

# "DIABOLIQUE"

a screenplay by

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based on the novel  
"Celle Qui N'Etait Plus"  
by Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac

and the film  
"Les Diaboliques"  
screenplay by Henri-Georges Clouzot  
and Jerome Geronimi

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"DIABOLIQUE"

A black screen. TITLES BEGIN. We hear the SOUND OF RAIN WATER hitting tiles, windows, rattling down through gutters...

FADE IN:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS - NIGHT

1

We start to see an old three-story building, very large and rambling, with arms that form courtyards, and windows that watch other windows across the way. All of these are dark right now -- except one on the third floor, a rectangle of yellow light. Into this appears a boy's head, which stares into the night. WE MOVE IN, not towards this small head, but towards the object of its gaze across the courtyard and the empty pool below...

ANOTHER WINDOW

Dark. Above the general water noise, one sound, soft and rhythmic, gets louder. PLICK, PLICK...

INT. BARAN BEDROOM - NIGHT

2

PLICK. Water is dripping from the ceiling onto the hardwood floor, missing a dressing table by a few inches. On this table is a framed photograph of a young girl in a postulant's habit standing with three older nuns. There's also a wedding photograph of the same young woman and her handsome groom, but this is obscured, perhaps deliberately, by bottles of lotions and a box of tissues. A rosary is draped around the dressing table mirror. WE MOVE TO a prie-dieu -- a kneeler -- against the wall. It's stacked with newspapers and magazines, and a man's jacket is thrown over it. WE MOVE ACROSS the walls towards the bed. They've been badly plastered to repair some damage; and a bathroom door has a splintered door jamb where someone once kicked it in. On a man's bureau there's a bottle of Scotch. Finally we're on the wall above the bed. There's a crucifix with a strip of palm tucked behind it. We MOVE down the wall TO:

THE BED

A woman in a plain cotton nightgown is in bed, awake, watching her sleeping husband beside her. Her name is MIA BARAN; her husband is GUY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Behind her is a nightstand full of pill bottles. She watches his chest rise and fall. Her expression is inscrutable. She's thirty-five, thin, tired. Her husband, five years older, looks harmless sleeping. Who doesn't? Quietly Mia slips from the bed.

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mia pulls a chain and a single bulb lights the dreary bathroom. One door leads back to the bedroom; the other to the hallway. She turns on the bathtub tap and a trickle of water flows into tub. Above it, the wind outside is pushing through the slightly-open window. Mia reaches behind the billowing curtains to close it.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

From outside, across the courtyard, we SEE Mia at the window...

ERIK SCANLON

is the watcher. When he sees Mia inside the bathroom, he reaches up and turns out the light which illuminates him - - but he still stands there, watching. Thirteen, sullen, inarticulate, he has what could pass for a crush on Mia...

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

Mia closes the window, then goes to the medicine chest, opens it. It's full of prescription bottles. She takes out a box of double-edged razor blades. She unwraps one blade, places it carefully on the edge of the sink. She looks at herself in the mirror. Once she had a kind of beauty, but she married out of it. Now her hair is shapeless, and the nightgown she wears is meant simply to cover, not seduce -- anything but seduce. Pale, her large eyes-dark and unblinking, she has the look of a woman who has realized everything good in life is behind her.

She takes the razor blade to the tub, places it on the soapdish. She turns off the water, sits on the edge. She looks down, sees the shabby white bathmat below her. She folds it, moves it out of the way. She closes her eyes, lifts the cotton nightgown over her head, gathers it to cover her chest and lap. We see her back is bruised, and a man's livid handprint mottles her upper arm.

She's breathing more heavily now. She shakes her left arm, as if it's tingling. She picks up the razor blade. She doesn't know if she can do it. She looks at herself in the mirror across the room with the contempt for herself her husband taught her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

6

MIA

Coward!

Suddenly, she stiffens. Her eyes pop; she's having some kind of episode -- panic, heart attack. Grabbing hold of the curtains at the window, she manages to pull herself up, whimpering with pain and fear.

MIA

(hoarsely)

Guy!

The curtains pull away.

ERIK

7

sees Mia's nude upper torso in the window before the curtains give way and she falls backward. He's frozen.

