encounter.

RICHARD

"Live free or die," that's what
we always say, don't we,
Priscilla?

PRISCILLA

How are you?

RICHARD

Fantastic! Never better. I'm
down here with a friend of mine.
An insurance investigator by the
name of David Duttonville.
(to Eddy)
Remember him?

Eddy has gone pale. Richard turns to Priscilla amiably.

RICHARD

Anyway, can't wait to see Lori.

PRISCILLA

Well, there may be a...

RICHARD

No, there won't be a problem.

He produces the divorce papers and taps Priscilla with them.

RICHARD
'Reasonable access.' I think
seeing her once or twice after
playing dead for six months would
qualify as reasonable, don't you?

EDDY
I don't think she'll...

RICHARD
(casually)
Shut up, Eddy.
(to Priscilla)
Shall we go?

Priscilla makes a decision.

PRISCILLA
She's going on a trip with her
school later this week. Until
then you can see her as often as
you like so long as it doesn't
interfere with her homework. Is
that fair?

RICHARD
Yes. Thank you.

PRISCILLA
Hold the fort, will you, Eddy?

She marches out of the office. Richard follows her.

RICHARD
"Hold the fort, will you, Eddy?"
"Yes, certainly, darling.
Anything you say."

He laughs and exits.

EXT. CLINIC CORRIDOR - DAY

Richard tails Priscilla.

RICHARD
You've lost weight.

PRISCILLA
Thank you.

EXT. THE RECOVERY CLINIC AND GROUNDS - DAY

The clinic is a large old house that has grown two ugly modern wings and become an institutional building. A hundred yards away along the shore, stands a smaller house, once the caretaker's cottage. Richard and Priscilla cross the grounds toward this.

Priscilla is composed but chilly. OUTDOOR P.A. SPEAKERS announce AA and group therapy meetings. Now:

SPEAKER

... and tomorrow we're offering a special class entitled, 'Keeping A Creative Diary.'

RICHARD

A 'Creative Diary?' I'll bet that's Eddy's class. 'How To Twist Reality,' a Master Class by well known sociopath, Eddy Otis. What the fuck are you doing here, Priscilla? The guy's... The guy...

He sees a YACHT, bobbing at the dock next to Eddy's familiar CIGARETTE BOAT. It is almost identical to the model Priscilla kept on her desk at the studio but Richard is too angry to make the connection.

RICHARD

He's a psychopath.

PRISCILLA

I don't want to talk about this.

RICHARD

Are you in love with him?

PRISCILLA

I don't want to talk about it. When things were bad, he was there for me. That's all I want to...

RICHARD

Of course he was there for you! He set the whole thing up!

PRISCILLA

You came to see Lori?

RICHARD

Yes.

PRISCILLA

Then let's confine ourselves to that and try to make this as easy for her as possible, okay?

She turns to enter the house but Richard grabs her arm and turns her back toward him.

RICHARD

Priscilla...

A tear trickles out of one of her eyes.

PRISCILLA

Please...

RICHARD

I'm going to prove it to you.
I never killed anyone.

She won't look at him and stares instead at his fingers digging into the muscles of her upper arm.

PRISCILLA

Please let go of my arm.

He lets her go.

INT. OTIS HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Richard looks up as Lori starts down the stairs toward him. She has a sulky curl to her lip and a look of disdain in her eyes.

EXT. TELEPHONE COMPANY. SUFFOLK COUNTY - DAY

Duttonville watches the phone company employees leaving at the end of their shift. He spies a PLAIN LOOKING WOMAN walking alone. He approaches her and gives her his card.

EXT. BEACH ROAD - DAY

Richard, with Lori beside him, drives along by the sea.

INT. BMW - DAY

Richard snaps the 'Olivia Kamen,' cassette into the machine and watches Lori's face as she listens to the song.

RICHARD

You know who this is, don't you?

Lori nods.

RICHARD

I didn't kill her, Lori. I didn't
kill anyone.

Lori maintains her cynical pose. Like, who cares? She won't even look him in the eye.

RICHARD

You didn't call me back. I called
so many times.

She looks away.

RICHARD

Did you really think I could do that? Your father? Me?

Still no response.

RICHARD

Look at me!

Even though the car is moving, Lori starts to struggle with the door. Richard grabs her. The car swerves, HITS A POST, and then straightens up. Richard screeches to a halt. Lori jumps out of the car.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Richard chases Lori across the beach. Finally he grabs her and brings her down.

RICHARD

I know what you're thinking: "If he didn't kill her then the other story is true and that makes him a creep anyway." Well, okay, I agree; but who's perfect? Are you perfect? Come on! Tell me! You think you're going to get through life without making a single mistake? Is that it?

She struggles but he holds her down.

RICHARD

In every other way, I was a good father to you. I loved you, I took care of you, I taught you everything I knew and gave you all the love I had. But what do you think?--because I'm your father I... I'm human, Lori, and you have to forgive me because you're all I've got and in the end, I may be all you've got...

She starts to cry. Richard yanks her to her feet and hugs her.

EXT. THE BEACH - EVENING

Richard has lit a fire. He and Lori sit by it, talking as the sun goes down.

LORI

... and the very next day he was over there comforting her...

RICHARD

But didn't he seem upset? I mean,
after all, it was his wife.

LORI

Oh, he wept and cried and talked
about how we had to stick together
and... He had me fooled. I never
liked him, but...

RICHARD

What about her?

LORI

I always thought she was so strong
but the first couple of weeks she
totally lost it. Then she was
so full of valium I don't think
she knew what was happening and
then, by the time she came 'round,
Eddy was like, well, part of the
ecosystem.

RICHARD

I saw.

LORI

It's not her fault. It's Eddy.
It's like he can make you think
you want to do things even when
you know you don't.

INT. THE SUFFOLK HOTEL. DOUBLE ROOM - NIGHT

Duttonville has managed to get records of all the phone calls
made from The Recovery Clinic and the Otis house in the last
six months and he and Richard pore over them, hoping to find
a recurring number that could be Kay's.

RICHARD

How much did these cost?

DUTTONVILLE

Nothing. I just had to have sex
with a couple of A.T.&T employees.

Richard looks at him, stunned. Duttonville blushes.

DUTTONVILLE

You know, 'Reach out and touch
someone?..'

Richard lets him squirm.

DUTTONVILLE

A hundred dollars, okay? I was
making a joke.

Richard looks at him a beat longer.

RICHARD

You're an odd duck, Duttonville.

DUTTONVILLE

So they tell me. Well?

RICHARD

Nothing. They seem to make a lot of calls from the clinic and not many from home--and none of the numbers mean anything to me.

DUTTONVILLE

They have a business line in the house, that's the problem.

RICHARD

Yeah, and Eddy always had a cellular too.

DUTTONVILLE

That's another call I'll have to make.

RICHARD

Maybe not. If we knew within ten or fifteen minutes when Eddy was going to call Kay, could your friend get us a quick print-out?

DUTTONVILLE

Yes.

SAME PLACE - LATER

Duttonville lies in one of two beds. Richard is in the bathroom. Duttonville is on the phone to his wife.

DUTTONVILLE

(low)

I just wanted to say I'm sorry we fought. I just had to do this. It's like he said, if I don't do this, I've lost my juice, I'm second rate... Why am I talking softly? Because... Yes, we are sharing a room... How could I say we were on a budget and then?... Of course I'm a little nervous, but... The difference between you and me is that I happen to think he's... Well, okay, maybe you're right... No, that's true...

He reaches out of bed, opens his nearby attache case, takes out a small PISTOL, and puts it under his pillow just as Richard emerges quietly from the bathroom.

