

DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN

by

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RECEIVED  
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DIRECTOR: Susan Seidelman

PRODUCERS: Sarah Pillsbury  
Midge Sanford

FADE IN:

INT. SAKS FIFTH AVENUE - DAY

A cathedral of clothes, a paradise of soft, sparkling, desirable merchandise. Invisible bells chime softly. A halo of light surrounds two mannequins enshrined on a display island.

Nearby, ROBERTA BARTEL leans against the end of a blouse rack reading from a folded New York Times.. She's pretty in a dreamy, innocent way.

Her sister-in-law LESLIE is looking through the blouses.

ROBERTA

Listen to this:

(reading)

"Beautiful stranger: red hair, green jumpsuit, walking dogs, Sheridan Square 5/7/81 morning. Can't forget you, give love a chance, call Blackie..."

LESLIE

Sounds like a pervert to me.

ROBERTA

Why? He could be sincere.

LESLIE

Nobody with a name like Blackie is sincere. Unless he's a pervert. He could be a sincere pervert.

(holds up

a blouse)

What d'you think of this color?

ROBERTA

What is it? Burgundy? Cerise?

(considers)

Better try it on.

They head for the dressing rooms.

Roberta, still thinking about the ad, stares at a red-headed salesgirl, a mannequin with red hair, a curly red wig on a wigstand.

DRESSING ROOM

Multiple mirrors, infinite reflections of Roberta sitting with the newspaper propped up on her knees.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Leslie tries on several outfits. From time to time, new articles of clothing are handed through the curtain by an unseen salesgirl: blouses, dresses, coats, each a little stranger, more incongruous than the last.

ROBERTA

(reading to herself,  
suddenly excited)

Wow...

LESLIE

Now what?

ROBERTA

(excited)

It's from Jim, listen:

(reads)

"Desperately Seeking Susan. Don't care who you married, I'm the one you love. I can prove it to music. Meet me Mon. noon, Pier 47 -- Jim."

LESLIE

Who's Jim?

ROBERTA

The guy she's in love with. She calls him "Jimmy Guitar."

LESLIE

(can't believe it)

You know these people?

ROBERTA

I don't know them, but I see their messages all the time. See, the girl, Susan's always travelling around, getting in trouble, trying to get Jim to join up with her. I think that's why she went and married that other guy. Just for a lark, to make Jim jealous.

She says this with the thoughtful expression of a soap opera devotee analyzing her favorite characters.

LESLIE

(bored)

Oh, come on. Real people don't do that. You know what I think? Some little hunchback in the Times office makes these ads up just to kill time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

Well I think it's real.

Roberta glances in the mirror and sees a million Robertas looking at each other in pairs.

ROBERTA

(continuing)

Maybe we're not real...

She smiles to herself. All the Robertas smile in pairs.

LESLIE

Very funny.

The salesgirl now hands in a pair of ski boots followed by a fox stole. Leslie takes them, looks at them.

LESLIE

(continuing)

Wait a minute. I didn't pick this stuff out.

(calls to salesgirl)

Excuse me. Wait a second.

(to Roberta)

Let's get out of here. These people don't know what they're doing.

ESCALATOR

Roberta and Leslie gliding down past the chandelier, Roberta looking down over the rail.

LESLIE

What're you having tonight besides birthday cake?

ROBERTA

Just paté and cheeses -- nothing fancy because Gary has this big party next weekend.

LESLIE

Oh, yeah -- what's that all about?

ROBERTA

(shrugs)

Clients... business...

(beat; returns to previous subject)

Don't you think it'd be romantic if someone was seeking you desperately...?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LESLIE

Big deal. Everyone I know's  
desperate, except you.

ROBERTA

(apologetic)

I'm desperate.

LESLIE

(stern)

No, you're not. It's your  
birthday and you're not even  
depressed:

ROBERTA

Maybe that means I'm deeply  
insane. Not insane, but you  
know...

LESLIE

Yeah, insane.

They step off the escalator and walk past the junior  
department where the mannequins and displays are more  
punk, sadistic looking. Roberta and Leslie look very  
mild and square by comparison.

INT. PARKING STRUCTURE

A three dimension maze of cars.

An elevator door opens and a group of women get out,  
Roberta and Leslie among them.

LESLIE

Anyway, I cut out an article for  
you about aging.

ROBERTA

I'm not aging. I'm only twenty-  
eight.

They walk towards a car, their footsteps echoing  
loudly.

LESLIE

It says it takes seven years for  
all the cells in your body to get  
replaced, so like when you're  
seven, fourteen, uh...

ROBERTA

Twenty-one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LESLIE

And twenty-eight -- you have all new cells, see?

ROBERTA

Huh, I do feel something.

LESLIE

Plus, for a woman, you haven't even reached your sexual -- the height of your sexual powers.

ROBERTA

I wonder what they mean, "sexual powers"?

LESLIE

You know, sexual powers. Just in general.

Roberta nods, although this is clearly not an answer. They reach Leslie's car and their footsteps stop, leaving a vacuum of sound. In the car next to them Roberta sees two women sitting with the windows rolled up, not talking. They look embalmed. Roberta stares for a moment, then looks away.

INT. CAR

As Leslie starts the engine, Roberta notices that her newspaper is crumpled. She smooths the edges carefully and glances once more at the ad.

ROBERTA

I wonder what she'll say when she sees this...

LESLIE

Oh, are you on that again? It's ridiculous.

ROBERTA

(thoughtful)

You never know...

(shrugs)

That's my philosophy.

She looks out the window, thinking of Susan...

INT. ATLANTIC CITY HOTEL - PRE-DAWN

A honeymoon suite in a large, expensive hotel. Neon light flashes intermittently through the blinds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A man lies sleeping in the rumpled bed: STEGMAN, in his mid-thirties, intense features, frowning slightly in his sleep. The nightstand is crowded with crossword puzzles, remedies for insomnia, and an empty shoulder holster.

The gun, and another like it, are in the hands of a girl of about twenty who stands near the window silently imitating the motions of a carnival sharpshooter. This is SUSAN, a devil with the face of an angel -- most men would jump at the chance to ruin their lives for her.

She's wearing a red satin smoking jacket with brilliant blue and green dragons entwined across the back -- and nothing else.

She aims the guns dramatically at Stegman, then tosses them in the air where they cross and twirl, catching the neon light. She nearly misses on the way down and the guns clatter together. She glances over at Stegman but he doesn't stir.

A discreet KNOCK at the door. Susan puts the guns on the dresser and opens the door. A BELLHOP with a tray stands outside.

SUSAN

That was fast.

BELLHOP

(pleased by  
the praise)

Croissants and peanut butter,  
eggnog, tequila and the New York  
Times -- your usual.

Susan nods indifferently, takes the tray and hands the man a dollar.

BELLHOP

(continuing; smitten,  
reluctant to leave)

Well... good morning, Mrs... uh...  
That's a very attractive robe  
you're wearing...

As he clears his throat, Susan closes the door.

She sits at a table and turns on a lamp, opens the paper to the classifieds and folds it back. As she reads, she spreads a croissant with peanut butter, dips it in eggnog and eats it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly she stops chewing, sits up excited.

SUSAN

Jimmy, baby. It's about time!

Hastily, she licks her fingers, tears the ad out of the paper and starts to get dressed.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Got to get out of this dump.

She tosses her things into a red suitcase which is already full of clothes and souvenirs. The inside lid is pasted over with postcards, hotel napkins and mementos. The suitcase is home, not just luggage. The dragon motif predominates.

When she's dressed, she closes the suitcase and puts the smoking jacket back on.

The blue and green dragons seem to ripple and move on the watery satin. She takes a canvas carryall from the back of a chair and slips it onto her shoulder.

She scans the dresser, tries on one of Stegman's rings, but it's too big.

Casually, she opens Stegman's suitcase and inspects the contents with shameless curiosity. She flips through a book like a photo album, empty except for... a postcard.

Susan holds it up: the card shows a dragon float in a Chinese New Year parade. The surrounding night is black, the dragon alive with torches and red smoke. Susan is delighted.

SUSAN

(continuing;  
appreciative)

Hmmm... what a beauty.

She takes the card, slips it into the carryall and heads for the door.

At the door, she pauses, glances back at the man in the bed.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Bye-bye, Stegman. It was fun,  
huh.

Stegman rolls restlessly in his sleep and sighs as the door closes softly behind Susan.

## ATLANTIC CITY BOARDWALK - DAWN

The sun is just coming up.

Susan walks swinging her red suitcase, springy and expectant as a jungle animal.

Ahead of her, we see the Greyhound station.

Behind her, we see the Bellhop. He watches as Susan enters the bus terminal.

## EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A Greyhound bus roars past in the foreground. Ahead, the New York City skyline. The bus follows the curve of the highway as it swings toward the city.

## BARTEL HOUSE - HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY - NIGHT

LOOKING THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM WINDOW, the bluffs overlooking the river, and beyond, Manhattan. Cars and busses stream across the bridge. Their lights green in the twilight. A barge drifts slowly down river...

## INT. LIVING ROOM - ANOTHER ANGLE

The young professional look: designer this and designer that, gourmet kitchen, candy colors.

Roberta's party is in progress. The guests look polished, crisp, healthy like apples.

Roberta, who has been looking out the window, turns guiltily at the sound of a voice. Her mother-in-law, GLADYS, is standing beside her. Gladys is 50, amazingly well preserved, with the forbidding gleam of older people who work hard to look glamorous. She's taller than Roberta, has a better tan, bigger breasts and more daring clothes.

Gladys is patting Roberta's hair.

GLADYS

What did he do to it, put more orange in it?

ROBERTA

Did he?

(touches her own hair, frowns)

What color is it? I can't remember.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLADYS

(shakes her head)

It's getting kind of orangey, like an old lady. People are going to think you're Gary's mother and I'm his wife.

(laughs)

Oh, don't tell Leslie I said that. She thinks I'm so Freudian.

At that moment, Leslie approaches.

LESLIE

Who's Freudian?

GLADYS

Nobody. Listen, Roberta, call me tomorrow so we can look at those fabric samples. We should really get that couch out of here before next week.

LESLIE

For Gary's bash.

ROBERTA

I'll call you tomorrow.

LESLIE

Where is Gary, anyway? I've been looking all over for him.

ROBERTA

I saw him go upstairs a while ago. Oh, there he is.

They glance at the stairs and see GARY coming down the stairs talking animatedly with an athletic blonde, BETTY.

He's big, driven, boyish an insensitive.

He detaches himself from Betty and comes over to Roberta. He's pretty loaded.

GARY

There you are. We were looking all over for you.

ROBERTA

Who was?

GARY

(smoothly)

Me and Leslie. It's cake time, right, Les?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LESLIE

Sure, let's go.

Leslie and Gary head for the kitchen. Gladys has drifted away to talk to a handsome young man.

Roberta is left alone. She turns and glances out the window. The party behind her is reflected in the glass, but within the outline of herself, it is dark and she sees out into the outside world.

POV - ROBERTA

The lights of the bridge, the cars and busses.

MOVING OUT THROUGH THE WINDOW

FOLLOWING a particular bus across the bridge. A Greyhound bus.

From far away, a strain of MUSIC (Susan's theme) is heard faintly.

IN THE ROOM

The lights suddenly go off and Roberta's outline disappears from the window glass.

ANOTHER ANGLE - GARY AND LESLIE

walking toward Roberta, holding the cake. (Singing: "Happy Birthday"... etc.)

ROBERTA

The glow of the candles illuminates her face.

GARY (O.S.)

Roberta's going to make a wish.  
Go ahead, wish.

Roberta takes a breath, closes her eyes, concentrates. Beat. She lets out the breath.

GARY

Did you wish?

She opens her eyes, laughs nervously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

I can't think of anything.

GARY

This may take awhile, folks...

LESLIE

Give her a chance.

ROBERTA

(closing her eyes)

I'm trying.

Immediately, a voice inside Roberta's head says:

ROBERTA'S (V.O.)

I wish something would happen...

Without opening her eyes, she takes a deep breath and blows as hard as she can.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY BUS TERMINAL

The wheel of a Greyhound bus jumps the curb and the doors OPEN WITH A HISS. Susan steps down. She's wearing Lolita sunglasses even though it's quite dark, and she's carrying the red suitcase. A couple of men stare at her as she passes.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY RESTROOM

Susan finishes washing her face, dries it with a towel.

The suitcase and the carryall are resting on the sink counter. She takes a rumpled shirt out of the carryall and puts it into the suitcase, transfers a toothbrush and a scarf from suitcase to carryall: she's got a system, she's at home with no home.

She picks up the cigarette she's been smoking, a Rothmans, and takes the dragon postcard out of the carryall... She looks at it, smiles, blows a stream of cigarette smoke through her nostrils; then pops the card back in the carryall and picks up the suitcase.

LOCKER AREA

Susan puts the red suitcase into a locker and closes the door. She fishes in her pocket for a piece of tinfoil, wraps a penny in the foil and jams it into the quarter slot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns the key and locks the locker, drops the key in her jacket pocket.

As she walks away, she catches a glimpse of someone watching her, but when she turns around there is no one there.

EXT. ROXY CLUB - NIGHT

The entrance to the rock club is a black door in a black wall. In the abysmal green neon light, shadowy figures are smoking and sniffing.

Susan walks past them, into the club.

INT. ROXY

New Wave MUSIC, wailing and throbbing.

At the far end of the bar, Susan sits talking to the bartender, a girl her own age with a blue crewcut. This is CHERYL.

They're relaxed together, familiar. Susan takes a sip of her drink, sets it down.

CHERYL

What's new?

SUSAN

Not much...

(glances around;  
speaks casually)

Paranoia.

CHERYL

(laughs)

Not new to me.

SUSAN

Well... maybe it's contagious.

CHERYL

Like schizophrenia -- they just discovered it's contagious.

SUSAN

I must've got it from this guy I was hanging around with in Atlantic City. Totally paranoid.

(beat)

Can I stay at your place tonight?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHERYL

Sure. My boyfriend'll be in in the morning -- he's working night shift.

SUSAN

That black guy?

CHERYL

No, this is another one. He's black too.

SUSAN

What's he do?

CHERYL

He's a cop.

SUSAN

(horrified)

A cop? You're kidding. Well...

(sees no choice)

I'll split early, before he gets back.

Cheryl nods, moves away to serve another customer.

Susan lights another Rothmans, inhales and tips her head back to blow the smoke at the ceiling.

BARTEL HOUSE - NIGHT

Roberta sits in the dark at the dining room table, where the remains of the cake are drying on the platter. A couple of candles droop in the frosting. Roberta pulls one out and sucks the frosting contemplatively.