INT. BARAN BEDROOM - NIGHT

8

We HEAR Mia's body falling to the floor. Guy awakens from a nightmare. He sucks in his breath deeply, like he's drowning. From behind the bathroom door:

MIA

Guy! Guy!

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

9

Mia's on the floor, nude, white, gasping for breath. The door leading to the bedroom opens and Guy stands there, naked except for his boxer shorts. He's in his late thirties, handsome, charming occasionally, with a complete lack of shame for his sexual appetites. Many women have found this appealing, for awhile. Mia cranes around to see him, implore him:

MIA

Heart...

But Guy just stands there, a cruel smile on his face, waiting for Mia to die. And Mia, even in her agony, is chilled. Then her eyes roll back and she's still.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

10

Erik is rushing through the dark corridor, not needing any light except that which comes through the transom of the Baran's bathroom. Suddenly, a door opens and he's grabbed from behind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

10

NICOLE

What the hell are you doing here?

NICOLE HORNER is in her early forties, with a sensual quality that her robe and pinned-back hair can't disguise. Even now, at 1 a.m., she looks as if she requires no warming up. Unafraid of man, woman, or God, only Time makes her uneasy.

NICOLE

Answer me!

Erik points to the bathroom door down the hall.

ERIK

The bathroom. There's something wrong. I saw her.

NICOLE

Peeping Tom -- get back to your room!

ERIK

She fell! She's hurt!

NICOLE

You little busybody -- if you're lying again -- stay here!

She moves down the hall. Erik, disobeying, follows at a safe distance. As she passes the door into the Barans' bedroom:

NICOLE

(softly)

Guy?

(louder)

Dr. Baran?

She moves on, heading towards the lit transom of the bathroom/corridor door. This doorjamb here is also damaged. She knocks quickly, then pushes the door open.

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

11

Nicole enters and sees Mia's body on the floor.

NICOLE

My God! Mia!

She starts forward and then stops, sees Guy in the doorway to the bedroom. A look passes between them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

11

GUY

Nicole--

NICOLE

Is she dead?

GUY

I don't know, I didn't check--

NICOLE

Jesus, Guy!

Furious, she sinks to her knees, turns Mia onto her back. As she does so, her own robe is loosened; we glimpse her breasts beneath. She feels for a pulse, pulls Mia's robe over her.

NICOLE

Get me a towel, for God's sake!  
She's alive, you--

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

12

Erik is moving towards the brightly-lit rectangle of the door. He can see Nicole's back as she kneels, glimpses Guy's bare legs moving back and forth, HEARS snatches of dialogue.

NICOLE (O.S.)

Call 911!... She's breathing!...  
Move her head...

Erik moves closer. Now Guy has knelt down, facing Nicole. Now Nicole looks up, sees Erik.

NICOLE

(to Erik)

Go get another teacher!

(she realizes her breasts  
are exposed; clutching  
her robe closed)

Move!

But the lights suddenly go on in the hallway as doors open behind Erik and VOICES begin to be heard. Erik just keeps coming closer...

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

13

Nicole's face is very close to Mia's. Guy can be seen in the doorway leading to the bedroom. He's carrying a phone, talking to 911. Mia's eyes flicker open.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

MIA  
(dully)  
I'm alive.

NICOLE  
No, you fool, you're dead, this  
is heaven, I'm the Blessed  
Virgin.  
(to Guy)  
How long do they say?

Guy just holds up a hand as he listens. Suddenly there are adults in the corridor, two teachers we'll later meet as Kazman and Goss, and some of the older students.

MIA  
(pleading)  
Don't let them see me.

KAZMAN  
What happened?

NICOLE  
Her heart again, that's all.  
Keep the boys away!

As Nicole returns to Mia, and the two teachers begin to handle the assembling crowd of other teachers and students, Erik sees the razor blade on the floor where Mia dropped it. He looks from it to Guy, still talking on the phone, and his expression tells us he knows what Mia wanted to do and why...

GUY'S VOICE  
(TV filter)  
Failure, despair, passivity,  
rebelliousness, defeat. Why?  
Every parent watching this  
presentation wrestles with one  
question. Why does a good boy go  
bad?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY (TV SCREEN)

14

We are seeing a rough cut of a videotaped sales brochure for the Baran School for Boys on a TV screen.