DUTTONVILLE

Yes, it's loaded but the safety's on... I will... No, don't worry. Good night, Inky. I love you.

He hangs up and sees Richard. He's both embarrassed and afraid. He does not want to offend this man even if he is ninety-five percent convinced of his innocence.

DUTTONVILLE

My wife... She, er... I carry it just to make her... you know... comfortable.

RICHARD

I see.

Richard gets into bed.

DUTTONVILLE

I'd never use it.

RICHARD

I'm relieved to hear that.

DUTTONVILLE

Actually, I despise violence.

Richard looks across at Duttonville.

RICHARD

Yeah. Me too.

DUTTONVILLE

Anyway, she called to remind me I have to go back to Boston the day after tomorrow... Mutual of Omaha... A fraud case and I'm their only witness.

RICHARD

I'll be okay.

He turns off his light. Duttonville turns off his.

RICHARD

When you agreed to help me... as far as I'm concerned, you saved my life. So, excuse me for saying this about your wife, but, if she's giving you a hard time, fuck her. Okay?

Duttonville smiles in the dark.

DUTTONVILLE

Well, thanks... but as it happens
she's not at all a bad sort of
a person. Quite the opposite.
You know, you just go through...

RICHARD

(cynically)
Phases?

DUTTONVILLE

Yes, exactly.

They lie in the semi-darkness for a while. Then:

RICHARD

Oh, and by the way, just as a
matter of interest, why "Inky"?

EXT. OTIS HOUSE - DAY

Richard drives up in the BMW with the top down. He skids to
a halt and jumps out. Priscilla, Eddy, and Lori are down by
the dock, working on the boats.

Richard walks down the narrow floating jetty. Eddy's boat is
moored on one side, Priscilla's on the other. Both Eddy and
Priscilla wear peaked naval hats with their names embroidered
above the braiding.

RICHARD

So nautical, guys... What's that,
Eddy? A captains hat? What fun!
Oh, and Priscilla too... Gee...

Lori laughs. Priscilla looks pained, as if she'd like to say
something to Richard but can't. Richard smacks his forehead.

RICHARD

How rude of me. Congratulations,
Priscilla.

Priscilla looks at him, puzzled.

RICHARD

The yacht. You finally got your
yacht. Well done! That is so
gratifying.

Priscilla looks away and busies herself with some ropes.
Richard notices a CELLULAR PHONE lying near to Eddy on his boat.

EDDY

Run along, Lori.

He jumps onto the dock. Lori hesitates.

RICHARD

It's okay. I'll meet you at the car.

Lori skips past Richard. Eddy thrusts his face at Richard's and speaks low so Priscilla can't hear.

EDDY

You got a detective--big deal--that doesn't bother me at all, but...

Richard waves at Priscilla over Eddy's shoulder and smiles.

EDDY

... but you try and poison Lori's mind... or Priscilla's for that matter... and I'll kill you.

Richard returns his attention to Eddy and laughs in his face.

RICHARD

With things the way they are, that wouldn't be a very smart thing to do, Eddy old pal, old buddy.

He playfully slaps Eddy's cheek and walks off. A little speaker half way up the jetty starts giving information about a 'visualization class.'

RICHARD

I'm visualizing, I'm visualizing. Jesus...

He puts his hands over his ears and laughs. From the car, Lori laughs back. Eddy watches. His face is flushed with anger. Priscilla looks thoughtful.

INT. BRIDGEHAMPTON STEREO SHOP - DAY

Richard buys Lori a small cassette player.

EXT. BRIDGEHAMPTON STREET - DAY

Richard and Lori walk along the street, talking seriously. At one point they stop and Richard emphasizes a point. Lori nods seriously. They walk on. She puts her arm through his.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Lori, carrying the new cassette player, peers around a corner. Eddy appears out of an office with three BUSINESSMEN. He is making some kind of pitch. Lori dodges back.

Now she enters a door and hurries up some winding stairs.

INT. P.A. ROOM/DOVECOTE - DAY

Lori emerges into a small room. Perched on top of the Clinic, surrounded by gently sloping roofs, this tower room, once a dovecote, now provides views of the entire facility. Stored here are various unwanted items, among them a fairly new ELECTRIC GUITAR. Obviously someone comes up here to broadcast their talent to the suffering masses below. Looking down, Lori sees Doctor Pettering hurry toward a door saying, "Dispensary".

Lori puts the CASSETTE MACHINE in front of the MICROPHONE. She switches the microphone to "Speak", presses the "Play" button on the cassette player, and hurries away down the stairs.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

JUNKIES and ALKIES nibble breakfast and confer on the miseries of abstinence. Eddy strides in with the businessmen.

EDDY

...the main building, this one, can, as you see, accommodate at least another thirty patients for daytime activities... and really utilize our excellent staff... With the new wing...

But he begins to falter as the P.A. system comes to life.

P.A. SYSTEM

... so, if you're out there, Miss Kamen, why don't you stop by? Anyway, here it is, that Little Esther Phillips song, 'Put No Headstone On My Grave.'

Eddy's eyes literally bulge in their sockets and he stops breathing. The change in him is so dramatic it's instantly perceived by all.

INT. GYM - DAY

Priscilla, who is conducting an aerobics class, frowns as the song intrudes on her consciousness.

PRISCILLA

Excuse me.

She walks out.

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

Eddy stares up at the P.A. Speaker, as if trying to figure some mystical happening. Then a look of abject terror is followed by one of fury and he dashes from the room.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Lori clatters down the last of the stairs and out into the corridor. She checks her watch, TEN PAST NINE, and then hears the pounding of shoes. She turns and runs.

ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Eddy races at full speed toward the P.A. Room.

ANOTHER CORRIDOR

Priscilla heads in the same direction.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Eddy storms up the tower stairs and crashes in. He sees the machine, hits "Stop" and then "Eject". He holds the cassette in front of his face. Nothing is written on it. Priscilla enters. Eddy spins around and stares into her shocked, accusatory face.

PRISCILLA

I thought Kay was dead.

Eddy quickly turns off the microphone and then turns and looks at Priscilla, searching for the right words.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Richard and Duttonville watch from a distance as Priscilla drops Lori off and then drives quickly away. Lori carries a backpack. Duttonville drives over to her as she waits in line to board a school bus. Richard gets out.

LORI

He freaked.

RICHARD

Did he see you?

LORI

No.

RICHARD

What time was it?

LORI

Ten past nine. I heard mom say, "I thought Kay was dead." She sounded really... well, pissed.

Richard thinks about this.

RICHARD

Good. When d'you get back?

LORI

Next weekend. Will you be here?

RICHARD

Yes.

Lori reaches up and kisses his cheek. Richard hugs her tight for a moment and then releases her to the giggling company of her friends.

INT. BMW - DAY

Richard and Duttonville sit in the car, waiting for Duttonville's A.T. & T contact to emerge for lunch. The car phone rings. Duttonville tries the handset. The phone keeps ringing. He puts the handset down and presses a button.

DUTTONVILLE

Yes?

Over the speakerphone:

ANNIE

Hi, it's Inky.

DUTTONVILLE

Annie, I'm just sitting here with...

ANNIE

They're expecting you at six at Gerald's office. Don't be late.

DUTTONVILLE

My bags are in the car. I love you.

ANNIE

I love you too. Oh, and David?

DUTTONVILLE

Yes?

ANNIE

Remember to keep a record of all expenses--just in case he does one day pay us, which I doubt and...

DUTTONVILLE

I'm... Yes?

ANNIE

Be vigilant.

DUTTONVILLE

Yes. I will be.

She disconnects. Richard laughs.

RICHARD

"Be vigilant!" She's a piece of work, your wife, she really is.