The newspaper lies folded on the table in front of her.

Pretending to be someone more glamorous than herself, she "inhales" the candle like a cigarette, head tipped, then "exhales" elaborately, eyes half closed...

Suddenly, the light goes on and Roberta jumps, dropping the candle. She squints up at Gary, who stands in the doorway in his robe.

GARY

What're you doing?

ROBERTA

Nothing. I wasn't sleepy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

Why were you sitting in the dark?

ROBERTA

(suppressed irritation)

It was peaceful.

GARY

(goes to the table)

Did you like your present?

He picks up a Cartier jewelry box. Inside, a diamond pendant sparkles on the white velvet. She looks at it with him.

ROBERTA

It's beautiful.

She means it. She's glad, closes the box with a snap. Nearby lies an elegant gift card which says "To Roberta from Gary with Love."

GARY

Don't leave it in the soap dish like your wedding ring.

(he fingers the gift card a

little nervously)

Listen, we have to reshoot the Crave commercial tomorrow and it's gonna take all day, so we'll have to skip lunch. I'll grab a sandwich at the set.

ROBERTA

(disappointed)

Oh, I moved my tennis game from noon to ten.

GARY

Play at ten. Or change it back... You're picking up that part for the Porsche, aren't you?

ROBERTA

(she'd forgotten)

I guess.

GARY

Then you can swing by the rental place and give them the deposit for the party stuff. You have all that under control, right? I mean, you know what to order?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

I know.

GARY

Take the tunnel, get onto Van Dam,  
it's way over on West Street.

ROBERTA

Near the piers?

GARY

(nods)  
You'll find it. Well, I'm going  
up.

He straightens, starts for the stairs.

GARY

(continuing)

What're you going to do about your  
tennis?

She glances down, sees the folded newspaper, with the  
message to Susan heavily circled.

ROBERTA

I think I'll just cancel it.

Gary goes out, turns off the light without thinking,  
leaving Roberta in the dark. His voice moves up the  
stairs.

GARY (O.S.)

Don't finish the cake.

In the dark, Roberta picks up the candle she dropped  
and rolls it thoughtfully between her fingers...

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Susan is walking along eating two candy bars. A man  
ahead of her keeps staring back at her. She slows  
down, looks him in the eye.

He dawdles around a newspaper dispenser, puts a coin in  
the slot and opens the window.

Susan catches the door of the dispenser as it's coming  
down and grabs a newspaper out of it. The man now  
gives her a half critical, half lecherous look. She  
stares at him, opens the window again, takes out all  
the newspapers and dumps them on the ground with a loud  
thwack. The man walks quickly away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Susan smiles, takes up her newspaper and walks away. In the distance are the piers.

INT. PORSCHE - DAY

Parked in a NO PARKING ZONE next to pier 47.

Roberta sits inside reading the Personals, absorbed. She glances at:

THE CAR CLOCK

which reads 11:57.

The keys are still in the ignition. On the keychain hanging down are two red plastic "lucky dice." Roberta takes the keys out of the ignition.

SOMETHING RED catches her eye. She sees a girl in a red jacket crossing the street in front of her, knows right away that this is Susan.

She gets out of the car.

ON ROBERTA

Following Susan past shipping line offices, concrete quays, giant hulls of ships.

PIER 47

At the end of the pier is a small ticket office for the Day Line Cruises.

Midway along the pier, Susan is leaning on the rail, looking down at the water.

As Roberta watches, Susan lights a cigarette, paces impatiently. Roberta walks toward her, transfixed.

ON SUSAN

Flicks an ash over the rail, looks up and sees Roberta. She turns her back indifferently. The twin dragons on the back of the jacket seem to wink mockingly at Roberta.

As she walks past, Roberta can't help looking at Susan. Susan sees her, leans against the rail in a mocking pose and looks back evenly. She thinks Roberta's a screwball.

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CONTINUED:

Roberta now finds herself in front of the ticket office. The TICKET AGENT leans forward and grunts.

ROBERTA

Oh, uh... one, please.

She keeps looking back at Susan.

AGENT

One where?

ROBERTA

(distracted)

Yes, that's fine.

AGENT

Ten bucks.

Without thinking, Roberta digs into her pocket and fishes out a ten dollar bill. The Agent pushes a ticket toward her. She puts it in her pocket without looking at it.

When she looks back at Susan, she sees:

SUSAN

Watching her. Meanwhile, a man (JIM) is approaching Susan from the other direction. In spite of his stud-ded leather pants and shirtless vest, he has the look of a friendly, impudent satyr.

He sneaks up on her blind side, taps her far shoulder. She turns that way, sees nothing. Immediately she knows it's Jim, is exasperated by the dumb gag.

She turns the other way to face him, already pissed off.

But Jim's face is already wearing an imitation of the expression he knows Susan will be wearing.

ON ROBERTA

watching them, thrilled and mystified.

HER POV

Two faces in profile, matching pissed expressions.

ON JIM AND SUSAN

SUSAN  
(disgusted)  
You think that's funny?

JIM  
Yeah, actually I do.

ON ROBERTA

Sidles to within earshot. They seem to be oblivious to her. She pretends to be reading the paper.

ON JIM AND SUSAN

SUSAN  
(playing it cool)  
What do you want?

JIM  
(imitating her  
playing it cool)  
Tequila and peanut butter for my  
girl and a Scotch and ketchup for  
me. But make it fast, we only  
have about fifteen minutes.

SUSAN  
How come?

JIM  
I got a gig in Boston tonight.  
The van's coming to pick me up.

SUSAN  
For how long?

JIM  
Two weeks.

SUSAN  
(angry)  
You knew you were leaving for two  
weeks and you sent that message?  
You scumbag, why didn't you --

JIM  
I didn't know! It was a last-  
minute replacement. The band that  
was supposed to play got killed in  
an elevator accident.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

I don't give a shit. I came all the way from L.A., just to meet you.

JIM

Look, when I get back, we'll do something. I'll think of something fun.

SUSAN

Last time you thought of something fun we ended up in jail in Trenton.

JIM

Wait a minute, the helicopter was your idea, I told you not to --

SUSAN

Who cares. I know how to have fun without you, you know.

(imagining)

I'm gonna have a blast...

A little jealous, Jim puts his arms around her, cajoling.

JIM

Why don't you come up to Boston with me? A lot of girls would kill for the chance...

SUSAN

Uh-uh, you'll be working all the time. It's boring.

They walk slowly toward the street. As she walks, Susan tosses a coin in the air palm up, catches it palm down in a rhythmical gesture.

Roberta follows at a discreet distance, straining to hear.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Anyway, I'm tired of moving around, sleeping on couches... maybe I'll get an apartment.

JIM

Who'd clean it? Who'd pay for it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

(unswayed)

I could have a cat and some plants  
and... whatever you put in an  
apartment.

JIM

I thought you liked being a bum.

SUSAN

(shrugs)

Maybe I'm burning out. Maybe I'm  
having a karmic breakdown.

JIM

You are a karmic breakdown.  
Anyway, you'd go nuts in an  
apartment. Like a bird in a cage.

SUSAN

Maybe.

(beat)

I almost got a pad in Atlantic  
City.

She realizes her slip too late.

JIM

Is that part of L.A. now?  
(jealously)  
Who's this guy you married?

SUSAN

Some guy with money.

JIM

(disparaging)

A drug dealer?

SUSAN

Uh-uh, Stegman's a businessman.  
(less certain)  
He might be a lawyer, I don't  
know. Anyway, he's real intense,  
kind of emotional.

JIM

You like that?

SUSAN

Yeah, but... he turned out to be a  
paranoid lunatic. He said we were  
gonna go out and do all these  
things and then he was too paranoid  
to even go out of the hotel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Instinctively, she glances back, sees Roberta walking behind her.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Even I started getting paranoid.  
I keep thinking people are  
following me...

She turns back to Jim.

JIM

What was he doing in Atlantic  
City?

SUSAN

I don't know, maybe he was trying  
to unwind.

Just then, there's a LOUD HONKING and they all look up to see a purple van hurtling toward them. The van jumps the curb, barrels down the pier and SCREECHES to a stop in front of Jim and Susan. It's packed with punks and music equipment.

JIM

My limousine.

Jim gives her a kiss.

JIM

(continuing)

Wait for me...

Roberta walks past very slowly as Jim and Susan kiss goodbye. Jim gets into the van and it starts to back up as fast as it came.

JIM

(continuing; calling  
out the window)

And don't go marrying anybody  
else. I don't like that.

Susan nods and waves. Roberta almost waves too but stops herself.

When the van is gone, Susan continues walking and crosses the street. Roberta slows to a stop, torn, then turns and follows her.

A BUSY STREET (WEST VILLAGE)

Susan walking, looking into shop windows, kicking a crumpled potato chip bag.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roberta following her, looking into each window Susan looks into, trying to see what Susan saw.

EXT. TREASURE HUNT

Susan stops in front of a chic/punk boutique.

In the window, a life-size porcelain Borzoi hound gazes longingly at a female mannequin, naked except for hip high green lizard skin boots.

A sign on the door says TREASURE HUNT - BUY \* SELL \* TRADE.

She goes inside.

Roberta comes and takes her place in front of the window. She discovers that she's able to see into the store.

INSIDE STORE - POV ROBERTA

Susan shows the proprietress (ALVINA, black, tall, graceful) her jacket, the embroidery on the back and so on, obviously offering to sell it.

Alvina accepts it. Susan takes it off and lays it across the counter.

As Alvina gets money from the register, Susan glances out the window, seems to look right at Roberta.

Roberta ducks OUT OF SIGHT.

EXT. TREASURE HUNT

Roberta backs into the doorway of the shop next door, a travel agency.

Susan comes out of the Treasure Hunt, glances around, walks to the corner, turns and disappears.

Or so it seems to Roberta, who emerges from the travel agency looking for Susan, sees no one, hesitates, then goes into the Treasure Hunt.

INT. TREASURE HUNT

Roberta approaches the counter uncertainly. Alvina is preparing a price tag for Susan's jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roberta touches the edge of the jacket. The dragons seem to snap and glitter on the surface of the cloth.

ALVINA  
Gorgeous, isn't it? All hand embroidered. Want to try it on?

ROBERTA  
(shy)  
It would never fit me.

ALVINA  
Yes it will, just try it.

Roberta takes off her sweater, lifts the jacket reverently and tries it on. It fits perfectly. She looks at herself in the mirror wonderingly.

ALVINA (O.S.)  
I'll put your sweater in a bag...

BARTEL HOUSE

Roberta comes in, flushed with excitement, wearing Susan's jacket and carrying the Treasure Hunt bag with her sweater in it. As she puts her purse on the table, she remembers something:

ROBERTA  
Gladys...

She picks up the phone. Someone is on the line.

BETTY'S VOICE  
(on phone, mid-conversation)  
... but the pasta wasn't as good as what we had at that place today...

GARY'S VOICE  
Wait a minute. Hello?

ROBERTA  
Hello? I was trying to dial out... Gary?

GARY'S VOICE  
I'm on the phone.

ROBERTA  
(flustered)  
Oh, sorry...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hangs up, thinks for a moment.

She goes to the bottom of the stairs, waits 'til she hears Gary hang up, then goes upstairs.

BEDROOM

Roberta enters. Gary is trying to remove a stain from his jacket lapel.

ROBERTA

(referring to the stain; a dig)

Is that from the pasta?

(beat; she regrets the dig)

I forgot to call Gladys about the fabric samples.

GARY

I told her to go ahead and order something and if you didn't like it, you could change the order. Otherwise I figured it would never get done.

ROBERTA

Okay.

Her cool submissiveness irritates him.

GARY

Where'd you get that thing?

ROBERTA

The jacket? I bought it.

GARY

You look like an aging hippie.

ROBERTA

Leslie says I've got all new cells.

GARY

(grimaces, not in a mood for humor)

Where were you all day?

ROBERTA

I told you, shopping.

She drops her purse on the bed. The cruise ticket she bought at the pier flutters to the floor. Gary picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

What's this? A ticket.

Roberta automatically puts her hand in the jacket pocket looking for the ticket. Naturally, it's not there, but her hand closes on something else: a key.

She looks at it quickly without showing it to Gary.

GARY

(continuing)

What're you doing with it?

ROBERTA

I, uh...

(inspired by her  
discovery of the  
key)

I found it in the jacket.  
Somebody left it in the pocket.

GARY

People don't just leave cruise  
tickets in jacket pockets.

ROBERTA

Why not? They leave keys.

GARY

What keys?

ROBERTA

That was just an example. It was  
a used jacket, they didn't check  
it over.

GARY

(accusing, but  
losing steam)

It's for tomorrow, this ticket.

Gary looks at the ticket, which suddenly seems innocuous. He crumples it up and throws it angrily into the trash.

ROBERTA

Maybe we're having a karmic  
breakdown, Gary.

For a moment, Gary is speechless with amazement. Roberta is surprised by her own words.

GARY

What did you say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA  
 (purses her lips,  
 turns toward the  
 bathroom)

I'm going to take a bath.

He watches her mutely.

BATHROOM

Roberta turns on the water in the bath, takes off her wedding ring and the Cartier pendant and puts them in the soap dish.

She locks the door, then takes Susan's key out of her pocket and examines it curiously.

PORT AUTHORITY

Susan kneels in front of her locker, searching through her carryall for the key. She's beginning to panic. She reaches for the pockets of her jacket -- and her hands slip down her sides: the jacket is gone and so is the key. Her face glazes over with dismay.

NEWSPAPER OFFICE

Roberta stands at the CLASSIFIED ADS window, where a CLERK is reading her ad back to her and typing it onto a form.

CLERK

(typing)

"Susan, had desperate message from  
 Jim music man: Meet me Pier 47  
 Wednesday noon regarding key."

(pause)

You want a name on this?

ROBERTA

No... Yes! Could I sign it "A  
 Stranger"?

CLERK

(gives a jaded look)

Whatever you want, lady.

EAST VILLAGE STREET

Susan is reading the ad in the middle of the sidewalk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN  
(heartfelt)  
Good going, Stranger.

ROCK CLUB (BOSTON)

A big club, members of Jim's band setting up in the background. Jim sits on the edge of the stage reading the same ad.

JIM  
(pissed off)  
What fucking Stranger?

TIGHT ON THE AD

Heavily circled.

A VOICE  
(talking on the  
phone)  
Get there early, pick her up  
before this "Stranger" shows...

INT. ATLANTIC CITY HOTEL ROOM - ANOTHER ANGLE

We are in the room where we met Susan. STEGMAN is nervously tapping the newspaper, which lies open on a table, as he talks on the phone. Now we see that he's tall, thin, intense, shadows around his eyes.