VIDEO IMAGE - AERIAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOL PROPERTY

15

A set of six buildings on a wooded hill; in the distance, the glint of the Pacific. We're ten miles from Crescent City, California, thirty miles south of Oregon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

15

18

GUY'S VOICE

(TV filter)

Well-meaning people may offer dozens of theories; all of them boiling down to blaming you, the parent. You won't find those theories here at the Baran School for Boys...

19

VIDEO IMAGE - THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

16

Ninety years ago when the main building was built, this was the chapter house for an order of nuns that virtually disappeared in the eighties. It was cheaply, clumsily transformed into the offices, dormitories, classrooms, and faculty apartments of the Baran School for Boys seven years ago. Still, many reminders of the building's former tenants remain: stained glass windows, Latin inscriptions over doorways, small alcoves where plaster saints used to stand.

GUY'S VOICE

We believe that for most boys 8 through 13, poor grades, behavior problems, and drug and alcohol abuse are the result of society's failure to enforce the Law of Consequence.

VIDEO IMAGE - STUDENT GROUNDS CREW

17

A crew of students, supervised by Kazman, clears brush. Another crew paints a school building. Another, inside the cafeteria, prepares a meal.

GUY'S VOICE

Here at the Baran School for Boys every action has its consequence. A carefully structured system of demerits and rehabilitory task groups ensures that penalties are exacted for every infraction.

VIDEO IMAGE - CLASSROOM

18

20

Nicole Horner is teaching a class-

GUY'S VOICE

As a result, students begin to have faith in a system that consistently rewards good behavior and punishes bad. In a few months, it's not unusual to see students performing better than they ever did "on the outside".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

18

TITLES END. We PULL BACK to show WE'RE INSIDE:

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - BUCHET'S EDITING ROOM - DAY

19

A unused storage shed on the school property has been turned over to the video filmmakers, PINGEL AND BUCHET, who are shooting the advertising brochure for Guy. They're Pacific Northwest seventies types, only a little stoned. Pingel directs and shoots; Buchet does lights and sound. They squint at the rough cut.

PINGEL

Right here's where we cut in the bloodhounds and the electric fence. Jesus.

BUCHET

Poor little bastards. Aren't you glad you never used drugs?

PINGEL

Aren't you glad you don't have problems with authority? Hand me the 50-millimeter.

BUCHET

Blow me.

(he touches fast forward)

I think we should open with the zero tolerance talk and the room searches... Parents eat that shit up.

Pingel opens the door and looks out.

PINGEL

Man, you gotta be at the end of your rope to wind up here.

Buchet shoulders past him with a tripod and camera.

BUCHET

We're here, dickhead.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY (NICOLE'S POV)

20

Buchet, with Pingel following him, lugs his equipment towards the front steps of the main building. Down the front steps comes GUY BARAN and an attractive woman in her mid-thirties. They talk as they stroll past them to the parking lot. A BELL RINGS.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

21

Nicole is at the window watching Guy, oblivious to the CLAMOR of eighth-grade boys, uniformed, responding to the CLASS BELL.

NICOLE

(her eyes still on Guy)

Front steps in ten minutes for the video shoot. Take your books home over the long weekend -- test on Tuesday!

(as a student approaches; warningly:)

I'll be in a better mood Tuesday.

The student takes the hint, turns, leaves. Nicole turns back to the window, opens it wider, and lights a cigarette. Her hands shake. From behind her:

MIA

(in the doorway)

Don't let Guy catch you.

NICOLE

(indicating the window)

He's occupied. I take it he resisted the impulse to expel the Scanlon kid again. The mother looks grateful.

Mia has come up to Nicole at the window, looks out at the parking lot.

MIA

Relieved is more like it. Why does a woman like that even have children?

NICOLE

Life. You light a cigarette and the bus comes. You're pro-life for a couple of months and you get pregnant.

MIA

Is something wrong with your eyes?

Nicole pulls down her glasses so Mia can see a blackened eye. Mia gasps, concerned.