DUTTONVILLE

(irritated)

If we're going to talk about wives, why don't we talk about...

Duttonville sees his contact. He gets out of the car. He and the woman exchange envelopes and then Duttonville returns to the car. He hands Richard the envelope and starts driving. Richard scrutinizes the record of calls.

RICHARD

Chicago. Local. Local. New York.

He goes very silent.

DUTTONVILLE

What?

RICHARD

(quietly)

Atlantic City...

DUTTONVILLE

What time?

RICHARD

Nine fifteen... Atlantic City. I'm telling you, that's it. It feels like Kay.

DUTTONVILLE

Give me the number.

Richard does. Duttonville dials.

OLD MAN

(wheezing)

Ocean Hotel. What can I do for you?

DUTTONVILLE

I've got to make a delivery there. What's your address please?

OLD MAN

Carolina and Boardwalk.

DUTTONVILLE

(jotting it down)

Thanks.

He hangs up and gives the address to Richard.

DUTTONVILLE

Not worth the risk to give her name. I'll get a train into the city and you can have the car. If it's her, call the police then call me. If my guys decide to settle out of court, which often happens, I'll fly down and meet you there.

Richard glances at Duttonville.

RICHARD

Take the car?

DUTTONVILLE

Yeah, take the car.

EXT. STATION - DAY

Duttonville gets out of the car and walks into the station. Richard drives away.

INT. STATION - DAY

Duttonville walks toward the ticket window--and then changes his mind and heads for a phone booth.

PHONE BOOTH

Duttonville scrawls something on a piece of paper. Now he puts the phone down and stands very still.

EXT. STATION - DAY

Duttonville comes out and hails a cab.

INT. SUFFOLK COUNTY HOTEL - DAY

Richard is packing. There's a knock at the door.

RICHARD

Who is it?

PRISCILLA

Priscilla.

Richard opens the door cautiously. Priscilla enters and quickly shuts the door behind her.

PRISCILLA

Was that Kay singing?

RICHARD

I'm not sure you and I have a lot to say to each other, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA

She's alive?

RICHARD

Ask Eddy.

PRISCILLA

I'm asking you.

RICHARD

Everything I ever told you was true. Eddy killed whoever it was in that bed--not me--and now you're stuck with him--not me--so why don't you just make the best of it. Go home and cook him dinner or something.

PRISCILLA

But the body?..

RICHARD

Eddy and Doctor Pettering made the identification.

PRISCILLA

What would you have believed?

RICHARD

Whatever you'd said.

PRISCILLA

And would you have forgiven me?

RICHARD

Yes I would.

He turns away and puts a pair of shoes in his case.

PRISCILLA

(touched)

Really?

Richard turns and looks at her.

RICHARD

Get out of here, Priscilla.

PRISCILLA

Everything seemed so cut and dry, the evidence and all... and as for your story...

(more)

PRISCILLA (Cont'd)
Richard, no one believed that,
not even your own lawyer.

RICHARD
How do you know?

PRISCILLA
Max told me.

RICHARD
Great.

PRISCILLA
God knows, I tried to believe it,
but... In the end, all I could
think about was Lori. I'm sorry,
but that had to be the priority.
I had to protect her.

Richard starts moving her to the door.

RICHARD
Yeah, well now you're living with
the guy who did the killing.
You're doing a fantastic job,
Priscilla.

PRISCILLA
(a flash of anger)
You were the one who crossed the
street. You were the one who was
unfaithful... When I got married
I took the contract seriously.
When I said I would "honor" you,
I meant it. I would never have
done anything to demean you and
I was never unfaithful to you,
not once.

Richard turns.

PRISCILLA
Even when I tried to believe your
story.... well, you think I'm so
strong I could just: "Oh, no big
deal, my husband had to have his
little fling. Boys will be boys"?
(less angry)
I tell you, Richard, there were
days when I literally thought I
was going mad and the only person
who seemed to care at all... was
Eddy... and, well, as they say
in the magazines, it was a
vulnerable time.

Richard sighs.

RICHARD
Yeah... I remember.

Richard opens the door. She is standing close to him in the doorway.

PRISCILLA
Christ, we had so much, didn't we?

RICHARD
Yes. We did. We just didn't know it.

PRISCILLA
After so many years of kissing... what do we do now? Shake hands?

There's a sensuality to her that didn't used to be there. Richard looks at her a long time. Then:

RICHARD
Good night, Priscilla.

Priscilla smiles wistfully and walks away. Richard watches her go... his wife of fourteen years... and looking better than ever.

RICHARD
Hey, Priscilla.

She turns hopefully.

PRISCILLA
Yes?

RICHARD
I'm almost home free so don't do anything to make him suspicious. Don't rock the boat; just act normal, okay?

PRISCILLA
Normal..? Oh, yeah, normal... sure, I remember that.

She turns and walks away. He almost calls after her again, but doesn't.

EXT. OCEAN HOTEL. ATLANTIC CITY - EARLY EVENING

Richard parks some distance away on Carolina and looks at the hotel. It's a ramshackle place on the shore in an area that was fashionable thirty years ago. Richard gets out.

INT. OCEAN HOTEL - EVENING

A half dead DESKMAN wheezes behind the desk. Richard enters.

RICHARD
I'm looking for Olivia Kamen.

The old man studies him. It's a big moment for Richard.

DESKMAN
She'll be at the Dominion Cafe.
It's a joint up the Boardwalk at
Delaware.

RICHARD
Could you walk it from here?

DESKMAN
No, but you could.

EXT. THE FRONT - EVENING

The sun is setting as Richard strides along the boardwalk. It's a windless weekday night. When he's a quarter of a mile away, he hears the distant sound of a PIANO. Soon he hears the final bars of, 'You Don't Know What Love Is,' sung in Billie Holiday style.

VOICE
You don't know what love is...
Until you've learned the meaning
of the blues...

He walks faster, drawn toward the blinking lights of The Dominion Cafe, compelled to that husky voice.

INT. DOMINION CAFE - NIGHT

It's a cocktail bar, one of those timeless watering holes for sentimental boozers with a penchant for the blues. The singer has her slender back to him. Almost unable to breathe, Richard orbits this fatal planet until...

...finally, he can see her face lit by a single beam of crisp white light.

And it's not Kay.

Richard falls into a booth, stunned.

WAITRESS
Yes?

RICHARD
Bourbon. On the rocks.

Richard glances at the singer as she acknowledges light applause and then he looks down. There's a jar with plastic SWIZZLE STICKS in it. They are in the shape of KEYS. Richard takes one out, turns it over in his hands, and knows that with Olivia Kamen not being Kay, he will spend at least the next fifteen years in prison. And then he hears:

VOICE

Don't put no headstone on my grave... All my life I've been a slave... And I don't want the world to know... Here lies the fool who loved you so...

Slowly, almost not daring to believe his ears, up comes his head and his eyes fix upon the singer on stage--a new singer who has seamlessly replaced the previous one.

Her hair has been dyed blond; but the lips, the voice, the body... the emotion...

It's Kay.

And now, as she continues to sing, better than ever, her eyes find Richard's. She does not falter but directs the song at him alone and each word becomes so loaded with private longing and regret that every person in the room falls silent and listens with the rapt attention of voyeurs.

When the song concludes, no sound is heard. It was too shockingly intimate for so harsh a response as clapping. And then the piano player stands and starts to applaud and soon Kay's slender body is propelled toward Richard on a sea of approbation.

KAY

Hello, Richard.

She slides into the booth next to him. Richard stares into her eyes, puzzled. After a moment, she takes A CONTACT LENS out of one eye, revealing the true color beneath.