STEGMAN  
Sure I know who it is. I know  
who's working against me.

He turns from the paper, listens: the SOUND OF FOOT-  
STEPS approaching in the hallway. He stiffens.

STEGMAN  
(continuing)  
Wait a second.

He takes the phone away from his ear, listens to the  
footsteps, then puts the phone back to his ear.

STEGMAN  
(continuing)  
It was just someone for next door.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEGMAN (CONT'D)

(looks at the ad  
again, frowns)

Somebody must have paid her off.  
Probably wasn't that hard, either.  
Like I said, she likes money.

(listens)

What? Oh, that's the easy part.  
She's blonde, not too tall, but  
she's like a magnet -- everybody's  
always looking at her. Guys. She  
dresses a little weird.

Meanwhile...

BARTEL HOUSE

Roberta getting dressed to go meet Susan; trying to  
match Susan's style: black pants, red shoes, purple  
sweater... still too square.

She takes a dress shirt of Gary's out of the closet --  
one with tuxedo pleats -- and puts that on: much  
better. One of Gary's ties? Looking in the mirror,  
she isn't sure, but she leaves it on.

Meanwhile:

STEGMAN (V.O.)

... and she wears a red satin  
jacket with dragons on the back --  
you can't miss her.

Roberta is putting on the dragon jacket over her outfit.  
She strikes a pose in the mirror, an imitation of Susan.

STEGMAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

But remember, she can con anybody,  
so don't be fooled. I thought she  
was just a sexy, spaced out...  
innocent... Do you hear an echo or  
something on this connection?

INT. STEGMAN'S HOTEL ROOM - ATLANTIC CITY

STEGMAN

Nothing? Huh, well... I'll call  
you, okay?

He hangs up, scowls at the telephone, turns it over and  
taps the bottom with a pencil.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Sitting on the edge of the bed, he notices that his foot is jiggling nervously. He clasps the knee to make it stop, then takes a vial out of his pocket and pops a few pills. Finally, he starts to take his pulse.

INT. TAXICAB

Susan sitting forward on the back seat, looking out the window impatiently as the cab crawls through traffic. She glances at the meter: \$6.75.

EXT. PIER

Crowded with Japanese tourists in cowboy hats. They mill around waiting for their Circle Tour.

ROBERTA

walking onto the pier, looking around for Susan. The clock over the ticket office says 11:55.

ON A MAN

young, with white cane and dark glasses, tapping his way uncertainly along the pier, toward the tourists. He wears an ancient black suit, white shirt open to his sternum. His hair is a little long, and he could use a shave. His name is SPY.

INT. TAXI CAB

Nearing the pier. The meter reads \$9.10.

SUSAN

Right here.

The cab pulls over. As the DRIVER stops the meter and picks up his clipboard, Susan is out the back door and moving toward the pier.

It takes the Driver (58, overweight, Turkish) a moment to register what's happened. When he does:

DRIVER

Hey!

EXT. CAB

He jumps out, sees Susan running toward the pier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DRIVER

Hey, you!

He sees a POLICEMAN.

DRIVER

(continuing)

Officer!

He hurries toward the Cop.

EXT. PIER

Roberta looks at her watch: 12:01. She anxiously searches the pier for Susan.

The young man with the cane and dark glasses is near her.

SPY

(loudly)

Yo. Anybody speak English around here?

He "accidentally" bumps into Roberta.

ROBERTA

(turning)

Excuse me.

SPY

Yeah, excuse me.

Behind Roberta, we can see Susan hurrying onto the pier with the Policeman and the Cab Driver in hot pursuit.

SPY

(continuing)

Say, could you help me to the street there? My cousin's gonna pick me up in the car but with all these holes in the floor, I'm afraid I'm gonna fall off the pier and break my neck.

ROBERTA

Oh, sure. I'm kind of waiting for someone, but... okay.

SUSAN

Now sees her red jacket on the far side of the crowd of tourists. She starts to push through toward it, but at that moment the Cop's hand falls on her shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

POLICEMAN

Wait a second.

ROBERTA AND SPY

She's starting to lead him through the crowd. Very slowly.

SPY

Thank you, kind lady. Now I gotta hold your arm here...

(takes her arm  
- with both hands)

See, that's how you're supposed to do with a blind person. Okay?

Go.

SUSAN

Showing the cop her empty wallet. He's intrigued by her, trying to resist it.

POLICEMAN

(to Cabbie)

She doesn't have it.

DRIVER

(irate)

She owes it to me.

The Policeman has no choice, puts a hand on Susan's arm, leads her back toward the street, resisting.

SUSAN

Wait a second! I gotta meet someone here. She has all my stuff. Look, she'll give me the goddam cab fare --

(to Roberta, calling)

Hey, Stranger!

As the Policeman hustles Susan off, she strains to catch Roberta's attention. But Roberta's being distracted.

ROBERTA AND SPY

She's leading him toward the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

Fuckin' foreigners, man, they're all over the place. You get in a cab, the cabbie don't speak English. He's never been outside Baghdad 'til he picked you up.

(gestures across  
the street)

Over there.

ROBERTA

You know your way around pretty well.

SPY

Right, well, that's 'cause I been blind since birth, see. Now, you take these nouveau blind -- they can't see shit --

SUSAN

being guided into the Cop's car. She's a couple hundred yards away, sees Roberta walking with Spy.

SUSAN

(to Cop)

Wait, there she is. Just let me...

But he's pushing her into the car.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Pig!

(tries to call  
to Roberta)

Stranger! Stranger, wait!

ON ROBERTA

looks around as if she hears something, doesn't see anything, just a cop car at the end of the pier... Meanwhile, Spy goes on.

SPY

See, I was on a cruise. You may wonder why a blind guy would want to take a cruise...

ROBERTA

(polite)

I suppose the motion of the water must feel good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

Hey, that's good. I couldn't  
think of why myself.

(gestures vaguely  
ahead)

We got to cross the street there.

Roberta hesitates, looks back up the pier, afraid of  
missing Susan. Spy grips her arm like a tall, skinny  
lamprey.

SPY

(continuing; urging  
her forward)

Hey, I'm blind, don't forget. You  
can't leave me here.

ROBERTA

(resisting gently)

But I really do have to meet  
someone...

SPY

(holding on to her)

That's my cousin in the gold Dart  
up there, come on!

ROBERTA

(realizes he's not  
what he pretends)

How do you know?

SPY

I can hear it. I'm very sensitive.  
Blind people are very --

Roberta breaks away from him.

SPY

(continuing)

Hey, bitch, come back!

Roberta starts to run. Spy follows.

Not looking where she's going -- looking back at Spy --  
she slams into a steel cable tether and collapses like  
a doll. A trickle of blood rolls from her temple.

Her purse goes over the edge of the pier into the water.

ON THE PURSE

Falling through the water. Slow, green, unreal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A voice heard as if under water.

ROBERTA (V.O.)  
Something's happening.

At the same time, another voice, also distorted.

SPY (V.O.)  
 Susan!  
 (worried)  
 Susan...?

These voices obliterated by another SOUND: the CLANG of a metal jail door opening.

OFFICIAL (V.O.)  
 Release her.

INT. JAIL CELL

Susan stands up.

SUSAN  
 It's about time!

CONEY ISLAND STREET

A dusty storefront. In front of the heavy curtains, a plaster gypsy reclines against a ratty velvet cushion, flanked by a large crucifix and a hand painted sign which reads: SISTER AMY OCCULT CONNECTION -- FORTUNE TELLING \* MASSAGE \* SPIRITUAL ADVISOR.

INT. OCCULT CONNECTION

SHADOWY SHAPES. Blurs of colors.

A VOICE  
 (cheerful, empty)  
 Hello? Are you there? Wake up.

The shapes and colors resolve into DR. WEEKS (32, balding, paste-colored) peering down at us, shining a light into our eyes.

WEEKS  
 There we go -- getting a good reaction...

As he continues, another ANGLE reveals that this is:

## INT. OCCULT CONNECTION

A bedroom in the apartment behind the storefront; small, crammed with dolls, religious knick-knacks and three televisions.

Roberta lies on a tufted satin bedspread. Her temple is cut and bruised, one eye a little black. She's coming back to consciousness as Weeks checks her here and there.

WEEKS

... reflexes normal, pulse and blood pressure fine: Looking good here. What's her name?

SPY & MIKE

Susan.

She looks around, sees Spy, the "blind" man from the pier, pacing up and down, no more blind than she. And MIKE, his partner, stolid, 45.

WEEKS

How you feeling, Susan?

ROBERTA

(groans)  
Where am I?

Spy pushes Weeks aside, addresses Roberta.

SPY

Where's the stamp?

ROBERTA

(vague)  
Stamp...?

SPY

Yeah, the stamp. Where is it?

ROBERTA

What? Oh...

A stab of pain in her head pushes her back against the pillows.

SPY

Cut the bullshit, I --

Weeks and Mike pull Spy aside.

MIKE

(placating)  
Come on, come on...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Weeks tries to rouse her from vagueness.

WEEKS

Susan, does your head hurt? How many fingers?

He holds up two.

ROBERTA

Two.

WEEKS

Good. Excellent. I want to hear you talk. How old are you? What's your name?

ROBERTA

Susan. You said it was Susan.

WEEKS

Last name?

(no response)

What'd you have for breakfast?

ROBERTA

Oh, I uh...

WEEKS

How old are you? Are you married?

ROBERTA

Married... it's so weird, I really don't...

(covers eyes with hand)

Breakfast... what did I eat...

WEEKS

(to Spy and Mike)

Evidently a temporary amnesia, from the blow. You'll have to let her rest.

SPY

How long?

WEEKS

It usually only lasts a couple of hours. A couple of days at most.

(writes a prescription)

Wake her every hour. Give her one of these if the headache gets bad. Try to gently jog her memory with familiar things. Got it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He smiles, turns. Spy sits down next to Roberta. She squirms under his gaze. Mike is seeing Weeks out the door.

MIKE

(in the background)

Do we pay you or does Stegman handle it?

WEEKS

(waves his hand)

Stegman's a patient of mine, I see him all the time..

He goes out, Mike returns.

SPY

(an announcement)

She's faking.

MIKE

She is not.

ROBERTA

I am not.

SPY

(to Mike)

How do you know?

(off Mike's shrug)

You think she's an innocent, little -- little -- Well she's not! Stegman warned us --

ROBERTA

(dim recollection)

Stegman...

SPY

(leaps at this)

You remember him?

ROBERTA

Vaguely. Isn't he a paranoid lunatic or something?

Spy glances at Mike.

SPY

Right. He's also your husband.

ROBERTA

(uncertain)

My husband...?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA (CONT'D)

(brightens)

Then I am married. Now I remember: He's going to have a big party, with some big wheels. I was supposed to do something... call the caterers.

Spy and Mike look at each other questioningly: what party? Mike shrugs.

SPY

Look, we don't know about any party. We just want the stamp.

ROBERTA

Stamp? You mean like on a letter? Why don't you just go to the post office and buy another one?

SPY

Well, if this were 1912, we could do that, no problem.

(with rising  
impatience)

But since it's 1984 and there's only a couple Fortunas left in the world and they're worth \$500,000, we'd rather just get the one we already had.

ROBERTA

How would I know where it is?

SPY

Because you stole it from Stegman.

ROBERTA

(impressed)

I did? Wow...

(thinks, can't recall)

If only I had a hint...

SPY

(grabs her shirt)

You want a hint? Death. How's that for a hint?

Mike intervenes again.

MIKE

He said to be gentle.

SPY

He said to jog her memory.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Just then, the PHONE RINGS.

SPY  
(continuing; grimaces)  
Stegman.

MIKE  
(worried)  
What're we gonna tell him?

Spy picks up the phone, listens.

SPY  
(into phone)  
Well, not exactly like we planned.  
'Cause, there were cops all over  
the place... How do I know? Maybe  
there was an accident.  
(listens)  
Yeah, well, we got a line on where  
she's staying. We're gonna check  
it out now. I'll let you know.  
(listens)  
Right. Okay.  
(glances at Roberta)  
How're things going with the  
party? The big party?... No, I  
thought -- never mind. I'll call  
you later.

He hangs up, stands with his hand on the receiver, his face screwed up in various unpleasant, suspicious contemplations.

Finally, he reaches for Roberta's jacket, dips his hand into the pockets.

ROBERTA  
(nervous)  
What're you doing?

SPY  
(smiles to make a  
show of civility)  
Looking for hints.

CLOSE ON - THE BED

Spy drops the contents of the jacket pockets one by one on the bed.

- a pack of matches from the Roxy
- a scrap of tin foil
- a piece of paper with a short list:  
CALL GLADYS, PART FOR PORSCHE, CATERERS-PARTY  
MENU???
- and last but not least, Susan's Port  
Authority locker key.

ANGLE - SPY AND ROBERTA

Roberta reaches for the key.

ROBERTA

(delighted)

Look, a key.

Spy reaches out quickly and covers her hand with his, turns it over and takes the key himself. They look at each other with a mixture of mutual defiance, surprise and attraction. He withdraws his hand slowly. The spark of sexual energy cools, contracting into a kind of hostility.

MIKE

Does it say what it's a key to?

Spy looks at the key in his hand.

SPY

Yeah, her past and our future.  
It's a Port Authority locker key.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY OFFICE

Susan sits across the desk from a colorless 45-year-old CLERK. During their conversation he doodles an endless series of crisp, neurotic checks: ✓✓✓✓

SUSAN

(exasperated)

I told you: I don't have any identification, what do you want me to do.

CLERK

I'm sorry but I can't release the contents of the locker if you don't have any identification.

SUSAN

But I can describe everything in the goddamn suitcase.

CLERK

I can't release the contents of the locker if you don't have identification.

SUSAN

(at the end of her rope)

What are you, a robot?

CLERK

(robotlike; the checks get smaller, tighter, faster:)

I'm an employee of the Port Authority of New York.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

So it's just tough shit if  
somebody finds the key and takes  
all my stuff and I lose  
everything, huh?

CLERK

Essentially.

(draws a box around  
the last check)

Have a nice day.

Fuming, Susan throws up her hands in despair/disgust,  
gets up and marches out. The Clerk opens a plastic  
wrapped sandwich and starts to eat it.

INT. PORT AUTHORITY - ESCALATORS

Susan is riding down the down escalator, still fuming,  
lightly pounding the side of the railing with her fist.

She glances up angrily at the floor she just left.

She doesn't see, coming up the escalator and now level  
with her...

ROBERTA, SPY.

going up the escalator. Roberta, impatient, takes a  
step up to get to the top faster.