MIA

Nicole!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

21

NICOLE

Your husband was in one of his moods last night.

MIA

You said you weren't going to see him alone again before--

She has to follow Nicole into:

THE CORRIDOR

22

Boys are shouting, running past on either side of them as they make their way outside.

MIA

It's just that we agreed--

NICOLE

Look, Veatch and his wife had me over for drinks last night and Guy was there. I wouldn't have gone if I'd known he's pimping for the boss now.

MIA

Nicole--

MIA

Anyway, Guy and I left together - he had too much to drink, and...

OUTSIDE NOW

23

heading towards the front steps.

MIA

You shouldn't be seen with him.

NICOLE

They all know, Mia. And it's best if we act normal. Otherwise, it'll look bad after. I only went because the wife takes Tuenols. Look.

She shows Mia something she has in her palm: a pill bottle.

MIA

What if she notices they're gone?

NICOLE

She won't. She had enough in there to relax China.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

23

MIA

(looking past her)

Put them away, for God's sake.  
Leo and Simon.

NICOLE

God.

SIMON VEATCH and LEO KAZMAN approach. Veatch is sixtyish, a fool who prides himself on his discretion. Like most of the staff, he deserves to be here. Kazman is in his early thirties, trivial, vain, and morose. He's often a woman's last blind date, and at parties he's the recipient of many hastily-fabricated phone numbers.

VEATCH

Good morning, ladies. Are we ready for our close-ups?

KAZMAN

I can't wait for this filming to be done. It gets everyone over-excited. And how he thinks we can handle more students without more staff--

VEATCH

(leaning in to Nicole)

Lovely seeing you last night.  
Any time Estelle and I can assist you two star-crossed--

KAZMAN

-- Is something wrong with your eye?

NICOLE

Allergies.

KAZMAN

(brushing smoke away)

I'm not surprised. If you don't quit for yourself, think of us. Secondhand smoke kills too, you know.

NICOLE

(blowing into his face)

Not reliably. Are you coming, Mia?

They leave. The men remain, looking after them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

23

VEATCH

She's bounced back rather well,  
hasn't she? I thought we'd lost  
her Sunday night.

KAZMAN

It's not right, the wife and  
mistress being so chummy.  
Especially when she knows.

(seeing Guy in the  
distance)

It just shows you. Women like  
men who make them suffer. It's a  
good lesson.

VEATCH

Don't be too hard on yourself.  
You make them suffer plenty, I've  
seen their faces.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - MAIN BUILDING - DAY

24

Pingel is arranging the shot, which will be a pan of the  
entire population of the school on the steps of the main  
building. Gradually, the dozen faculty and administration  
staffers and the sixty students take their places. Nearly  
everyone, children and adults alike, looks unhappy or  
likely to make others unhappy. WE PAN ALONG the top row  
of students and FIND

NICOLE

sunglasses on, her eyes trained on something in the  
distance. She speaks roughly, automatically to a student  
who's misbehaving one row below her. Then she turns to  
SEE Mia talking softly to Erik at the foot of the steps.  
Mia gives his head a pat and climbs the steps to join  
Nicole.

NICOLE

You shouldn't single him out,  
Mia. It isn't good for him.

MIA

As if everything else here is.

Mia turns to look at the photographer. Nicole, rebuffed,  
smiles as SHE WATCHES TINA GOSS, a large overly made-up  
woman in her mid-fifties. She's yelling at the her  
students in the lower rows. Someone once told her to look  
15 years younger, dress 30. It hasn't worked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

24

TINA

Get in line, Mr. Salazar, or you'll be on grounds crew for a month, I mean it.

NICOLE

(to Mia)

Look at her. The Ghost of Christmas Future... She told me this morning the secret is to make love to the camera. I can't get that image out of my head.

MIA

Where's Guy?

NICOLE

Coming.

And now Guy, hair slightly touseled, comes briskly from the parking lot. He looks like the Kennedys used to.

PINGEL

Dr. Baran! Top row, please, if that's all right. Ms. Horner, please, your sunglasses.

NICOLE

Thank you, I'll keep them.