KAY

And the hair comes out of a bottle. Did you think I'd look exactly the same?

Richard's gaze is so fixed Kay forgets the lens on her finger tip and stares back at him with one brown eye and one blue.

RICHARD

I should punch you clean through this wall.

KAY
(sighing)
Yeah, you should, but you won't.
Eddy would. You, you're more of
a call-the-police-type, aren't
you?

RICHARD
Yes I am.

Richard looks at her. Invisible hands reach inside his chest.

KAY
So what's it gonna be? Are you
making that call now or can we
have a drink and talk a while?

RICHARD
Waitress.

KAY
Creme de Menthe.

The waitress goes away. Kay takes his glass, drinks from it,
and watches him over the rim.

KAY
You've gotten better looking.
She hands the drink back. Richard drinks.

RICHARD
Didn't you know the risk you were
taking going on the radio?

Kay lights a cigarette.

KAY
Maybe I wanted you to find me.
Maybe I didn't like what happened.

RICHARD
Maybe if you didn't like it, you
shouldn't have done it.

KAY
Maybe I didn't know what he was
doing until after it was done.

RICHARD
Maybe that's a little hard to
believe.

KAY

Maybe you should shut up and listen. As it happens that is the truth. He said to flirt with you, which wasn't hard by the way, but never why. After we had dinner that night, he told me to go up to Lake Ontario. He told me...

RICHARD

What were you driving?

KAY

The jaguar with the cigarette boat behind.

RICHARD

Why didn't I think of that?

KAY

He told me not to stop until I got there and then to stay out of sight. You remember those cabins?

RICHARD

I remember those cabins, yeah.

And he remembers the look of her in the blue night... and the warm feeling of her breast pressed against his arm. And many emotions and sensations he felt then, he now begins to...

KAY

You know who the Watkins are?

RICHARD

Tell me.

KAY

Eddy's parents.

RICHARD

You should have warned us.

KAY

I thought it was just another one of his little cons. I never thought he'd do anything like this. Never.

(beat)

You're right, I should have warned you.

She looks away, ashamed. The drinks arrive. Seeing the contact lens still on her finger, Kay flicks it off and removes the other one. She puts it in the ashtray and stubs her cigarette

out on it with a hiss. The waitress leaves.

KAY

Anyway, the next day he shows up on his motorbike. We go out on the lake and he tells me everything. I thought he was joking. I said, "You hired a call girl and killed her in my bed?" and he says, "No, I killed you." Then I look around and I realize where he's moored the boat no one can see us. He says either I go along with it and disappear or... being as I'm dead already...

RICHARD

Then what?

KAY

He took me straight across the lake to Canada. Soon after, he sent me an old I.D. we'd used before--Olivia Kamen--and some money. By now it was too late. I knew I had to be an accessory. I took the money and the I.D. and tried to forget.

RICHARD

Any luck?

KAY

No one forgets anything in Canada. The air's too sharp.

She finishes her drink and rattles the ice around.

KAY

So I came back. Eddy didn't like it but what could he do? He gave me a little more money and I got a job here.

RICHARD

What was it between you? You didn't even sleep with him, did you?

Kay looks at him, wondering how to explain.

KAY

Let's get out of here.

EXT. BOARDWALK - NIGHT

Kay slides her arm through Richard's as they walk.

KAY

This woman gets married... She's real young. Small town girl, small town boy, a nice couple... A few years later this livewire comes to town. Before you know it, he's become their very best friend; but the truth is his eye is on the wife and one day when they're alone, he whispers in her ear, "Do you really wanna live like this, like a car that's not tuned, like a beam of light that's not focused? Do you really want this fifty percent existence when you could have life at a hundred?"

RICHARD

I think I've heard this sales pitch myself.

KAY

She's been content for years, happy even, but now all of a sudden... she's suffocating. She looks at Eddy and she sees someone who... Well, for all his faults, he really is alive... and pretty soon a strange thing happens: when she looks at herself in the mirror, she sees something that isn't alive at all. She sees something that's just dying, day by day, for lack of oxygen. And after six months of this, the claustrophobia's so bad, she feels she may as well blow her brains out and have done with it.

(beat)

At which point... along comes Eddy and offers an escape, something real specific.

RICHARD

What did he want you to do? Beat your old man to death and steal his wallet?

KAY

Who says we're talking about me?

RICHARD

What?

But Kay continues right on.

KAY

By now the good wife feels this
is her last chance for freedom,
her one and only shot at real
life, at life Eddy-style.

She looks up at Richard and raises her perfect eyebrows.

KAY

And, oh boy, you'd be surprised
how quick she says yes.

RICHARD

Yes to what?

KAY

Everything and anything. In all
my life up to then I'd never
cheated anyone out of anything.
Within a week, Eddy was using me
as bait in a series of home
improvement cons. Then it was
sex scams, ripoffs... fraud and
bunco... the whole shebang.

RICHARD

Why didn't you leave him?

KAY

I shoulda left him. What can I
tell you?

(beat)

I couldn't go home and I was
young.

RICHARD

When you were older? Why didn't
you leave him then?

KAY

I did, several times, but somehow
I always had the worst luck. The
job 'ud fall through, the guy 'ud
turn out to be a rat...
whatever... and Eddy was always
there to pick me up... In his
way, he really loved me. Then
one morning I woke up and I just
didn't have the energy to leave
again. I'd lost it. I was the
magician's assistant. A doll.
Bait.

She looks up and regards Richard with a speculative half-smile.

KAY

But do you know what I find really odd?

RICHARD

What?

KAY

You're not asking the one question I'd be asking if I was you.

RICHARD

And what would that be?

KAY

Who's idea was it? Was it Eddy's... or was it Priscilla's?

Richard stops dead and stares at Kay. He feels a chill go up his spine.

RICHARD

Are you serious?

They have reached The Ocean Hotel. Kay smiles sweetly.

KAY

Oh, look. We're home.

RICHARD

Do you know? Kay, if you know, you gotta tell me.

KAY

Come upstairs.

RICHARD

No.

KAY

I have something to show you.

RICHARD

If you're not gonna tell me, let's go straight to the police.

KAY

Come upstairs and I'll tell you everything... then we can go to the police. I promise.

Richard glances out to sea. There's a red beacon flashing out on the point. He ignores its warning and looks back to Kay.

KAY

Look, if I'm gonna go to jail,
I don't wanna go in this dress.
Okay?

Richard stares into the vortex of her face. She walks toward the hotel. Richard follows.

INT. OCEAN HOTEL - NIGHT

Richard and Kay go up in an old fashioned elevator. On the top floor, they get out, walk up some more stairs, and exit onto the roof.

EXT. ROOF OF OCEAN HOTEL - NIGHT

There's a one story house up here. Doubtless the luxury suite in 1930, it's now a rickety but atmospheric abode, surrounded by potted plants and tattered deck chairs. Kay unlocks the door.

INT. KAY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Richard wanders around. Windows on three sides. Views of the sea. He hears Kay behind him.

KAY

Do you mind if I take a shower?

RICHARD

Listen, Kay...

KAY

Don't rush me. Have a heart.

She puts a finger to his lips and walks away. Richard is powerless to stop her. He watches her disappear through a door at the end.

The suite is really just one big oblong room with a kitchen at one end and a bathroom at the other. Close to the center of the room, is a large, low bed.

Richard hears the shower go on. He stares at the bed; then turns quickly away. An old piano stands against a wall. There's a phone on a nearby table. He should have called the cops an hour ago.

A VIEW FROM OUTSIDE... LOOKING IN THROUGH THE WINDOWS

Someone is WATCHING. Richard goes to the piano, sits down, and starts to play. The SHOT now sweeps along the outside of the house and stops on a lighted window. A naked Kay emerges from the shower and starts to dry herself.