Spy takes her arm and pulls her back, nudges her in the  
ribs with his gun.

SPY

What's your hurry?

ROBERTA

I want to see what's inside.  
Don't you?

Spy looks at her and scowls. He's attracted to her,  
doesn't want to be. A moment later they reach the top  
and he guides her into the stream of people.

LOCKER AREA

Spy motions to Roberta to open the locker. She opens  
it and the door swings open. Inside is Susan's red  
suitcase.

Spy pulls it out and opens it right there on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Roberta looks at the pretty postcards, the hip clothes, a red feather boa... her delight overcomes her growing fatigue.

ROBERTA

How neat... look, a bareback rider.

Points to a postcard. But Spy isn't into neat -- he starts ripping everything out of the case including all the postcards, searching for the stamp.

SPY

(mumbling angrily)

Bareback rider... what about the stamp?

(mimicking her)

"I don't remember..."

Finally, everything is on the floor. Roberta looks at the heap sadly, then nervously at Spy.

Spy glances at her, grimaces with disappointment, then starts shoving everything back into the case.

ROBERTA

(braving it)

Let me do it.

He allows her to put everything back into the suitcase, touching each thing carefully, lovingly, curiously.

When she's finished, he picks up the suitcase and helps her up. She's a little dizzy, stumbles but catches herself, touches her head.

SPY

You'll take one of those pills before we go?

ROBERTA

Go where?

SPY

To jog your memory...

(ironic)

... gently.

CLOSE ON

black water. SOUND OF WATER SLAPPING against pier posts.

## PIER - NIGHT

Roberta and Spy standing on the pier. Spy's visualizing their first meeting, moves her by the shoulders to the place where he first saw her. Then he steps back and looks at her critically, like a stage director. He frowns.

SPY

You were standing here... foreign people swarming all around... you stood out in the crowd, like he said...

(looks around)

Did you drive? Take the subway? Stegman said you were gonna meet someone, a stranger. Maybe a stranger, maybe a competitor -- his, not yours.

ROBERTA

Maybe he's just being paranoid...

(sees Spy frowning at her)

What's the matter?

SPY

Didn't you have a purse?

Roberta instinctively touches her side. It dawns on her that she did have a purse.

ROBERTA

Yeah, I think... what kind of purse was it?

SPY

We're trying to fix your memory, not mine, remember?

ROBERTA

(thinking)

I wouldn't have just dropped it... could I have put it on the bench...?

SPY

(looking around)

That's it! One of those foreigners took it, cleaned it out, then -- what? Threw it in the water! It's probably still sloshing around under there.

He hurries to the edge of the pier and looks down, peers into the water. Roberta comes up beside him and looks with him. The water is black, full of garbage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(continuing)

Over there -- what's that?

She sees a black, baglike thing bumping against the pierpost.

ROBERTA

It looks like an old diaper.

SPY

Give me a stick or something.

He turns to her as if expecting her to hand him a stick. She looks around, sees a long pole hanging under the clock over the ticket office. The pole has a hook on the end for changing the letters on the office marquis.

She gets it, while he takes off his jacket, folds it carefully on the ground and lies on it, trying to get a good angle on the object in the water.

When he looks up, Roberta is coming toward him with the pole. From Spy's point of view, it looks like she's advancing on him with a javelin.

He rolls away quickly. She turns toward him, surprised. He freezes.

SPY

So. That dumb act was an act after all. Stegman warned me...

Roberta now realizes what he's thinking.

ROBERTA

(awkward, frightened)

Oh...

She doesn't know what to do, looks down, sees that she's stepping on a corner of his jacket.

She picks it up somewhat apologetically, as if to hand it to him, but as she does, the gun falls out of the pocket. She fumbles, drops the pole and catches the gun more by accident than skill. She holds it away from her, afraid it might go off, staring at it in amazement.

ROBERTA

(continuing)

I'm free...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

With this remark, Spy realizes that the dumb act was not an act after all.

SPY  
(half coaxing,  
half bullying)  
Give it to me, Susan.

She starts to back away from him.

SPY  
(continuing)  
You don't know what you're doing.  
You've got amnesia.

ROBERTA  
I'll go to the police.

SPY  
Ha, and go up for grand larceny?  
You've got amnesia -- how do you  
know you didn't kill somebody?  
Maybe the cops are looking for you  
right now.

ROBERTA  
(worried, but)  
I don't care. Anything's better  
than being with you.

She starts to run along the pier. He runs after her. He senses that she won't shoot, but nevertheless, he's afraid to come too close. He leaves about twenty yards between them.

From time to time, she looks back, points the gun as she runs as if it might keep him away by a magic force without her having to fire. And it does.

EXT. STREET

She sees, to her horror, that she's heading straight for the gold Dart. Mike, sitting at the wheel, sees her, starts the car just as she veers down another street.

ON ROBERTA

running past industrial warehouses, stepping over a half burnt mattress, skirting a wino who jeers unintelligibly at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns another corner, looks back, sees Spy coming after her. The Dart is converging on her from the cross street.

Just ahead are the lights of a late night liquor store.

ON SPY

sees the liquor store ahead, realizes he must make his break to capture her now. He puts on a burst of speed, quickly closing the distance between them.

ON ROBERTA

The liquor store is just ahead of her. She turns to see where Spy is. He's too close: she fires a shot over his head. To her shock, the gun goes off and the recoil almost makes her drop it.

She runs into the liquor store.

INT. LIQUOR STORE

Roberta runs in breathless, wild-eyed, disoriented, dirt-streaked and waving a gun.

The man behind the counter, a young CHINESE, immediately trips his burglar alarm. The device emits a piercing, hellish SIREN and Roberta looks up, sees her face on the surveillance camera monitor as it records her desperation.

ROBERTA

Help me, I need help. I'm --

EXT. STREET

Spy and Mike are sitting in the Dart outside the liquor store. They hear Roberta SCREAMING inside.

ROBERTA (O.S.)

I'm being chased by a man, he kidnapped me, he's a --

Her voice is cut off by the SOUND OF A GUN GOING OFF. A police SIREN is heard in the distance.

SPY

Come on, let's get the fuck out of here.

The Dart shoots away from the curb.

## INT. LIQUOR STORE

The counterman is waving a gun of his own, which is smoking. Broken glass everywhere, liquor streaming onto the floor. Roberta shrinks back against a display rack.

CHINESE

You scum, you think you can rob me every other week? I'm tired of this crap.

He FIRES ANOTHER SHOT at her, misses wildly. BOTTLES EXPLODE over her head.

ROBERTA

You don't understand! I'm not trying to --

CHINESE

(livid)

No, you don't understand, you, you, get out of my store.

She gets out as fast as she can.

## EXT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

A squad car is approaching. Terrified, Roberta runs into an alley, stumbling over a stack of old newspaper and a bicycle wheel, which wobbles away crazily.

## ANOTHER STREET

Roberta walking slowly. Finally she stops in the middle of the sidewalk, too wretched, exhausted and frightened to go on. She leans against a lamp post for support. Then she notices something. The lamp post is pasted over with xeroxed flyers announcing a rock group opening at the Roxy Club. Roberta stares at the name. She digs into her pocket and comes up with the pack of matches with the same name.

## EXT. ROXY - NIGHT

Roberta looks from the pack of matches in her hand, to the line of weirdos waiting to get into the club. She looks at the unearthly clothes, makeup, expressions... Does she know them? Do they know her? A tall GUY with a shock-white Mohawk and a T-shirt which reads "NO GUTS -- NO GLORY" detaches himself from his vampirish companion and approaches Roberta.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MOHAWK

Got a light?

Roberta remembers the matches in her hand, fumbles to light his cigarette. He stoops to catch the flame.

ROBERTA

Excuse me, have you ever seen me here before?

MOHAWK

I doubt it.

ROBERTA

(more urgent)

You see, I'm trying to figure out who I am, it's very important, because I --

MOHAWK

No it isn't. It used to be important. Now we're all nobody. It's better that way.

ROBERTA

(desperate)

Not to me. Are you sure you don't remember?

MOHAWK

You want to know who you are?

(Roberta nods, expectant)

You're nobody. Thanks for the light, Nobody.

He turns and goes back to his companion.

Roberta turns away, chilled by his words. Just ahead, a bouncer is collecting the entrance charge and stamping peoples' hands to get into the club.

Roberta watches in despair: she has no money, can't get in.

Just then, a young woman hurries up to her. She's animated, theatrical, ethnic clothes. Her name is AMY.

AMY

(effusive)

Susan... we've been looking all over for you, honey. What are you doing? You look spaced out.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AMY (CONT'D)

(whispers in  
Roberta's ear)

I didn't know what to do with the  
stamp or anything...

(peers into  
Roberta's face)

Are you okay?

Roberta looks at her with a blank, bewildered stare.

AMY

(continuing)

What happened? How long've you  
been walking around like this?  
You better come home. The car's  
in the alley.

She gestures, they walk toward the alley, Amy holding  
Roberta's hand. Roberta is happy to be taken care of,  
relaxes.

ROBERTA

Were you looking for me?

AMY

(turning into the  
alley)

We were desperate...

ROBERTA

(nods)

It's a good thing you found me  
because someone tried to kidnap me  
and force me to tell them where  
the stamp is, but I--

A car has pulled into the alley behind them and is  
HONKING its horn.

Amy turns around and looks, waves the driver away.

AMY

Get lost! The streets are free  
you know.

The CAR HONKS again. They move aside, but the car  
moves with them, shepherding them against the wall.

AMY

(continuing)

Cut that out, you freak!

Roberta now glances around and sees to her horror that  
the driver of the car is Mike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hears the SOUND OF ANOTHER CAR coming from the opposite end of the alley, turns back and sees Spy bearing down on them in the gold Dart.

She looks around frantically, tries to make a break for it, but Amy is clinging to her, holding her back.

She twists away and reaches for her gun. Which is, at that moment, in Amy's hand, aimed at Roberta. Mike and Spy have pulled over and are approaching.

AMY

(to all of them,  
proud)

Was I smooth or was I smooth?

Roberta looks at her bitterly. Her injury and fatigue suddenly catch up with her and she leans against the wall, weak and miserable.

ROBERTA

(hoarse, out of breath)

You're horrible.

(to Spy, who smiles  
at this)

You're worse.

(tears fill her eyes)

I hate you.

This childish insult, accompanied by tears, distresses Spy.

SPY

(half angry, half  
hurt)

Well, if you hadn't tried to skip  
out...

He trails off, doesn't want to hear himself make excuses. He makes a face, takes her arm and leads her over to the Dart.

EXT. DART - NIGHT

pulled up to an all-night coffee shop across the street from the Occult Connection.

INT. DART

Roberta and Spy sit inside. Spy puts a napkin in Roberta's lap, lays out a hamburger, fries, etc. He's trying to make amends, be nice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

You want ketchup? You want a  
fork? Want to eat inside?

(beat; she's not  
even looking at  
the food)

Aren't you gonna eat anything?

Roberta leans back and closes her eyes.

ROBERTA

I'm too tired.

SPY

I guess I should have fed you  
before, maybe you wouldn't have  
run away...

She doesn't open her eyes or acknowledge the feeble  
joke.

SPY

(continuing)

You know, you hurt my feelings  
when you said anything was better  
than being with me.

(silence)

What if you were in a  
concentration camp, that would be  
a lot worse.

(beat)

Look, if we find the stamp, I'll  
let you go, okay?

(beat)

It's no skin off my teeth and you  
wouldn't be safe with Stegman...

(beat)

Susan?

She's fallen asleep. Her head rolls down against his  
shoulder. Gently, he props her up, pulls the hair back  
from her face.

INT. ROBERTA'S HOLDING ROOM - NIGHT

Spy comes in carrying Roberta in his arms. Mike fol-  
lows behind him. Spy places Roberta down on a cot.

SPY

Asleep like a baby.

MIKE

(suspicious, jealous)

You into babies?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(pissed off by the  
insinuation)

She's Stegman's wife. Among other  
things. You think I'm stupid?

Spy covers Roberta with a blanket. Mike watches,  
skeptical.

MIKE

I hope you're smart.

INT. GARY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Gary and Leslie are in Gary's bedroom. Leslie watches  
as Gary goes through the contents of the trash basket.  
He looks strung out.

GARY

I don't know, she's so spaced out  
maybe she just forgot to come  
home.

(beat; uncrumples a  
sheet of paper, reads  
it, tosses it aside)

Of course, the stores are closed  
so I can't imagine what she's  
doing...

(digs deeper into  
basket)

I keep thinking about that jacket,  
and the cruise ticket I told  
you... here it is.

He pulls out the ticket, shows it to Leslie.

GARY

(continuing)

I'm sure she's having an affair.  
She left her wedding ring by the  
sink...

LESLIE

She always does that.  
(something catches  
her eye)  
What's this?

She takes it out of the basket. It's a crumpled paper  
bag. She reads the name of the shop.

LESLIE

(continuing)

Treasure Hunt. Is that where she  
bought the jacket?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY  
(self-pitying)  
Unless her boyfriend bought it for  
her.

Beat.

LESLIE  
Maybe we should call the police.

GARY  
Have her arrested?

LESLIE  
(exasperated)  
Maybe something happened to her.  
Aren't you worried?

GARY  
(indignant)  
Of course I'm worried. I'm hurt,  
I'm upset... And what about the  
party Saturday night? She knows  
how important it is to me, and she  
takes off and leaves me with all  
the work -- who's going to call  
the caterer and --

LESLIE  
That's all you really care about,  
your party. You miserable shit.  
Even when we were kids you were a  
selfish brat... so conceited...

GARY  
Because I'm not afraid of my own  
shadow? You and your ego gestapo  
-- you probably encouraged her to  
run away. Ridiculous women.  
Always defending each other for  
their stupid, spineless --

In a rage, Leslie takes the trash basket and drives it  
over Gary's head.

Cursing unintelligibly inside the basket, Gary throws  
her against the TV and starts shaking her.

LESLIE  
Stop it, you creep! You demented  
jackass, you miserable...!

In their struggle, the TV gets turned on. An ad BLARES  
out for Crave dog food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Immediately, Gary lets go of Leslie and pulls the basket off his head.

GARY

(excited)

Crave from Hollow House! That's my new account, look!

Caught up in his enthusiasm, Leslie watches as a pack of Irish Setters swarms over a gigantic package of Crave the size of a small bus.

INT. ALL NIGHT COFFEE SHOP & NINETY-NINE CENT BREAKFAST - MORNING

The place is crowded, noisy, smoky, congenial. Spy, Roberta and Mike sit at a tiny table eating breakfast.

From time to time, Spy looks at Roberta. She looks much better.