Pingel is already moving his camera along a row as Guy moves up to stand beside Nicole. As he passes Tina Goss:

GUY

That's a beautiful color on you, Ms. Goss.

Tina preens under his attention. Guy reaches Nicole, looks at her face, then touches his own cheek. Softly:

GUY

You know, the swelling smooths out the lines. A little.

Nicole turns to him. She puts her upraised middle finger on her front teeth, flipping him the bird.

NICOLE

You've got lipstick here.

Guy smiles, a charming, unembarrassed smile at his inability to resist women.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

24

Pingel and his camera go past them. Slowly Nicole takes down her finger. Pingel emerges from behind his camera.

PINGEL

Let's do that again. Hands at your sides, everyone.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

25

The pool glistens; light from the stained-glass windows of the dining hall shines on it.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - DINING HALL - NIGHT

26

Formerly the convent chapel, the space is now outfitted with three long tables, each containing 20 students, which face three round tables for the staff set up on the former altar. Behind these tables are vaulted ceilings and stained-glass windows. There's a service window cut into the wall to connect to a kitchen. Here students line up cafeteria-style for plates of chicken a la king -- standard, unappetizing institutional food. We FIND ERIK in the line. His attention is on Mia, not on his food or his classmates. We look with him and SEE:

Mia, Nicole, Guy, Simon Veatch, Leo Kazman, and Tina Goss are being served their meals at the main table by white-coated HOPKINS, a member of the kitchen staff. Pingel and Buchet are also here as Guy's guests.

PINGEL

We're going to cut in a talking head of you -- consequences, a system kids can believe in, blah, blah, blah -- then a few talks with some of the kids, you know, I once was lost and now I'm found, that kind of Boys Town stuff--

VEATCH

Success stories are our specialty here. In my class, for example, there's an extraordinary--

BUCHET

(looking over his shot list)

-- And we've got to get some pool footage when it's cleaned -- can that happen this weekend?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

GUY

I'm a poor man, guys. Much as I'd like to, I can't afford to maintain a pool till summer just for show.

BUCHET

It's just, you know, kids frolicking, all work and no play, Northern California fresh air--

(off Guy's look)

All right, skip it, but we want to shoot the kitchen work crew...

He stops as Hopkins places a plate of food in front of him. He looks at it a beat, then looks at Pingel's equally unappetizing plate. Nicole looks at hers, then quietly puts her napkin on the table.

NICOLE

Take a number. Here you are, Hopkins, I'm not hungry.

Veatch sees Guy's frown; he looks gamely at his plate.

VEATCH

Our chef's skills aren't in presentation. I'm sure it tastes better than it looks.

KAZMAN

(under his breath)

It would have to.

Tina Goss eats with gusto.

TINA

Peas mushy. Pepper?

Mia stares at her plate. Reproachfully:

MIA

Guy... you promised. This is the third night in a row.

GUY

It's a sin to waste. Aren't you the expert on sin?

MIA

They can't eat this again. Look, no one's eating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

Guy surveys the students. Most of the students are eating, though without enthusiasm. The ones who aren't begin eating under Guy's gaze -- except Erik, who stares him back and pushes his plate away, refusing to eat.

GUY  
You're encouraging them. They see you balking and they follow suit. Use your great moral force on my behalf. Eat. It's perfectly edible. See?

Mia, revolted, watches Guy smile and eat.

MIA  
I can't--

GUY  
Pick up your fork.

Kazman and Veatch manfully begin eating. Pingel and Buchet do, too. Tina's eating with energy, oblivious. Nicole watches her with amused disgust. Mia takes a forkful of the whitish mixture, hesitates, then puts it in her mouth.

GUY  
(still smiling  
pleasantly)  
That didn't kill you. Go on,  
swallow.

Instead, Mia brings her napkin up to her mouth. She looks panicky.

GUY  
Swallow it.

Erik and some of the other students closest to the front have noticed something going on at the headmaster's table. So have the two other faculty tables. Everyone watches, trying not to.

NICOLE  
For God's sake, Guy.

GUY  
I said swallow. For once in your life.

Sweating, Veatch lifts his plate towards Mia's, intending to take some food off hers.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

VEATCH

As a matter of fact, I'm rather hungry myself, my dear, so if you're not going to finish yours...