INSERT - TIGHT

The PERFUME Kay always uses is applied by those slender hands to all appropriate zones...

INT. KAY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Kay emerges from the bathroom. She wears a rose colored silk robe from China. The Chinese may be inscrutable. This robe isn't. Richard gets up from the piano stool.

RICHARD

You live with someone and you
think you know them but the truth
is we've all got a billion
secrets. Everyone's an iceberg...

KAY

They are?

Kay comes close. Richard is besieged by her scent.

KAY

(softly)

You know, I haven't had a good
night's sleep since it happened.

She walks away, her waist a fluid pivot beneath the robe.

RICHARD

(weakly)

You promised...

KAY

Every night when I've closed my
eyes...

She turns off a lamp.

KAY

... I've thought about you and
what I did to you.

Another lamp is extinguished.

KAY

And what I didn't do to you.

Richard feels his breath becoming shallow.

RICHARD

What do you mean?

Kay switches off another lamp and walks closer to the bed.

KAY

Well, you never did get what you
came for that night, did you?

Now there's only one lamp on, right by the bed, casting a
circular pool of light.

RICHARD

Kay... Please...

Kay takes off her pink robe, drapes it over the lamp and lies
her pink body down on the bed to bathe in the pink light.

KAY

I told you I had something to show
you...

She rolls onto her stomach and stretches herself. Her eyes hold
his and now all artifice melts away so when she speaks it's in
an irresistibly low and passionate voice.

KAY

Come here. Please. It would make
me feel so much better. Before
it's all over, get what you came
for. Let's have that at least.
After... I'll tell you whatever
you want to know and do whatever
you want me to do... but sleep
with me first, Richard, please,
just once. It's what we always
wanted and now we can have it...
Come on. Come here, Richard.
Please. Come inside me.
Please...

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE - LATER

Their naked bodies writhe and twist upon the bed in a glorious
intertwining of body and soul.

INT. KAY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Kay, sitting astride Richard, bursts into tears as an excess
of feeling--sexual and otherwise--topples her forwards, and
sends her crashing onto his chest, sobbing in orgasm. Richard
rolls her over, grabs her whole body in his arms, holds her so
tight she gasps, and kisses her until, moments later, she comes
again with him.

A CAR ALARM bleeps annoyingly in the distance.

SAME PLACE - LATER

Richard, up on one elbow, contemplates her face. Is one night
enough? Her eyelids roll back and she studies his expression.

KAY
About Priscilla?

RICHARD
That too.

KAY
I don't know. I never had the
nerve to ask.

RICHARD
But you said...

KAY
I lied. I'm sorry. I wanted you
in my bed.

Richard smiles, lulled by sex, flattered.

RICHARD
What's your real name?

KAY
My real name. Christ, it's so
long since I used it it doesn't
even feel real any more. Every
time we got in trouble, Eddy 'ud
fix us up with fresh I.D.

RICHARD
You make it sound so easy.

KAY
It is but some are better than
others. Olivia Kamen, for
example, is a much better I.D.
than Kay Otis ever was... and
that one held up pretty good,
didn't it?

RICHARD
Yeah, it did; but tell me what
your real...

The phone rings. Kay picks it up.

KAY
Yeah?... Yes he is.
(she hands the phone
to Richard)
It's for you.

RICHARD
Hello.

DESKMAN
(wheezing)
There's a David Duttonville down
here in the lobby. Should I send
him up?

RICHARD
No! No... I'll come down.

He hangs up.

RICHARD
Shit.

KAY
What is it?

RICHARD
It's a friend of mine. I need
time to think. Stay here.

He gets out of bed and dresses fast.

RICHARD
I'll be right back.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Richard crosses the roof. Once he has gone, the SHOT MOVES IN,
approaching the door to Kay's place...

INT. 12TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Richard comes down the stairs from the roof and punches the
elevator button. There's a distant clang of old gates and then
the elevator creaks up toward him.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Richard enters. He presses the G button and the big brass doors
skid shut noisily. He watches the numbered lights as he
descends. 12, 11, 10, 9... It's an ancient machine, maybe as
ancient as the deskman, and it's in no hurry.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

The deskman looks up as Richard leaves the elevator. The doors
shut behind him and the cage ascends. The CAR ALARM is louder
down here. Duttonville is not visible.

RICHARD
Where's my friend?

DESKMAN
Huh?

RICHARD
Where's Mr Duttonville?

DESKMAN
I don't know. Where is your
friend, Mr Duttonville?

RICHARD
Didn't you just call me?
Upstairs? Kay... Olivia Kamen?

The Deskman shakes his head and shrugs, amiable but puzzled. Richard looks out of the front doors. He sees Duttonville's car parked up the street. Its lights are flashing as the alarm sounds.

Richard runs toward the elevator.

He pokes the button once. The 12 light is illuminated. It stays illuminated.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Richard ploughs upward, two steps at a time.

By the 6th floor, sweat flies off his face as he jerks himself around a bend and on up. And up. And up. It's a war against exhaustion fueled by a terrible premonition.

By the 11th floor Richard can run no more and drags himself up the final steps to 12.

A BROOM HANDLE has been jammed into the elevator gates.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

Richard staggers across and pushes open the door.

INT. KAY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Everything is as he left it. Except for one thing. There's an object half inside the circle of light cast by the bedside lamp. It could almost be the handle of a BASEBALL BAT.

Richard's legs give way and he falls to his knees. Still gasping for air, he starts crawling across the floor toward that inviting pool of pink light. As he rounds the bed, he feels something on his hand. He looks down.

Blood.

He looks at the object. It is a baseball bat.

Slowly, Richard turns and gazes at Kay on the bed. Her face has been rendered unrecognizable. He's been here before. Same woman, same murder.

Richard kneels in the eye of his own catastrophic hurricane. He has been framed for killing this woman twice. Only two things are different this time. There's a witness, the wheezing deskman, to testify to his being here--and this isn't Kay. This is Olivia Kamen "...a much better I.D. than Kay Otis ever was... and that one held up pretty good, didn't it?"

RICHARD

Christ, I don't even know your name...

He sits back on his heels and surveys the situation. In the distance, he hears POLICE SIRENS.

He puts his hand on the edge of the bed to ease himself up and in so doing rock's Kay's body. Her right hand, balled into a fist, falls away from her body and projects out over the edge of the bed. As Richard stumbles away, the CAMERA homes in on it. Something shines through the blood, a glimmer...

But Richard is gone.

INT. OCEAN HOTEL - NIGHT

Richard stumbles down the stairs. And all the while the SIREN draws nearer. By the time he is on the ground floor, the first siren has been joined by another.

The wheezing deskman stands at the front door, looking out. Richard reels down another flight toward the garage.

UNDERGROUND GARAGE - NIGHT

Richard weaves through the garage on rubber legs.

EXT. THE OCEAN HOTEL - NIGHT

As two SQUAD CARS noisily arrive at the front of the hotel, Richard comes out the back. He lurches across a narrow service road, jolts over a sidewalk, crashes up two steps, falls once on the boardwalk, gets to his feet, and steps out into darkness.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Richard hits the sand five feet below. He scurries back under the boardwalk, unhurt. He plunges his hands into the sand and rubs at the blood.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Keeping in the shadows, Richard approaches the BMW. The alarm still sounds but the few people out this late are focused on the activity at The Ocean Hotel. The two squad cars are joined by a third. Richard deactivates the alarm from a distance and waits a moment. The cops don't look toward the car. Richard walks quickly over to it and checks the trunk. It's been carefully popped and then closed again.