He reaches over and pushes her hair gently away from her temple.

SPY

The ice helped.

ROBERTA

(nods)

I feel better.

She looks away and he lets her hair drop. Immediately, to cover his awkwardness, he changes the subject.

SPY

(gestures around them)

You know, it's amazing to me how every morning these poor suckers get up, get dressed, eat this terrible slop for ninety-nine cents, so they can go off to some miserable --

MIKE

(interrupts, mouth full)

You eat it, too.

SPY

Yeah, but it's different for me.

MIKE

Why?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

'Cause it's temporary. I'm gonna have three hundred thousand dollars soon. I mean, I almost have it.

MIKE

I'm almost the Shah of Iran, what're you talking about?

SPY

(deeply offended)

So we had a little setback. What d'you think we're doing this for? Don't you believe in this money?

MIKE

I believe in it, but not like you. You believed in it before we even heard of Borzel. Since you were five, probably.

SPY

That's why I'm gonna get it.

ROBERTA

Who's Borzel?

SPY

He's the guy who's givin' us and Stegman three hundred thousand dollars for the stamp.

ROBERTA

What does he want it for?

SPY

(shrugs)

He's loaded -- Mafia or something -- and he's into stamps. He's one of those weird guys... weird and rich. Like I'm gonna be.

ROBERTA

What're you gonna do with the money?

MIKE

I'm gonna buy a chicken farm outside of Lakewood for my family and me.

She looks questioningly at Spy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(restrained)

I'm gonna invest it in the market,  
live off the interest.

ROBERTA

Won't you be bored?

SPY

Bored? How could I be bored?  
Anyway --

(looks around the  
cafe)

-- this here isn't so exciting.  
If you're gonna be bored, you're  
gonna be bored, it's got nothing  
to do with money.

Roberta finds this vaguely depressing.

SPY

(continuing)

Well -- what were you gonna do  
with the money? You were gonna  
get the whole package.

ROBERTA

(thinks)

... I think I'd go travelling.

SPY

(dubious)

Yeah, well, travelling, you could  
spend a lot.

ROBERTA

(getting into it)

I'd like to go someplace really  
weird, like... like Egypt or  
Africa or Peru.

SPY

By yourself?

ROBERTA

Why not? Like an explorer.

SPY

Travel's a waste of time. By the  
time you get back it's all a blur.  
You can't remember anything.

ROBERTA

Well, look at me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA (CON'T)

Here I am doing nothing and I don't remember anything, anyway.

SPY

(wipes his mouth  
with his napkin,  
briskly)

Well, I just thought of something  
for you to do. Come on.

He pushes back his chair. The others follow.

INT. GRUNDY MUSEUM - DAY - CLOSE ON A STAMP

matted with heavy black paper. The stamp depicts Fortuna, the Roman goddess of fortune, opening her arms to a landscape of American fields, a tiny farmer plowing his furrow and an infinitesimal city glittering in the distance. The prairie wind whips the goddess' hair and tunic and unfurls her banner which reads:

FORTUNE ON OUR SIDE - 1912

ROBERTA (O.S.)

What does it say? "Fortune on Our Side"...

Beat.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Spy and Roberta looking at the stamp through the glass display case, where it lies enshrined like a relic. The stamp is seen within the frame of her shadow on the glass, the way she saw New York City in the window at her birthday party.

ROBERTA

It's beautiful. It's like a little window with a whole world behind it, all miniature...

SPY

Yeah, but do you recognize it?

ROBERTA

I don't know... who is she, the woman?

SPY

Fortuna.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

Is this the same as the one I stole from Stegman?

SPY

The same as I could make it.

Roberta looks at him questioningly.

SPY

(continuing)

The one you stole used to be in there.

(indicates the display case)

I made that one so we wouldn't leave a hole. Then we just switched them. Mike knows one of the guards.

ROBERTA

(looks at the stamp with new interest)

It looks perfect.

SPY

Thanks...

(looks at it, proud)

It came out pretty good -- it was my first stamp, you know. Took me weeks to get the inks right... the reds are tricky 'cause they fade uneven.

ROBERTA

I didn't realize you were an artist...

SPY

Well -- you should have.

This makes her laugh.

EXT. TREASURE HUNT - DAY

Alvina is just unlocking the front door when a taxi pulls up to the store and Gary jumps out.

She sees him bounding toward her expectantly.

ALVINA

We're not open till 11:00.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

I have to talk to you for a minute. Are you the owner?

ALVINA

You'll have to come back in half an hour.

Waving around the crumpled bag that once held Roberta's sweater:

GARY

I can't wait. It's a matter of life and death. It's my wife Roberta, she bought a jacket...

It's clear that he won't stop until she lets him finish. To that end, she unlocks the door and, sighing, lets him in.

INT. SEPTIMA'S OCCULT CONNECTION - DAY

But it could be midnight in the dark, cluttered room. The walls are hung with gypsy theme tapestries and a "gypsy" fortune teller -- Amy, in her work outfit, is reading Roberta's palm.

Mike and Spy stand nearby, talking. Spy idly looks over Amy's collection of phony gypsy knick-knacks.

AMY

... a sheltered life, everything flowing smoothly, peacefully... but look at these lines, all going off in different directions, scattered, it's very strange...

ROBERTA

I know, I feel strange.

Across the room:

MIKE AND SPY

MIKE

He called again. I'm telling you he's not going to wait much longer.

SPY

I'll talk to him.

MIKE

(ironic)  
What're you going to say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Spy picks up a bust of a gypsy and looks at it. The gypsy stares at a handful of cards with an expression of exaggerated horror.

AMY AND ROBERTA

AMY

You have the palm of a terrorist,  
or a -- full of subversive  
fantasies and sexual longings...

SPY

(from across the  
room, puts down bust)

Really?

ROBERTA

(whispers to Amy)

Is that the same as sexual powers?

MIKE

(interrupts)

What about the stamp? Can you  
make her remember?

AMY

She has deep secrets, hidden  
thoughts, conflicts, very deep.  
Deep ambitions.

Spy meditatively taps a decorative BELL and it gives  
out a pure, quiet TONE.

MIKE AND SPY

MIKE

Why don't we call Stegman and tell  
him what happened, straight.  
Maybe he'll have some ideas.

SPY

(shakes his head)

He used to have ideas. Now he's  
just out of control. I just think  
he'll blow it.

(tries to sound  
off-handed)

Anyway, I promised her if we found  
the stamp we'd let her go.

Mike perceives that Spy is in love. He feels betrayed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

(bitter)

Great. You promised. Well what about me? I didn't promise. You're a hot shit little college dropout but I'm a working man. I got my family to think about.

ROBERTA

(intent, to Amy)

What should I do?

Spy is peering into a crystal ball and seeing his own face reflected in it.

SPY

(to Mike)

Go take care of your family. I'll deal with Stegman.

AMY

(to Roberta)

Learn to concentrate. Control your fantasies.

MIKE

(doesn't trust him)

You'll deal with it...

AMY

Trust yourself. Be courageous.

SPY

(earnest)

I will. I'll find the stamp and we'll get our money. That's the important thing, right?

Mike and Spy look at each other. Affection, trust, distrust, desperation, jealousy and sympathy are acknowledged briefly in the look.

AMY

(to Roberta)

Don't worry about your memory. Think about your fate.

ROBERTA

(concentrating)

I will.

POLICE STATION - DAY

A typically hideous room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gary sits in front of a large, pitted formica desk with a small video terminal, two telephones and an array of old styrofoam cups, each with an inch of cold coffee in it.

Across from them sits an officer, LOACH. He's young, cheerful, ambitious.

On the desk between them rests a plastic pouch with Roberta's purse, soggy and horrible looking, inside. Beside it lies the Cartier pendant and a framed picture of Roberta, smiling and innocent, which Gary obviously brought from home.

GARY

(upset, anxious)

Obviously she was robbed, maybe kidnapped, maybe --

LOACH

Or maybe they wanted it to look that way.

GARY

They? Who's they? Why would anybody want -- ?

LOACH

The other members of her group.

GARY

You mean her friends?

LOACH

What d'you know about them? Did she bring them to the house? Did they plan their robberies there? What about guns?

GARY

Guns?! Robberies? What're you talking about? Roberta's a nice, ordinary, middle-class housewife, she --

LOACH

(genial)

Mr. Bartel, what do you think your wife does all day?

GARY

I know what she does. She shops, she runs errands, she buys stuff ... she reads the paper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOACH

(smug)

She's bored, right?

GARY

Wrong.

LOACH

She's frustrated.

GARY

No!

LOACH

(leans toward Gary  
confidentially)

She resents you.

GARY

(furious)

You don't know anything about her.

Grabs the framed portrait of the smiling Roberta and shoves it under Loach's face.

GARY

(continuing)

See this? This is the girl we're talking about. She was my sister's roommate in college. From Yakima, Washington, which is famous for apples. She was in the folk dance club. She was a virgin in every conceivable sense of the word.

Loach smiles amiably, switches on the video terminal on his desk and swivels it around to face Gary.

ON VIDEO SCREEN

A still of Roberta in the all-night liquor store, obviously taken by the surveillance camera. She's disheveled, waving the gun, staring wildly at the camera, her features distorted by desperation, the bruise on her forehead clearly visible -- she looks utterly out of control.

Other stills appear on the screen: Roberta advancing on the counterman, turning, disappearing in a blur of speed and smoke.

Over the stills...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOACH (O.S.)

Our records show that your wife Roberta, as she was known to you, may be involved in a hold-up gang which has been recruiting high school students in exchange for drugs and...

FADE SOUND over final still. The framed portrait, up close: Roberta's clean, smiling, innocent face.

LOOKING THROUGH A LONG RANGE VIEWER - A DARK BLUR

Unfocused images whipping past like racing shadows.

ROBERTA (V.O.)

Why was I meeting that stranger at the pier?

(beat)

I think I know why.

The viewer finally slows and focuses on the water. Little choppy waves slapping the air, catching the last rays of the sun.

SPY (V.O.)

Why?

ROBERTA (V.O.)

I think we were gonna get on a boat and clear out of town.

The viewer moves slowly. A bird flies down and sits on the water. Then another bird comes and sits beside the first.

ANOTHER ANGLE

reveals that Roberta is looking through a coin-operated viewer supplied for tourists. We are on the Coney Island boardwalk. It is sunset. Roberta's wearing Susan's clothes. She looks great.

SPY

You mean you were lovers?

ROBERTA

(walking on)

No, partners. See, it wasn't just your stamp, it was other stuff, a regular business.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(nods, they're on  
to something)

An export racket, stolen art.

ROBERTA

Maybe jewels, who knows?

SPY

Dope. Stegman said you spent a  
lot of time in Mexico.

ROBERTA

(pleased)

See?

As they walk, she tosses a coin in the air palm up,  
catches it palm down, unconsciously imitating Susan  
(the trick she did at the pier). Spy watches, troubled  
about something.

SPY

What about you and Stegman?

ROBERTA

(shakes her head)

He wasn't in on it.

SPY

I mean, do you love him?

Roberta's surprised. She considers. Meanwhile, Spy  
goes on.

SPY

(continuing)

How could you love a guy like  
that? I mean, I can see he's got  
a certain insane charm -- and  
money, of course -- but he's a  
jerk. Why are so many smart,  
beautiful, interesting women  
attracted to jerks? I mean,  
really?

He stops walking, turns to her for an answer. She  
looks at him, suppresses a smile, shrugs.

He takes her by the shoulders and kisses her. It's not  
really passionate, it's more like a test kiss. Then he  
stops himself.

SPY

(continuing)

You're still his wife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

I'm just myself.

SPY

(shakes his head)

And he's my partner.

(grim)

More or less.

SHOT OF THE WATER

The two birds. One flies a little way off and sits on the water again.

INT. ROXY CLUB

Susan sits at the bar, drinking. The VAMPIRISH PERSON who stood in line with Mohawk outside the Roxy comes over to her.

VAMPIRE

Hey, Susan. You still here? I saw you out front Friday night.

SUSAN

I wasn't here Friday night.

VAMPIRE

Yeah, you were -- you were talking to Mohawk. I saw your jacket and everything. The one with the lions.

SUSAN

Dragons, and it wasn't me, it was that witch.

(troubled)

She got my jacket and then she stole my suitcase and now she's trying to take over my whole life.

(beat; frowns)

If only I could figure out why...

The PHONE RINGS at the bar and Cheryl picks it up. She listens for a moment, then hands it to Susan.

CHERYL

For you.

SUSAN

(into phone)

Hello?

It's Gary.

## INT. GARY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gary's working late, alone, speeding.

He sits in front of a Steenbeck doing several things at once: editing a dog food commercial, making notes on a legal pad, calculating on a calculator and dialing the telephone. He refers to a card from the "Treasure Hunt" on which Susan wrote the number of the Roxy for Alvina.

GARY

Hi... my name's Gary Bartel. I'm trying to find my wife and the owner of the Treasure Hunt told me you were asking about her...

Gary hears Susan's musical LAUGHTER on the other end of the line. Behind the laughter he hears MUSIC, GLASSES CLINKING, PEOPLE TALKING -- inviting sounds.

On the Steenbeck, a dog leaps backwards and forwards from mid-air to ground, to mid-air.

SUSAN (V.O.)

So, she's married to you. Are you a witch, too?

GARY

(chuckles nervously)  
No, I direct commercials for TV.

SUSAN (V.O.)

What's her name, your wife?

GARY

Roberta. Roberta Bartel. What's yours?

## INT. ROXY - LATER

Gary picks his way cautiously through the dark. He's completely out of place here and he gets off on the faces, clothing, the various insignia of youth, freedom, daring, sex, dissolution as he imagines them.

He makes it to the bar, leans over and speaks to Cheryl.

GARY

I'm looking for Susan.

Cheryl points. Gary sees Susan at the other end of the bar. Immediately, he's stricken, fascinated. He moves toward her cool, unattainable profile like a man in a dream.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he reaches her, she turns, smiles, pats the empty barstool beside her and he sits down.

SUSAN

So, she split, huh.

GARY

I've been looking all over for her, everywhere, calling everybody...

SUSAN

(lighting a cigarette)

What for?

GARY

Well -- I'm worried about her, naturally.

SUSAN

It's not natural to worry. Maybe she's having a good time.

GARY

(at a loss)

I'm not having a good time.

SUSAN

Why not?

GARY

Why not? Well...

(slightly flustered)

For one thing, I'm having this very important gathering with my biggest West Coast clients, big men in the field, and Roberta was supposed to do a lot of the planning and...

He trails off, harried.

SUSAN

(calm, philosophical)

Have a drink.

GARY

No thanks, I don't drink before dinner.

(obsessed)

Plus, they're all going to be there with their wives and they're expecting to meet Roberta, naturally... this is a disaster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

(to Cheryl)  
Tequila for Gary.

GARY

What am I going to say? "Sorry  
Roberta's not here, she decided to  
disappear this week?"

SUSAN

(puts the drink in  
front of him, nods  
sympathetically)  
You're in a mind loop, that's all.

GARY

(drinking)  
I can't drink this, I'm on a  
health program...  
(takes another  
sip)  
She knows how humiliated I'll  
be. She's probably doing this  
just to get back at --

SUSAN

You like shrimp? That's a health  
food.

GARY

Sure, I eat shrimp. I like  
shrimp.

SUSAN

Good. We can take out this great  
shrimp salad from La Gourmet and  
eat it over at your house. That  
way we can talk.

GARY

Oh.

SUSAN

I'm going to help you find her.

GARY

You are? Great, that's great.  
Uh... Why?

Susan smiles and slips off her stool, beckons to Gary  
to follow.

## INT. BARTEL HOUSE

Gary and Susan sitting at the kitchen/bar counter finishing the last of the shrimp salad.

GARY

So now you want your suitcase back.

SUSAN

Not just that -- I want to know why she's following me around and why are the cops following her around...

GARY

I told you, they think she's involved with this ridiculous crime ring that's holding up liquor stores -- it's ridiculous.

(beat)

My sister thinks she got liberated.

SUSAN

What do you think?

GARY

I figure she must have met some guy... it's hard to imagine, but...

He shrugs.

SUSAN

(nods)

I think she's a witch. And all those other things, too.

She gets up and starts wandering around the room, checking it out, boldly curious. Gary follows her.

SUSAN

(continuing; inspecting a painting on the wall)

Here's my theory: Stegman thinks the FBI's on to him, right?

GARY

Stegman... the guy you're living with...?

SUSAN

In Atlantic City.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

(nods, rambles on)

But he's about to close a big deal, he thinks maybe his last big deal because his enemies are closing in on him, and also he thinks he's got cancer and heart disease and fifty other things wrong with him.

GARY

Does he?

She flips through a message pad, puts it down, goes into another room.

SUSAN

Nah, he's just paranoid, crazy. But meanwhile...

She picks up a framed portrait of Roberta -- the one Gary brought to the police station -- studies it thoughtfully.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Meanwhile, he hires your wife to impersonate me and lead the cops around on a wild-goose chase.

GARY

Susan, I'm sure whatever happened to Roberta has nothing to do with your Stegman.

SUSAN

Yes, it does. Absolutely. See, she'll let the cops pick her up, she'll give them some fancy cock and bull about Stegman, they'll have to let her go, then she'll disappear. Back to Hoboken.

GARY

(humoring her)

But the cops were already here looking for her.

SUSAN

Then she'll go someplace else.

GARY

What about me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

You'll be okay... You'll stay in Hoboken. Meanwhile, Roberta and Stegman meet up in Tahiti... they buy a boat, a thirty-foot pleasure cruiser. They call it the Ariadne... They --

GARY

I mean, what about me, I'm her husband?

SUSAN

Huh? Oh -- you'll find someone else...

(looks into a room)

Is this her room?

GARY

Upstairs.

UPSTAIRS

Susan enters the bedroom, looks around.

SUSAN

Wow, I like the mirrors.

(glances into  
the bathroom)

You got a sauna?

GARY

We don't use it much, we put it in for resale value when we built the place. We picked the tile, the fixtures, everything. I'll show you.

He demonstrates a hidden TV which rolls out from a built-in dresser unit by remote control. He's very proud.

GARY

(continuing)

The builder said it couldn't be done, so I designed it myself.

Susan is at the vanity, dabbing on some of Roberta's perfume. She goes to the closet and runs her hands through the clothes.

SUSAN

(inspecting a label)

Bergdorf's...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

I used to shoplift there when I was a kid.

(slips the jacket  
off the hanger)

She owes me a coat...

She drapes it around her, then sits on the bed, tests its bounce, flops back on it.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Boy, this is heaven.

(rolls toward him)

Got any pot?

GARY

(self-conscious)

I don't smoke anymore.

She rolls back her sock and produces a joint. In doing so, she provides Gary with a long, delicious view of her leg.

SUSAN

How about a match?

He pats his pockets: nothing.

GARY

I'll be right back. Don't move.

EXT. BARTEL HOUSE

Lightning flashes over the lawn. THUNDER, the first drops of rain, more lightning.

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - NIGHT

Pouring rain. Roberta and Spy are squeezed into a telephone booth to get out of the rain. Spy is talking on the phone.

SPY

I know... I know it's been three days but she's never been alone. Must be those guys, the ones that bought her off. Maybe she was in with them from the start, before you even met her, know what I mean?

(listens briefly)

This is a pay phone, why would anybody bug a pay phone?

## INT. STEGMAN'S HOTEL ROOM - ATLANTIC CITY

A chair is jammed against the door on the inside and the shades are drawn. The dresser is crowded with room service trays. Obviously, no one's been in or out of the room for several days.

Stegman is gripping the phone so tightly his hands are white and shaking.

STEGMAN

Okay. We can't let these guys freak us out, we got to be calm, rational... Okay? Now look...

(his voice is very low, then suddenly he's shouting)

No more dicking around, no waiting, no excuses!

(louder)

I don't care how you get her, just get her, you stupid putz!

(ends the conversation quickly)

Okay. Great. Thanks.

He hangs up. His jaw is so tight from the strain of containing himself that it looks like it might shatter.

He stares ahead distractedly for a moment, then, making up his mind, gets up and quickly starts throwing his clothes into a suitcase.

## INT. HOTEL HALLWAY

As Stegman comes out of his room, he passes the bellhop carrying a room service tray. The bellhop looks back at him, stops, and as soon as he's out of sight, puts down the tray and hurries after him.

## EXT. OCCULT CONNECTION - NIGHT

Roberta and Spy are running down the street to get out of the rain, using the dragon jacket as a single roof between them.

They make it to the doorway breathless, Spy fiddles with the lock, finally gets the door open, looks back at Roberta to find her catching rain on her tongue, face tipped to the sky.

SPY

(nudges her)

Hey, Killer...

They go inside.

## INT. ROBERTA'S HOLDING ROOM

They come in shaking the rain off their clothes and hair. Spy closes the door, turns to her and catches her in his arms, unable to resist any longer.

They're both shivering with cold and excitement,

SPY

He'll kill us, right?

ROBERTA

(she puts her arms  
around his neck)

It'll be worth it.

He kisses her hungrily.

SPY

(happy)

It's worth it, already.

He holds her tight for a moment, mostly to get himself together. Presses his cheek against her head.

SPY

(continuing)

You talked me into it.

ROBERTA

(laughs)

How did I talk you into it?

SPY

(pulls her toward  
the bed)

You didn't. It's just fate.

ROBERTA

That's what I think.

They roll onto the bed. The rain blows in the open window.

## BARTEL HOUSE - NIGHT

Susan, wearing Roberta's robe, sits with her feet propped up on Roberta's dressing table. The triple mirrors of the dressing table show Susan smoking a joint and reading something, rapt. It's Roberta's diary. She's using the dragon postcard for a bookmark.

Shifting her feet, she accidentally knocks a bottle of perfume to the floor, where it spills silently. Delicately, she pulls a scarf out of an open drawer and drops it over the spill.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gary is heard before he's seen. He's talking on the phone.

GARY (O.S.)

(on phone)

So I'll pick you up at the airport and we'll go straight to my house. No, no trouble at all. Of course she'll be here. My wife is looking forward to meeting you too.

SUSAN

(without looking up)

Tell them I'm your wife.

GARY

(on phone)

Yes. Okay, see you, Brent.

Sound of the PHONE HANGING UP. Gary pads over to Susan. He takes off his cufflinks, lays them down on the dressing table and begins to undress.

GARY

You think there'll be enough food? I don't know what to do about the decorations...

SUSAN

(without looking up)

I'll do them, I'm great at that stuff.

GARY

That would be terrific. You said you could set up the tables and...

SUSAN

I'm going to do everything.

Suddenly there is a LOW BEEPING SOUND coming from somewhere.

Susan looks over and picks up the expensive looking wristwatch lying on the dressing table. When she pushes a little button on the side out, the BEEPING STOPS. When she pushes the button in, the BEEPING STARTS up again. It's a digital alarm watch.

SUSAN

Cool...

GARY

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He takes it from her hand before she has a chance to pocket it.

GARY

(continuing; noticing  
for the first time  
Roberta's diary)

You shouldn't be reading that.

SUSAN

Are you kidding? Everybody should be reading it. It's an amazing document:

(reads)

"Couldn't sleep. Went into the kitchen. Gary came in, turned on the light. Gary left. Finished birthday cake."

Gary takes it away from her, puts it back in the dresser drawer.

SUSAN

Nobody's life could possibly be that boring. It's obviously a cover.

GARY

A cover for what?

SUSAN

Her other life. The interesting one. I'm beginning to like Roberta.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A cat dashes across the wet street and a taxicab swerves to avoid it, BRAKES SCREECHING. The cat escapes into the dark.

INT. TAXI

Stegman steadies himself in the back seat, fumbles anxiously with what looks like a small radio tucked inside his shirt. The taxi DISPATCH ROARS and CRACKLES.

STEGMAN

Your radio's interfering with my heart monitor, could you turn it off? We're almost there.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEGMAN (CONT'D)

(leans back, pale)

Thank God...

(glances out the window, sees the Occult Connection ahead)

Stop! Stop here, we almost passed it. No, pull ahead, I don't want to be seen.

The taxi slows.

STEGMAN

(continuing)

Pull over there.

The taxi stops at the curb and the driver stops the meter. Stegman leans forward to pay the driver.

INT. ROBERTA'S HOLDING ROOM

Roberta and Spy lie peacefully together, dozing.

Somewhere in the building a COMMOTION is growing louder and getting closer. Roberta stirs in her sleep as she hears it. Gradually we distinguish two VOICES: Amy's and Stegman's. They're very loud.

Suddenly Spy sits bolt upright.

SPY

(terrified)

Stegman!

AMY (O.S.)

They're just talking.

STEGMAN (O.S.)

There's no such thing as just talking.

SPY

He'll kill us.

STEGMAN

(bursting into room)

I'll kill them!

(flings Amy off him)

Get away from my heart monitor, you...!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(manly)

Listen, Stegman, I know she's your wife, but you said it yourself: she's irresistible. She...

Stegman has flipped on the light, leveled the gun at the bed.

STEGMAN

Where's Susan?!

ROBERTA

(doubtful)

I'm Susan.

STEGMAN

You may be a Susan, but not the one I'm looking for.

SPY

(can't believe his good fortune)

She's not? That's great.

ROBERTA

(indignant)

No, it isn't. If I'm not her, who am I?

SPY

(to Stegman, explaining)

She's got amnesia.

ROBERTA

(to Spy)

You thought I was Susan.

SPY

You thought you were Susan.

ROBERTA

But only 'cause you thought, you said --

Stegman has no patience for this. He turns to Spy, furious.

STEGMAN

How could you be so stupid?!

SPY

You described her.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY (CONT'D)

You said she'd be wearing the jacket.

(indicating Roberta)

She was wearing the jacket.

They all look at the jacket hanging on the back of the chair. The satin is dark with rainwater and the blue and green dragons have bled their colors into the red pool of the background. Their shapes are blurring to abstraction. The magic insignia is disappearing. Roberta cries out involuntarily.

ROBERTA

Oh, no...

STEGMAN

(advances on Roberta)

You're wearing her clothes...

(notices the suit-

case on a chair

beside the bed)

Where is she? You know where she is, why aren't you telling me?

ROBERTA

We don't know.

STEGMAN

(eyes narrow)

You're in this together. You, the girl, Susan, too -- trying to cut me out of the deal. You had her steal my stamp so you could sell it to Borzel --

SPY

Your stamp? Who made the copy?  
Who arranged the switch?

STEGMAN

Who set up the deal? Who contacted Borzel?

SPY

Big fuckin' deal.

STEGMAN

So what are you going to do now, smart guy?

SPY

(thinks)

Go to Borzel and tell him the truth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEGMAN

(outraged)

And return the 50 grand advance!

SPY

(not sure he heard  
correctly)

What 50 grand?

STEGMAN

Don't try and play dumb with me now. You knew all about it -- they told you, didn't they? Maybe it was your idea...

SPY

(disbelief)

You're nuts.

STEGMAN

I wouldn't be surprised if you knew exactly where the stamp is... maybe you have it already... what did you do with Susan, did you kill her?

SPY

(shaking his head  
in disbelief)

Man, it must be hell being you.

Stegman, in a rage, starts to draw his gun, but Spy swiftly stops him, presses him against the wall.

SPY

(continuing;  
furious)

Don't ever pull a gun on me.

(lets him go)

Get out of here.

Stegman lingers, still in a fever of paranoid suspicions.

STEGMAN

(can't resist,  
strangled voice)

Did you sell it to them already?

Did you?

SPY

(starts to drag  
him bodily from  
the room)

Out. I'm not listening to your insane bullshit anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He pushes Stegman out the door. Just before he closes the door...

STEGMAN

You don't want to hear the truth,  
that's why. I bet you did kill  
her -- what'd you do with the  
body, huh? What'd you --

Spy slams the door in his face. Silence.

EXT. ROOM

Stegman stands outside, gathering himself together. He straightens his clothes, composes his face, heads for the stairs, his gait calculated to suggest authority, control.

He sees Amy peering at him cautiously from behind a door.

STEGMAN

(continuing; attempts  
a friendly manner)

Hi, Amy.

He passes by, walks down the stairs.

TIGHT ON THE NEW STAMP

A field of white. The white paper is hugely magnified, illuminated, the light breaks down into a mosaic of soft prisms.

A needle moves under the lens, holding a drop of ink. The needle touches the paper, leaving a fine point of color, then another. Slowly, the profile of Fortuna begins to appear: classically self-possessed, slightly smiling, tilted upward.

SPY (O.S.)

I didn't want to have to do this  
... A decent forger would never  
make more than one copy of  
something. It makes it cheap,  
plus, it's dangerous.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A room we've never seen before in the Occult Connection building. It's crowded with worktables and lamps, shelves of chemicals and equipment.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

This is the forgery studio. Spy looks up from his work to Roberta, who is pacing nearby.

SPY

What if Borzel sees that it's a fake? Stegman said he knows his business.

ROBERTA

Nobody noticed at the museum.

SPY

(scornful)

Nobody sees anything in a museum. It's probably just a xerox of the Mona Lisa.