Richard lifts the lid and looks down.

There's one BASEBALL BAT in there, almost identical to the one he just saw upstairs.

Richard pushes down on the lid. The trunk stays shut. Richard gets in the car and drives quietly away.

INT. BMW - NIGHT

Richard drives north.

HIS POV

The road at night, snaking toward him. But the snake brings memories:

Priscilla's face behind a white veil, her lips saying, 'I do.' Priscilla efficiently decorating their first house. Priscilla and Lori playing with a toy boat in the sea. Priscilla and Eddy working on her computer, scheming; an odd, intimate look between them...

Richard opens all the windows. Drives on. Remembers:

Eddy pretending to be a plane as they re-cross the street. Eddy bouncing off the car on Tremont Street. Priscilla calling Eddy over to decapitate the fish and Eddy doing so without emotion.

Whack.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Standing in front of a mirror, Eddy performs his fastidious morning ritual while the news plays on TV in the background. His well cut hair is perfectly groomed. His cheeks, beneath somewhat tired eyes, are closely shaven.

Button the shirt. Knot the tie. Gold cuff-links in cuffs. Gold Rolex on right wrist and on the left... On the left...

Eddy checks the dressing table and frowns.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY

Priscilla is methodically gutting a grapefruit when Eddy comes down the stairs and enters the room. She looks up at him with cold eyes.

EDDY

Have you seen my I.D. bracelet?
I can't find it.

PRISCILLA

No.

Eddy looks at a TV standing on the counter. It's the same news show he was watching. A report continues about a cop who stole three million dollars-worth of drugs from the police evidence vault. Eddy shakes his head.

EDDY

Who can you trust these days?

Without looking up at him, Priscilla says:

PRISCILLA

No one.

Eddy stares at her a moment, then:

EDDY

I was working on my boat yesterday. Maybe I left it down there.

Priscilla says nothing. Eddy keeps on looking at her and then shakes both his hands in front of him and noisily sucks air through his teeth.

PRISCILLA

Now what's the matter?

EDDY

I don't know, Priscilla, feels like frost-bite.

He turns and walks out. Priscilla watches him go and then returns her attention to the TV. The cop, last seen on a boat in the Caribbean, has disappeared.

EXT. ROAD ABOVE CLINIC - DAY

Duttonville's car is parked among some trees on the road overlooking the clinic. Richard watches as Eddy walks down the dock.

Eddy jumps onto his boat and looks briefly around the deck. Now, casting a quick glance toward the house, he steps onto Priscilla's yacht and disappears into the cabin.

Richard is about to run down to him when a flash of color catches his eye.

Priscilla is running at full speed across the lawn toward the clinic.

Richard hesitates and then starts making his way through a stand of pine trees that will give him cover almost all the way to the far end of the clinic.

INT. PRISCILLA'S BOAT - DAY

Mounted above the chart table is the model of the yacht that used to stand on Priscilla's desk at the recording studio. Eddy finishes searching the area around the engine and sits back on his heels, thoughtful.

INT. OTIS HOUSE. BREAKFAST ROOM - DAY

Eddy comes back in. Priscilla's coffee mug steams on the table but Priscilla is not here and the TV is off.

EDDY

Priscilla?

But the house is empty. Eddy turns the TV on again and goes back upstairs.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

A long corridor, with a door at either end, passes right through the building with only two right angle turns in between. Richard enters and walks a short distance to the Main Office.

As he approaches, he hears Priscilla's voice.

PRISCILLA (O.S)

I don't know what more I can tell you. He's over in the house now, looking for it... Yes, he was gone most of the night...

INT. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Richard enters quietly. Priscilla is on the phone, her back to him.

PRISCILLA .

He's had it for years... Yes, "Eddy O".... Look, it's all rather complicated. Wouldn't it make more sense to get out here as soon as possible and?... They are? Good... Yes, I will. Thank you.

She puts the phone down and then becomes aware of the figure standing behind her. She spins around.

The GUN in her hand is pointed at Richard's heart.

RICHARD

Wait!

But she immediately lowers it in relief.

PRISCILLA

Thank God you're here.

She goes to a window and cautiously looks out toward the house.

RICHARD

What's happening?

PRISCILLA

They found an I.D. bracelet in her hand.

RICHARD

What? Whose hand?

Priscilla glances at him quizzically.

PRISCILLA

I thought you went down there to find her?

RICHARD

Are we talking about Kay?

PRISCILLA

Don't you know what happened?

RICHARD

I know Eddy killed her, yes, but...

PRISCILLA

I couldn't believe it. He came downstairs and he asked me. Had I seen his I.D. bracelet? I said no. So he went out to look for it on his boat and then I turn back to the TV. It's the news, and...

INT. OTIS HOUSE. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Eddy is looking through the bathroom drawers with increasing irritation when, from behind, he hears:

TV NEWS

... Olivia Kamen, a singer who in recent months had attracted a small crowd of loyal followers down at the Dominion Cafe. Her body was found shortly after midnight but it wasn't until this morning that Medical Examiner, Arnold Morrison, discovered the I.D. bracelet clenched in her right hand...

Eddy, eyes bugged out in horror, collapses onto his knees and crawls across the carpet toward the TV. The REPORTER, who is standing in front of The Ocean Hotel, continues his report.

TV NEWS

Police are still not revealing what name is on the bracelet but we've been told they do now have a lead and that...

INT. CLINIC. MAIN OFFICE - DAY

Richard and Priscilla remain by the window, watching the house.

PRISCILLA

I suppose that's why they...

She waves her hands around, searching for the words.

PRISCILLA

... put this stuff out. But to be sitting there and he's just drifted through and... For Christ's sake, he asked me! He said: "Have you seen my I.D. bracelet? I can't find it." I mean...

RICHARD

Listen, Priscilla, I have to ask you something...

EDDY (O.S)

Priscilla!!!

It's a scream of bitter fury and frustration.

PRISCILLA

He must know I called the cops.

THEIR POV

Eddy bursts out of the house and sprints toward the clinic. He carries a jacket, balled up in one hand.

RICHARD

Shit.

Richard starts to run out of the room to confront him.

PRISCILLA

Take the gun!

RICHARD

No, you keep it. Stay here.

He rushes out.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Richard runs toward the first of the two right angle turns.

INT. CORRIDOR. OTHER END - DAY

Eddy comes hurtling in through two big swing doors. As he flies by, a door behind him is opened cautiously.

A wary Duttonville peeks out.

INT. CLINIC DISPENSARY - DAY

Duttonville hears a noise and turns quickly.

Doctor Pettering punches him hard in the face, knocking him out. Pettering moves quickly toward the "Secure Drugs" cabinet.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Richard skids onto the long section of corridor. It must be a hundred and fifty feet.

Eddy sees Richard RUNNING toward him at breakneck speed. He throws the jacket aside and raises the PISTOL that was concealed in it. He AIMS.

Richard grabs a DOOR HANDLE and is JERKED to a halt. He rips open the door and LEAPS inward. The GUN EXPLODES and the bullet CRASHES into the WALL.

Eddy listens. From far away, he hears the whine of POLICE SIRENS.

INT. STAIRS TO P.A. ROOM - DAY

Richard, not knowing Eddy has stopped to listen to the sirens, hurtles up the three winding flights of stairs.

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Richard arrives in the tower and looks out through one of the windows. Eddy is dashing across the grass toward the dock. Richard hears the sirens now but sees nothing up on the road. Doctor Pettering hurries to his car with several boxes.

Now, as Eddy runs toward his boat, the sirens start to FADE.

Richard switches the P.A. microphone to "Speak", picks up the ELECTRIC GUITAR, and plays a chord.