ROBERTA

Look, it'll work.

He looks unconvinced; Roberta is firm.

ROBERTA

(continuing)

Anyway, we have to try it. No guts, no glory -- that's my philosophy.

Spy looks at her, impressed by her confidence and courage.

INT. SPY AND ROBERTA'S ROOM - DAWN

Roberta lies on her back staring at the ceiling, thinking. Spy rolls toward her, half asleep.

SPY

(sleepy)

Susan...

(beat)

I don't know what to call you.

PIER - DAY

where Roberta waited for Susan, Roberta's PCV.

ROBERTA (V.O.)

(meditative, almost  
an interior voice)

If I'm not Susan, who am I?  
Nobody knows...

POV THROUGH COIN-OPERATED VIEWER

As before, the waves, the two birds. They fly away as if startled.

SPY (V.O.)

Somebody must know. The people who knew you before.

INT. SPY AND ROBERTA'S ROOM - DAWN

As before, a little lighter. ANGLE on Roberta's face.

ROBERTA

I've got to find Susan. She's the key.

She's alert, determined... changing.

BARTEL HOUSE - MORNING

Susan lies sleeping, stretched out luxuriously across Gary's bed. Gary can be heard talking on the telephone and this rouses Susan to semi-consciousness.

She rolls over, opens one eye halfway, sees Gary tying his shoes, then putting on his wristwatch as he talks on the phone.

GARY

Sure I want the Kodak job, if I could get my foot in the door there... but that's not why I invited the guy. I'd like to meet him and I think he'll have a good time -- so you gonna bring him? Great... me, too. See you at the party.

He hangs up, puts on his jacket, sees that Susan is waking up.

He comes over and gives her a kiss, talking all the while around the kiss. He's more nervous than ever.

GARY

(continuing)

Listen, I got to go to work, got to meet my accountant in half an hour to talk about some stuff...

SUSAN

(as he's leaving)

Wait -- do you have a newspaper?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY

I'm taking it with me.

SUSAN

Just leave me the personals.

GARY

(actually pauses,  
surprised)

You, too?

SUSAN

Who else?

GARY

Roberta read them all the time.

SUSAN

(big discovery)

No kidding...

She rolls back against the pillows, smiling to herself, savoring her discovery.

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - MORNING

Susan is eating handfuls of candy corn as she listens to the Clerk read her ad back to her.

CLERK

(reading)

"Desperately seeking Stranger. Missed you at the pier but meet me for a big surprise, Saturday, your house, 10:00 - Susan."

SUSAN

She'll love it. Now the other one...

CLERK

(reads)

"Jimmy Guitar. Urgent - party gig for you Saturday night, 1826 Glencoe, Hoboken. Can't wait to see you. Love Susan."

EXT. STREET - DAY

Susan comes out of the Times office and walks cheerfully down the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She passes a Woolworths and something in the display window catches her eye: Old Halloween decorations on sale at half price. Orange streamers, black cats, skeletons.

SUSAN

(inspired)

That's it, a theme party.

She heads for the door.

TIGHT ON THE NEW STAMP

The lens moves over the graceful billow of Fortuna's tunic where it brushes her cheek and flows out over her shoulder. Slowly, it moves down her body to where the needle is outlining the hilt of her sword, entwined with a white rose.

ANOTHER ANGLE - THE FORGERY STUDIO

Spy is working, Roberta paces behind him.

ROBERTA

(talking to herself)

See, I thought the Stranger and I were partners. But maybe I was the Stranger and Susan was me. I mean, Susan was Susan. And we were partners. And we were supposed to meet at the pier.

SPY

(doesn't look up)

Huh... Look outside. Is he still there?

Roberta goes to the window and starts to draw the shade.

ROBERTA'S POV - OUT THE WINDOW

across the street, the 99¢ breakfast place.

Sitting in a booth near the window is Stegman. From time to time he glances out the window at the Occult Connection. But mostly, he's reading the newspaper.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

ROBERTA

(puzzled)

Just sitting there. Reading the paper...

SPY

He probably doesn't know what to do. He's waiting for us to contact Susan. Or take out the body in plastic bags. What a klutz.

ROBERTA

(thoughtful; watching Stegman)

How did Stegman know that I was meeting Susan at the pier?

SPY

(thinks)

Huh, I'm trying to remember. I think it was something in the newspaper.

ROBERTA

(excited)

Look. He's doing something.

Spy goes to the window.

## ROBERTA'S POV

Stegman is hastily tearing something out of the newspaper. Leaving the rest of the paper behind, he clutches the scrap of paper and hurries out of the coffee shop.

## EXT. OCCULT CONNECTION - DAY

Roberta hurries out of the Occult Connection, dashes across the street to the coffee shop.

## INT. COFFEE SHOP (SAME AS 99¢ BREAKFAST)

She comes in, heads for the newspaper abandoned by Stegman. Just as she's about to reach for it, another hand reaches out and picks it up.

The hand belongs to ALBERT DAYCEE, the bellhop from the Atlantic City Hotel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Without looking at her, he smoothly pockets the newspaper and walks out the door. Roberta stands staring at him for a moment, then goes to the register and puts a coin on the counter, picks up a fresh newspaper. But all the while, she keeps her eye on Daycee.

ROBERTA'S POV -THROUGH COFFEE SHOP WINDOW

Daycee goes to a pay phone on the corner and places a call. She sees him talking to someone, referring to Stegman's newspaper as he talks.

EXT. PAY PHONE

Daycee is talking on the phone. Roberta moves within earshot, as though waiting for her turn at the phone.

DAYCEE

Third column, halfway down, after  
"Charlotte C. please forgive  
me"...

(waits)

That's it.

(listens)

Yeah, I guess that's it. I'll  
come pick you up.

(smiles, evidently  
at a compliment)

Thanks, Mr. Borzel;.

He hangs up.

EXT. STREET

Roberta watches Daycee walk away.

CLOSEUP ON NEWSPAPER

Roberta's finger scans down the Personal column, stopping next to an ad that begins: "Desperately Seeking Stranger..."

INT. FORGING STUDIO - ANOTHER ANGLE - CLOSE ON ROBERTA

Roberta is staring at the ads. Spy stands behind her.

SPY

I wonder who the guy was following  
Stegman? It wasn't Borzel.  
Borzel's fat. Real fat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

Maybe we'll find out tonight.

She looks back down at the newspaper. Reading from it:

ROBERTA

(continuing)

... 1826 Glencoe Avenue.

Hoboken...

A flicker of memory appears on her face -- mixed with dread.

BARTEL HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Susan is putting up party decorations with the black maid, ALICIA. She's climbing all over the furniture in the process and dropping cigarette ashes wherever she goes.

ALICIA

(anchoring a  
bristling black  
cat to the  
chandelier)

I thought this was a party for Mr.  
Bartel's business associates.

SUSAN

That's what it is.

Stepping carefully onto a fragile end table to fasten some black streamers. Alicia watches, dubious.

ALICIA

Halloween come and gone last week,  
you know.

SUSAN

That's why this is so hip.

(reaching for  
the chandelier)

Could you help me screw these in?

She leans toward Alicia to hand her a handful of dark red chandelier lights to replace the white ones. In reaching so far, the end table gives out with a CRACK and Susan leaps to the couch as the table collapses. An expensive Chinese bowl and the portrait of Roberta are crushed in the accident.

SUSAN

(unperturbed)

Uh-oh. Oh, well... it'll give us  
more room for dancing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The TELEPHONE RINGS.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Could you get rid of this mess,  
I'll be right back.

ALICIA

What do you want me to do with it?

SUSAN

(going for the phone)

Just get rid of it. Throw it out,  
take it home...

(into phone)

Hi, Gary. No, everything's great.  
The tables just arrived and we're  
decorating. It looks great.

INT. OCCULT CONNECTION - CLOSEUP ON THE NEW STAMP

The needle moves and the tiny ploughman begins to take  
shape in the fields. The stamp is almost finished.

ROBERTA (V.O.)

Will you finish in time? I could  
take a cab.

SPY (V.O.)

I'll finish, don't worry.

CLOSE ON A TABLE

covered with platters of food, all of it black: black  
sausages, pumpernickel breads, black grapes, black  
casseroles, black cakes, dips, cheeses...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Susan stares at the table, awed. She's smoking a  
joint?

SUSAN

It's even more beautiful than I  
imagined...

Alicia stands nearby, looking nervously at the display.

ALICIA

Where's Mr. Bartel?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

He called. He said the plane was  
an hour late, for us to start  
without him.

Behind them, the room is draped with punk decorations,  
the chandelier blazing darkly with red lights, the  
furniture moved to the walls and the STEREO BLASTING  
NEW WAVE MUSIC.

SUSAN

(continuing; proud  
of her work)

I really could design parties for  
rich people, don't you think?

ALICIA

(polite)

Sure...

CLOSE ON NEW STAMP

as Spy finishes the lettering on the banner: FORTUNE  
ON OUR SIDE.

SPY (V.O.)

Finished. Let's ride.

INT. BARTEL HOUSE

Susan is pouring black food dye into the punch bowl.  
Someone taps her on the shoulder. She turns, sees no  
one, turns the other way expectantly. It's Jim, of  
course. Behind him, the band is bringing in the equip-  
ment and starting to set up.

SUSAN

You think that's funny?

JIM

Yeah, but not as funny as you. I  
won't ask what you're doing in  
Hoboken.

He takes her in his arms and kisses her.

EXT. STREET - HOBOKEN

The Dart is cruising along looking for Glencoe Street.  
Roberta looks out the window at the leafy, peaceful  
streets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA  
(worried)  
These streets look familiar.

SPY  
Maybe you're really a suburban  
housewife.

A joke.

ROBERTA  
(recognizes it)  
There's Glencoe.

They turn down the street.

#### APPROACHING THE BARTEL HOUSE

Roberta glued to the window. People in party clothes flocking into the house, NEW WAVE MUSIC pouring out.

ROBERTA  
(unhappy)  
I remember -- this is my house...  
Why would I live in a place like  
this?

Spy parks the car and opens the door to get out, then sees that Roberta isn't moving. She's afraid.

SPY  
What's the matter?

ROBERTA  
I'm nervous.

#### INT. BARTEL HOUSE

The guests are streaming in, some stunned, some outraged and some delighted at the bizarre spectacle of the living room. Alicia and the other hired help go about their business, serving food and drink as if this were a normal gathering.

We see Cheryl, Mohawk, Vampire, others from the Roxy; friends of the band, freaks and punks mixed in with the squares and the chic.

Leslie is pushing through the crowd, frantic, looking for the source of this chaos.

## EXT. BARTEL HOUSE

Roberta follows Spy slowly up the flagstone path. The front door is opened by a hired maid. She looks Roberta and Spy up and down disapprovingly.

## INT. HOUSE

Roberta looks around, dismayed. Everything looks both familiar and utterly alien, due in part to Susan's transformation of the house.

SPY

Maybe you're a punk suburban housewife.

ROBERTA

(preserving her dignity)

Obviously, this was just a cover.

They move into a pool of people, carefully because it's not much lighter than the Roxy. Roberta looks around eagerly and nervously for familiar faces. She spots Mohawk.

ROBERTA

(continuing)

I know him!

SPY

(looks; amazed)

You do?

## INT. STAGE AREA

A small section of the living room has been transformed into a stage area. This is where the band is playing.

Leslie approaches Jim, who has just stopped at the end of a number, and taps him on the arm.

LESLIE

Who hired you?

JIM

Susan.

LESLIE

Where is Susan?

Jim shrugs, offers Leslie a joint, then begins another number.

Louis (Gary's lawyer) is sitting behind the drum kit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The punk drummer, Murphy, sits beside him.

LOUIS

(in a daze, stoned)

How did I get here?

MURPHY

Must've been the food coloring.

Louis grins, gives an elaborate, amateur drum roll with a smash to the side kettle and a final blow to the hi-hat, which misses... the drumstick hits a platter of food in the arms of Alicia. Black food and drink goes flying...

An ELEGANT WOMAN is splattered with black stuff.

ELEGANT WOMAN

Oh, no! I'm completely black!

Alicia's eyebrows go up; she smiles.

EXT. BARTEL HOUSE

Gary pulls into the driveway in his Porsche. Sitting beside him is Brent, the West Coast producer.

GARY

(smiles nervously)

My secretary did the organizing on this party so it's kind of a surprise for me, too.

BRENT

(thin, jaded smile)

I like surprises.

They get out of the car, walk past a parked taxi and up the path that leads to Gary's house.

CLOSEUP - BACK SEAT OF TAXI

A shaking hand is quietly loading a .457 Magnum (Stegman). In the front seat the METER is still TICKING.

EXT. BARTEL HOUSE

Gary and Brent are greeted at the door by a huge biker in dirty leather and his trashy girlfriend with "Roni" tattooed on one jutting breast. The biker waves a beer can at Gary genially.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gary is so shocked he can't think of how to respond. He ends up smiling nervously at the biker and at Brent, who takes this remarkably gracefully.

GARY

I don't even know some of these people... ha ha.

Brent smiles a long suffering smile.

INT. HOUSE

Gary and Brent enter and are dumbstruck by the spectacle in front of them.

BRENT

(recovers faster)

This is a surprise, Gary. And I always thought we were less formal out West.

Gary grabs the first drink he sees and downs it in one swallow. Then he turns to Brent.

GARY

(pinwheels in his eyes)

Eggnog, tequila and food coloring. Have some.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HOUSE - ROBERTA AND SPY

The MUSIC is pulsating. Spy starts to dance a modified salsa step, very sexy. He pulls Roberta to him, but she hangs back.

ROBERTA

I don't want to dance. Anyway, I forget how.

SPY

You can forget everything, but you can't forget how to dance. Unless you forget how to breathe.

Persuaded, she dances with him.

ON GARY

Gary is looking around feverishly for another drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gladys, nearby, catches a glimpse of someone on the dance floor and turns to Gary.

GLADYS

Gary... you didn't tell me Roberta was here.

GARY

Roberta? She's not here...

GLADYS

Isn't that her, right over there...

Gary follows her gesture over to where Spy and Roberta are dancing. The room is crowded and Spy and Roberta are moving around a lot, so Gary can only catch an occasional glimpse of her.

He begins to push his way through the crowd.

GARY

(to himself)

Roberta...

ON SPY AND ROBERTA DANCING

Meanwhile, Spy has swung Roberta around so that she's now facing Gary as he approaches. Abruptly she stops dancing.

SPY

Hey, don't stop. You were doing fine.

ROBERTA

(half to herself)

I'm sure I know that guy...

ON GARY

pushing his way through the crowd with determination.

GARY

Roberta.

ON ROBERTA AND SPY

ROBERTA

(remembering)

... I was supposed to pick up a part for his car...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Gary now is face to face with her.

GARY  
Roberta!

SPY  
Roberta?

Gary and Roberta stand there staring at each other.

SPY  
(continuing)  
Who is this guy?

ROBERTA  
(slowly)  
My husband.

GARY  
(glaring at Spy)  
My wife.  
(to Roberta)  
Where the hell have you been?  
(nods at Spy)  
Who's that?

ROBERTA  
It's sort of a long story --

GARY  
(bristling)  
So it's like that.

SPY  
(aggressive)  
What do you know?

ROBERTA  
(to Spy)  
I have to talk to him.

Discreetly, she divides them, starts to steer Gary away. She glances back once at Spy before they start up the stairs. Spy looks upset.

INT. BEDROOM

Roberta and Gary are alone in their room, both deeply uncomfortable, Gary especially distressed.

GARY  
What're you doing with that guy  
down there? Why did you leave me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She sees his distress and softens.

ROBERTA

I didn't mean to, it was an accident.

GARY

An accident? What were you doing holding up a liquor store on 34th Street? Was that an accident?

ROBERTA

Of course it was. Look, I better start from the beginning. You know how I always used to follow the personals?

She lights a Rothmans. Gary is disconcerted.

GARY

You don't smoke.

ROBERTA

I do now. Now -- back to the personals...

Gary runs his hand through his hair, trying to calm himself down to listen.

EXT. BARTEL HOUSE

A grey limousine is stopped outside the house. The door opens and Daycee jumps out. Behind him, with Daycee's assistance, emerges a very fat, forbidding man with tired, intelligent eyes; this is BORZEL.

Borzel looks up at the Bartel house, trying to assess the situation. He motions to Daycee to stay behind as he heads for the house.

INT. HOUSE

Susan and Jim are kissing in the middle of the crowded room. She breaks away, talks into his ear. They're both pretty high.

SUSAN

I want to show you something.

JIM

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She takes him by the hand and leads him through the crowd.

JIM  
(continuing)  
What? Tell me.

SUSAN  
I can't tell you.

She leads him to the kitchen, into a short hallway, to a door. She opens it. It's completely dark inside. He looks inside.

JIM  
Okay. Is that it?

Susan laughs, pulls him down a dark staircase. It's the basement.

BASEMENT

She turns on a tiny light with a red shade. In the dark, the outlines of discarded furniture, a pool table, pinball machines...

They're both laughing now. Susan hops up on the pinball machine, sits astride it, facing him.

SUSAN  
Got a quarter? You could play.

He takes one from his pocket and puts it in the slot, pulls the lever and the machine lights up and EMITS A SERIES OF SOFT CHIMES. Susan leans back languidly, pulls up her dress. Jim releases a playing ball and lets it play itself while he starts to make love to her on the pinball machine.

BEDROOM - ROBERTA AND GARY

GARY  
(distraught)  
-- But how could you just forget everything like that?

ROBERTA  
I'm sorry. I guess basically it just wasn't that interesting.

GARY  
Why not?  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARY (CONT'D)

I'm not stupid and I don't find our life boring. You know, some people are just bored with themselves.

ROBERTA

Well, maybe I was, but I'm different now.

GARY

Good. Then, now that you're back everything'll be okay.

ROBERTA

Actually, I'm not really back yet. First I have to take care of some business with Spy and --

GARY

What business?

ROBERTA

(matter of fact)

We have to deliver a forgery of a stamp that someone stole from a psychotic killer named Stegman, who --

GARY

(furious)

What? What is this bullshit? Have you lost your mind?

ROBERTA

Yes, but I found it again.

GARY

What about us?

Roberta pauses looks at him ruefully.

ROBERTA

I don't know about us.

DOWNSTAIRS

Stegman is pushing through the crowd, looking for Susan, or Spy for that matter. He's extremely nervous. Gladys mistakes him for someone else and throws an arm around him. Stegman automatically pulls his gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GLADYS

Chucky, how are you?  
 (sees it's not Chucky,  
 sees the gun)  
 You're not Chucky.

STEGMAN

(pale smile, pockets  
 the gun)  
 That's right.

He moves away. Gladys is temporarily motionless.  
 Leslie sees her.

LESLIE

Who's that?

GLADYS

One of Susan's friends, I guess.

LESLIE

They're so horrible.

GLADYS

But you know, they're kind of sexy  
 in a weird way. They're like  
 animals.

They drift over to the refreshment table, where Spy  
 stands drinking and smoking impatiently.

They inspect the contents of a black bowl.

LESLIE

(taps Spy on the  
 shoulder)  
 Excuse me, do you know what this  
 is?

SPY

(tastes it)  
 Black salad.

Just then, Spy sees a very fat man across the room,  
 wandering through the crowd, obviously searching for  
 someone. He does a double take, to make sure it's who  
 he thinks it is. Then he drops everything and moves  
 toward Borzel.

SPY AND BORZEL

Spy approaches Borzel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

Mr. Borzel...

Borzel looks at him surprised.

SPY

(continuing)

You must be here for the stamp...

Borzel looks carefully at Spy, then nods slightly.

SPY

(continuing; nods  
to the stairs)

Upstairs.

They head for the stairs.

#### ACROSS THE ROOM

Stegman pushes a dancing couple out of his way and looks over to see Spy and Borzel heading up the stairs. He pushes his way through the crowd after them, his face white with fanaticism and strain. He looks possessed.

#### HALFWAY UP THE STAIRS

Borzel walks ahead of Spy. Stegman's behind them. Stegman calls Spy's name and in the same instant FIRES A SHOT. Spy hits the ground, the BULLET sails over his head and annihilates a huge mirror at the top of the stairs.

#### INT. BEDROOM

Gary is still lecturing Roberta.

GARY

And as for those crummy friends of yours...

They hear the SHOT.

GARY

(continuing)

What're they doing, setting off firecrackers out there?

He strides to the door and throws it open to see what the commotion is about.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Immediately, he's knocked aside by Spy and Borzel who are trying to get out of Stegman's way but he's fast behind them. He FIRES ANOTHER ROUND over their heads for good measure. Gary is terrified.

STEGMAN

Okay, nobody move. Nobody's gonna fuck with me now. I'm in control here.

He slams the door behind him, trapping them all in the bedroom.

Gary tries to disengage himself from the others.

GARY

(to Stegman)

I have nothing to do with this, this...

STEGMAN

Sit down.

GARY

(blabbering out of fear)

I met her at school, she was my sister's roommate. I didn't know she was a criminal. I mean -- we're not even really married. We're about to get a divorce, we --

STEGMAN

(waving the gun)

Shut up!

Gary shuts up and collapses into a chair, humiliated.

STEGMAN

(continuing;  
addresses Borzel)

They've been against me from the beginning, it was a conspiracy... to rip me off, to make me look bad, to ruin my health. Then they tell me I'm paranoid, but that's just part of the mind fuck, see?

(turns violently  
on Roberta)

But that one there, she started it.

ROBERTA

(amazed)

Me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEGMAN

She sent messages! "Stranger" -- she had me fooled for awhile, but I figured it out...

(breathing heavily)

First she wired my phone, my hotel room, but then she thought of a better way... didn't you?

(he grabs Roberta's arm and twists it painfully)

No wonder I was sick... they were tapping my brain, at night, in my sleep.

Nobody dares make a move. Clearly, Stegman's completely hopelessly unglued.

BORZEL

(to Spy, verifying)

He thinks he's got a wiretap in his brain?

Spy shushes him with a look, then turns to Stegman.

SPY

Listen, Stegman, maybe if you let us give you the stamp then the tapwires would, uh... like disconnect.

He waits to see if this registers with Stegman, but he can't read the madman's reaction. He seems not to object, so Spy moves slowly, carefully to Roberta's jacket which lies on the bed.

He takes an envelope out of the pocket, opens it, and shows the stamp to Stegman.

Stegman glances at it, still without expression. Then he hands it to Borzel.

Roberta and Spy hold their breath as Borzel examines the stamp. Finally, Borzel nods, takes a fat envelope out of his pocket and passes it to Stegman. Everyone breathes again.

Stegman looks briefly into the envelope: it's full of money. He pockets it, grins broadly, then abruptly stops grinning and pushes Roberta toward the door.

STEGMAN

Now -- she has to die.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

(angry)

For crying out loud, Stegman.

STEGMAN

She set me up! She killed Susan!

ROBERTA

Killed her, I never even met her.

STEGMAN

(pulling Roberta, waving  
around the gun)Get down on your knees, all of  
you.

(trembling violently)

Get down!

Gary throws himself on the floor. Borzel looks to the others for a clue. In the silence, Gary's digital ALARM WATCH is heard BEEPING softly. He turns it off at once, but it gives Roberta an idea.

ROBERTA

Wait, what's that sound? Like a  
tape recorder or something.

STEGMAN

(alert, hesitates)

What sound?

SPY

(playing along)

Don't you hear it, man?

ROBERTA

Oh, it's coming from your...

(looks pointedly at  
his heart monitor)... from inside you, how weird...  
what is it?

STEGMAN

(alarmed)

I don't hear anything. What're  
you talking about?

Spy gives Gary a kick on the floor to prompt him.

GARY

(turns the alarm  
back on)Yeah, I hear it, too. It's  
louder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEGMAN

My heart monitor...

He starts unbuttoning his shirt, fumbling with the monitor which is taped to his chest in several places.

ROBERTA

Uh-oh, I think he has a wiretap in his heart monitor. Isn't that dangerous?

SPY

Maybe he's having a heart attack. It's awfully loud.

STEGMAN

Stop! I'm having palpitations!

He's sweating, short of breath, pale. Now he lets go of the gun so he can pull at the monitor with both hands.

Roberta catches the gun before it hits the ground and aims it hard on Stegman. He no longer cares. Gary gets up off the floor.

STEGMAN

(continuing)

I'm having a heart attack!  
Somebody help me -- CPR -- I need CPR!

GARY

You've having an anxiety attack.

Stegman pauses in his frenzy.

STEGMAN

How do you know?

GARY

I used to have them all the time, remember, Roberta?

ROBERTA

I remember.

SPY

(catches her tone)

You remember?

ROBERTA

(nods slowly)

Everything...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Long beat. Stegman is slumped on the floor panting, eyes closed. Borzel picks up the envelope with the money.

BORZEL

Who do I pay?

Spy and Roberta look at each other.

SPY & ROBERTA

Us.

Borzel opens the envelope and counts out the \$250,000. Gary's eyes are popping out of his head.

BORZEL

(apologetic)

I already paid that scum 50 grand...

ROBERTA

(generous)

We'll take what's left.

At that moment the bedroom door flies open. Susan is standing there with Jim behind her.

SUSAN

Gary, I'll be leaving... Steggie?

She looks around the room at the odd grouping of people. She looks from Stegman crouched on the floor, breathing heavily, to Roberta holding the gun.

SUSAN

Roberta?

ROBERTA

(breaks into a  
delighted smile)

Susan!

SUSAN

Hey, what's going on here?

SPY

Uh... nothing. Listen, Susan, I gotta talk to you a minute.

But Roberta quickly steps between them, puts the gun in Spy's hand, gestures towards Stegman.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

You keep an eye on him. I'll talk to her.

Gary looks around, totally confused.

GARY

(heads for the door,  
goes out)

I need a drink.

THE PARTY

GARY

Drinking at the bar. Betty comes over, puts a hand on his shoulder.

GLADYS

pulls Borzel onto the dance floor. He's a hot dancer.

GLADYS

...well, I can drive you home.  
I've never been to Atlantic City,  
but it sounds fascinating...

SPY

fast dancing with Jim in the middle of the room.  
They're loaded, having a great time.

EXT. HOUSE

An ambulance is parked in the driveway. The back doors are open and Stegman is being loaded inside.

Susan and Roberta stand by and watch as the attendant closes the doors and the ambulance drives away.

Susan hooks her arm through Roberta's and the two women stroll down the driveway past a parked taxi.

A cabbie is waiting inside reading a magazine. The METER is still TICKING.

Susan and Roberta walk across the lawn.

ROBERTA

It's funny, I would never have done those things if I hadn't thought I was you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUSAN

(nods)

I wouldn't have done them either.

ROBERTA

What I don't understand is... Are you sure you didn't take a stamp from Stegman?

SUSAN

Of course I'm sure. I didn't take anything.

(long beat)

Except an old postcard with a dragon on it.

A major CYMBAL CRASH from inside the house marks the beginning of an incredibly fast drum solo, which is heard over:

TIGHT ON

The dragon postcard, dragon side up.

Then turned over. The Fortuna stamp smiling in the corner.

Then turned again, dragon side up.

The DRUM SOLO BUILDS, then finally blends into the SOUNDS OF A PARADE as the picture of the dragon float comes to life and we are --

EXT. DRAGON FLOAT PARADE - CHINATOWN - NIGHT

Showers of fireworks, smoke, millions of people swelling the narrow, winding street behind the dragon float.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Overlooking the parade.

Roberta and Spy and Susan and Jim sit at a window table. The postcard with the stamp lies in the middle of the table between them.

ROBERTA

How long will it take to sell it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SPY

Not long. The question is, what're we gonna do with the money?

SUSAN

Split it up, like we said.

SPY

Yeah, but how're we gonna spend it?

ROBERTA

I think we should invest it. We could live off the interest.

SPY

Really? I was thinking of travelling...

(off Roberta's look)

So, I changed my mind. Look, we could all go to Rio, live like kings.

ROBERTA

(reluctantly)

I don't know. I got to figure out what I'm doing.

SPY

If you go to Brazil, then that's what you're doing.

ROBERTA

But I don't speak Portuguese or anything.

SUSAN

I do. I speak fluent Portuguese.

Roberta flashes her a dubious look.

SUSAN

(continuing)

Let's go.

(nudges Jim)

I've been trying to get you out of here for years.

JIM

Yeah, well... not a chance in five Miamis.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ROBERTA

(laughs)

Not a chance in five Miamis.

(to Susan,

challenging her)

How do you say that in Portuguese?

SUSAN

(gives her an arrogant,

"Susan" look)

How do you say "Pass the snake" in Chinese?

ROBERTA

(confused)

"Pass the snake"? What's that mean?

SUSAN

It means, don't try and be Susan when Susan's around.

ROBERTA

(laughs)

In that case, I guess I'll just have to be Roberta.

Jim laughs. Susan winks at Spy, who puts his arm around Roberta.

Roberta, laughing, turns and looks INTO THE CAMERA.

FADE OUT.

THE END