RICHARD

Eddy, my friend... Running away?

Indeed he is--and as fast as his legs can take him. Richard leans in closer to the mike and speaks in a confidential tone, punctuating his remarks with the occasional fragment of a tune.

RICHARD

Oh, what a joke you are, when it comes right down to it.

(imitating Eddy)

"I don't know when I've liked a guy as much as I like you, but you're a wimp and this is how you die, step by step, these little things you deny yourself... This cowardice." Talk about cowardice! Look at you, little Eddy Watkins, gun in hand, running away from an unarmed man! Eddy Watkins. What a scream...

Eddy stops, turns around, and stares at the nearest speaker, STUNNED. Now he looks up toward the tower and sees Richard high above him. Richard smiles.

RICHARD

(imitating Priscilla)

"Hold the fort, Eddy."

(he laughs)

You know, when I heard my wife, my ex-wife, treating you like an office boy... Oh, did I laugh. I thought to myself: Talk about loss of juice.

(imitating Eddy)

"...so, you end up living this fifty percent existence when there's a hundred out there to be had." Ha-ha-ha. Eddy Watkins, pocket philosopher... Ha ha.

Eddy stops. The sirens have faded away completely. He turns and runs back toward the Clinic. But then he stops. There were sirens, he is in trouble, and there's his boat, the best, perhaps the only, possible escape. His sanity gets the better of him. He reverses direction and marches back down the jetty. But!...

RICHARD

Before you killed her, Kay told me all about you.

ANGLE ON PRISCILLA

listening as:

RICHARD (O.S.)

What was it, Eddy?--were you jealous because Kay slept with me? Was that why you killed her? 'Cause she liked me so much and found you so, so, so disgusting?

EXT. CLINIC - DAY

That's it for Eddy.

EDDY
(screaming)
Fuck you! Fuck you, man!

He rushes back toward the clinic.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Eddy almost takes the doors off their hinges as he CAREENS through.

INT. STAIRS TO P.A. ROOM - DAY

Eddy pumps his way up the stairs, cursing.

INT. P.A. ROOM/DOVECOTE - DAY

He flings open the door.

RICHARD

slams the guitar into Eddy's face.

Eddy manages to block some of the force of the blow but in so doing loses his grip on the gun which flies out of his hand, smashes through a window, and lands on the sloping roof below.

Eddy stares at Richard, dazed but still vertical. Six narrow lines traverse his face where the strings of the guitar have printed themselves across his face.

Richard hefts the guitar back again and hits Eddy in the stomach with it. Eddy drops to his knees, gasping.

EDDY
Insult and injury... All in one
day and in such large doses...

He smiles up at Richard appealingly. Richard raises his guitar:

RICHARD
Just one thing.

EDDY
What's that, Richard? How can
I help?

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Priscilla, walking toward the P.A. room, freezes as:

RICHARD'S VOICE

Priscilla. Was she in on it or not?

INT. P.A. ROOM - DAY

Eddy laughs--and then hugs his stomach to ease the pain.

EDDY

All those years of marriage and you still don't know who it was you lived with... The human condition, what a laugh...

He gets one leg under himself.

EDDY

Was she in on it or not? Was she or wasn't she? Are you kidding me or what?

He lunges at Richard who instantly steps back and bats him with the guitar.

Eddy, caught completely off balance, topples sideways, spins, and falls backwards out the window.

EXT. ROOF - DAY

He lands on his back eight feet below on the sloping roof. He starts to roll, unconscious, toward the edge. Richard instantly jumps onto the roof and chases after him.

Before he can reach him, Eddy comes to a halt on his own at the very edge of the roof. A trickle of blood oozes out the corner of his mouth. The six guitar lines each leak a single narrow thread of blood which run in parallel toward his neck.

Richard approaches cautiously.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The .45 is in the gutter right next to Eddy and, though he appears unconscious, the fingers of his right hand now close about it as Richard leans down to check the pulse in his neck.

Eddy opens his eyes and smiles brightly.

EDDY

Alive and well and living on Long Island... no thanks to you.

Richard stares at the gun and backs away as Eddy slowly and very painfully gets to his feet.

Richard stares down that dark little tube... and then up into Eddy's smiling eyes. Eddy circles around to get above him and

soon has his back to the tower while Richard, heels only feet from the edge, looks up the roof toward him. It's clear what Eddy has in mind. Either Richard "falls" or gets shot.

RICHARD
Just one thing before I go.

EDDY
What's that, Dicky-boy?

Beyond Eddy, up in the tower, Richard sees Priscilla step cautiously toward the broken window. She has her gun pointed in this direction; but she's a long way away and it's not clear who she's aiming at.

RICHARD
(softly)
Who was I married to? Put my mind to rest.

EDDY
Your own wife?! What the hell happened to the world? Is there no trust?

RICHARD
We were friends once, you and I, and I never did anything to you... so, why don't you for once in your life tell the fucking truth? It's hilarious, I know, but it means something to me.

OVER PRISCILLA'S SHOULDER

Both Richard and Eddy make suitable--though distant--targets and it's still not clear who Priscilla has in mind. She steps gingerly forward and steadies her arm against the window.

EXT. THE ROOF - DAY

Eddy shakes his head and smiles.

EDDY
(to himself)
His own wife...

RICHARD
Come on, Eddy.

EDDY
You really don't know?

RICHARD
No, I really don't know. Tell me. Please.

EDDY

Gee, if it means so much to you,
bubi, then here it is, God's own
truth...

PRISCILLA SHOTS.

Eddy TOPPLES forward into Richard's arms, almost knocking him
over the edge. For a moment Richard sways, still holding Eddy,
and then, finally, manages to recover himself.

Richard eases Eddy onto the roof and crouches down. The bullet
hit Eddy in the back of the head. An excellent, and timely,
shot.

RICHARD

Damn!

Priscilla climbs down the tower ladder, walks over, and looks
at Eddy's body.

PRISCILLA

Christ, I guess I did it...

RICHARD

Yeah, you certainly did,
Priscilla, you certainly did.

He looks at her with an odd, speculative expression.

PRISCILLA

What's the matter?

Richard just shakes his head.

RICHARD

Nothing.

PRISCILLA

No, what's the matter? Why are
you looking at me like that? Is
there something I don't know?

Richard stands.

RICHARD

I was about to find out. From
Eddy. And then he died.

He takes the pistol from her. Priscilla frowns irritably.

PRISCILLA

I don't seem to be following you.
Find out about what?

Richard hesitates. What's the point?

RICHARD

Forget it.

PRISCILLA

God, I hate it when you do that.
If you start something, finish
it. What were you about to find
out?

Richard looks at her for a few moments. Well, why not? He
moves a little further from the edge.

RICHARD

Some people think you were in on
it from the beginning. Eddy was
about to tell me for sure. Now
I guess I'll never know.

Priscilla looks at him, puzzled, not understanding... or maybe
pretending not to understand. Then she gets it.

PRISCILLA

How could you think that?

She CRACKS him in the face, a smart BACKHANDER that jerks his
head to one side. Without hesitation, Richard RETURNS THE BLOW
with his forehand.

RICHARD

Same to you.

Priscilla stares at him a moment before she turns and walks away
up the roof. Richard watches her go and then looks down at
Eddy.

RICHARD

Thanks again.

EXT. RECOVERY CLINIC - DAY

Eddy's body is loaded into an ambulance. There's TV NEWS here
and COPS by the dozen. The atmosphere is almost festive.

On the front lawn, Richard and Priscilla are being questioned
separately.

INT. EMPTY OFFICE - DAY

Duttonville opens his eyes. There is a bruise on his forehead
and he has a vile headache; but he's okay. He rolls onto his
stomach and then eases himself onto his hands and knees. He
remains like this for a moment or two, rocking gently and
moaning, and then slowly stands.

EXT. RECOVERY CLINIC - DAY

Duttonville emerges a little unsteadily through the front doors, blinking in the midday light. He takes in the scene. Many of the police and press cars are either packing up or gone.

Richard and Priscilla are still being kept apart but their conversations with their respective interrogators seem entirely casual now.

Duttonville approaches a PRESS PHOTOGRAPHER who is packing up his gear.

DUTTONVILLE

I just arrived. What's the story?

ANOTHER ANGLE

Richard sees Priscilla through the dispersing crowd. She shakes hands with a COP. Richard watches her walk away toward the dock. He turns to his COP.

RICHARD

Listen, am I free to, er?..

The man nods and Richard follows Priscilla.

TRACKING SHOT

Priscilla walks down the jetty toward her boat. Richard starts to catch up to her.

RICHARD

Priscilla.

PRISCILLA

Leave me alone.

RICHARD

Listen, we all make mistakes.

Priscilla spins around so fast and stops so suddenly that Richard almost has to jump into the sea to avoid running into her.

PRISCILLA

Mistakes?! The exact same one?
Twice?

Richard stands there a moment. Then with deeply felt emotion:

RICHARD

I'm sorry.

Priscilla remains immobile, expressionless. Then she takes a deep breath. Lets it out.

PRISCILLA

And I'm sorry too. That I didn't believe you the first time.

Richard smiles and shrugs. Duttonville approaches.

DUTTONVILLE

Hi.

RICHARD

Priscilla, this is my friend, David Duttonville.

PRISCILLA

We met already... after the... After...

DUTTONVILLE

After the first one, exactly.

He says it in an odd way, a little hard and unpleasant. Richard glances at him, surprised. There's an awkward silence, then:

PRISCILLA

Listen, when I get depressed like this, I usually go out sailing for a while... blow the cobwebs away. Would you like to come?

She is inviting both of them.

RICHARD

Sure, I'd love to.

DUTTONVILLE

We have business to discuss.

Richard again looks at him. His manner is so abrupt it's rude. Duttonville tries to smile at Priscilla.

DUTTONVILLE

I did this work on a speculative basis... which my wife... Well, put it this way, if I don't sort it out before I go home, I'll get another one of these.

He points to the bruise on his forehead. Richard shrugs.

RICHARD

Okay... whatever you say.

He looks at Priscilla.

RICHARD

Some other time.

PRISCILLA

Sure. I really hope so.

Priscilla turns and walks away. Richard allows Duttonville to take his arm and lead him to a bench overlooking the dock and the sea beyond.

RICHARD

What's the problem?

They are far enough away that Priscilla, who now starts preparing her boat for departure, cannot hear them.

DUTTONVILLE

Did you kill her?

RICHARD

Who?

DUTTONVILLE

Kay.

RICHARD

Eddy killed Kay. Don't you...

DUTTONVILLE

The real Kay?

RICHARD

Yes, yes... both of them.

Duttonville is looking at Richard hard, watching him.

DUTTONVILLE

No, he didn't. The first one, maybe, but not this one...

RICHARD

Where have you been, David? They found...

DUTTONVILLE

Where have I been? I'll tell you where I've been. I was here. All night.

Something about Duttonville's eyes scares Richard.

DUTTONVILLE

So was Eddy.

Richard stares at Duttonville, transfixed.

DUTTONVILLE

When you dropped me at the station, I remembered that about a week ago I'd asked my secretary to do a search. I wanted to see if either Eddy or Priscilla had taken out any more insurance policies. People tend to get a taste for this kind of thing.

RICHARD

And?

DUTTONVILLE

One of them had.

RICHARD

Which one?

Priscilla hoists the mainsail.

DUTTONVILLE

Priscilla, on Eddy, for a half million dollars. Herself as sole beneficiary. It was taken out three weeks ago, around the time you and I started rattling their cages. Doctor Pettering did the medical.

RICHARD

So?

DUTTONVILLE

So I thought to myself, "What would it mean if Eddy didn't know about this policy? If he never went to the medical? If it was a fake. What would that tell us about Priscilla?" So... I came back here.

Richard looks toward Priscilla. She slides the tiller into the rudder and moves it from side to side, testing it.

DUTTONVILLE

I told him I was working for the insurance company and wanted to check some details on his life insurance policy. He said, "What life insurance policy?" I said, "The one Priscilla has on you." He went very pale and then he said, "Oh, that one." But I could tell he was lying.

RICHARD
Jesus Christ.

Priscilla checks the boom vang and the mainsail sheets. Everything is shipshape and she is ready to set sail in her lovely new yacht.

DUTTONVILLE
So I decided to stick around, see what he did. Actually, I thought he might kill her.

RICHARD
But he didn't.

DUTTONVILLE
How could he?

RICHARD
What do you mean?

DUTTONVILLE
How could he because she wasn't here.

Priscilla unties the painter and casts off.

DUTTONVILLE
All night she wasn't here. She didn't get back till six a.m.

Richard stares at Duttonville, horrified. Then, slowly, he turns back toward the dock. A brisk wind takes the boat out to sea on a south easterly tack. Richard stands up.

RICHARD
She's getting away.

DUTTONVILLE
I don't think so.

RICHARD
What do you mean?

DUTTONVILLE
Remember I told you Eddy was here all night?

RICHARD
Yes.

DUTTONVILLE
I meant he was right here.
Working on Priscilla's boat.

RICHARD
He thought he was next...

Duttonville nods.

DUTTONVILLE

Right. Now do you think Eddy would sit still for that?

RICHARD

The great Eddy O? Not in a million years.

Richard looks out to sea again. Priscilla waves at him. If he shouted she wouldn't hear. If she heard, it would be too late.

After a moment Richard slowly raises his hand and waves back at her, once, almost like a salute.

ANGLE ON BOAT

Seeing what she thinks is a friendly wave, Priscilla can contain herself no longer. Quickly lashing down the tiller, she disappears into the cabin, her shoulders heaving.

As soon as she is out of sight, the laughter bursts forth. Pretty soon she is laughing so hard you can hear her knock into things. At which point:

The yacht BLOWS UP.

EXT. THE SHORE - DAY

Richard and Duttonville watch the much loved vessel scatter itself skyward. Now, as the debris rains down, they back away, shielding their heads. From under his arms, Richard sees something land on the ground not far away. It bounces and then rolls onto its side.

Richard picks it up and blows soot off it. Blackened, its mast snapped off, it is just recognizable as Priscilla's model boat.

DUTTONVILLE

What's that?

Richard turns the charred hull over in his hands. Then:

RICHARD

Nothing.

He throws it into the sea and walks away.

EXT. DUTTONVILLE'S HOUSE. GARDEN - DAY

Richard, Duttonville, and Annie sit outside on a warm fall day. Lori pitches to one of Duttonville's sons as Richard tears off a check and hands it to his friend.

DUTTONVILLE
Can you afford this?

RICHARD
I'm back to work. No problem.

Duttonville hands the check to Annie.

ANNIE
A welcome surprise. Thank you.
She smiles ruefully and heads off toward the house.

DUTTONVILLE
I got one for you.

RICHARD
Hit me.

DUTTONVILLE
Why did the chicken cross the
road?

RICHARD
I don't know. Why?

DUTTONVILLE
Well, if you don't know...

Richard stares sideways at Duttonville. For a moment it seems like he might hit him. And then, as if using muscles atrophied by long disuse, he starts to smile.

THE END