He shuts up when Guy shoots him a look.

GUY

Mr. Kazman, would you tell the table proctors no student will be allowed to leave this room until every plate is clean.

Kazman nods, goes down to the heads of the student tables and whispers to the head boys.

GUY

A child bride, gentlemen, that's what I married. And each year she grows younger. She's worse than the boys she teaches.  
(quietly)

Swallow.

Tearfully, shame-faced, Mia manages to swallow. She drinks some water. She waits for a word of approval from Guy.

GUY

Again.

Nicole reaches over with a salt shaker.

NICOLE

This will help.

She has loosened the top of the shaker, and when she shakes it, salt falls onto the food in a heap. Clearly now no one could eat it.

NICOLE

Sorry. Hopkins! Clear this away.

MIA

Excuse me.

Humiliated, she gets up, goes past the long tables of students, exits. Erik watches her.

NICOLE

(to Pingel and Buchet)  
Wouldn't that have been fun on film? Bet you're kicking yourselves.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

26

GUY

Would you excuse me?

He leaves. Chummily Veatch leans in to Nicole.

VEATCH

I'm sure Ms. Horner will keep something hot for you.

Nicole turns and gives him a look which wipes the smile from his face...

INT. MIA'S CLASSROOM - NIGHT

27

Mia is sitting in a student's desk, her eyes closed. There are no lights on; she's hiding here, her refuge. Suddenly Guy's shadow falls over her. She stiffens. But he's in a softer mood, paternal.

GUY

Why do you make me do that to you, Mia?

(he turns her towards him gently)

Why?

MIA

You don't have to do it. You like to. Especially in front of others.

GUY

Only when you misbehave. Like that stunt you pulled Sunday night.

(he's smoothing her hair from her brow)

You do it to get my goat. Admit it. I know you.

Already, we can see Mia softening. This is the man she married. Teasing, affectionate -- the bad boy the nice girl couldn't resist.

MIA

No you don't.

GUY

I'm the only one who does. I knew you'd be here, didn't I?

MIA

I just... why are you always cutting corners with the boys? Where did all my money go?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

27

GUY

(patiently)

It was only yours because I sued the diocese to get it back. And who's the one who insisted on plowing it into this lost cause?

MIA

Even so... with what you charge these parents...

(indicating the room)

Look at this. We don't have half of what they need.

GUY

(smiling, he starts massaging her neck)

Do we have to have this fight again? You get to sound nice and compassionate, and I'm the guy who kicks puppies. Why can't you be the heavy for once?

MIA

Stop that.

GUY

(teasing her)

Look at that face. Am I going to get my knuckles rapped? You would've made a very good nun.

(his hands touch her breasts)

Except you like this too much...

MIA

Stop it. Guy -- listen! They're done with dinner--

And we can HEAR the boys in the hall, running right past the unlocked door of Mia's classroom. It only excites Guy more. He eases her onto the floor. She doesn't put up much of a fight.

MIA

What if someone comes in?

GUY

That's what demerits are for.

She half-struggles, half-submits to him, and we...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA & GUY'S BEDROOM - DAY

28

Early morning. Mia is moving around the room, packing a small suitcase. In it we see an array of pill bottles. She's ready to go. She looks at Guy asleep in the bed. Stares down at him a second. He looks innocent. She weakens for a second, then leaves the room with her suitcase...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - MAIN BUILDING - DAY

29

Mia waits on the porch for something that doesn't arrive. Grateful, she's about to turn back when Nicole's sedan comes up.

NICOLE

(not bothering to lower  
her voice)

It wouldn't start.

MIA

(whispering)

I thought you weren't coming.

NICOLE

Get in, get in. Did he hear you?

SOMEONE'S POV

30

Mia gets in. The sedan pulls away. Now we see it's...

ERIK

whose eyes we've been watching through. He stands at the window in his dorm room, staring at the sedan as it winds down the road to Highway 101.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - DINING HALL - DAY

31

A loud breakfast -- students are preparing to leave for the long weekend. Erik is eating alone. Kazman enters, calls from the door:

KAZMAN

DeSantis, Nunez, Stein, and  
Folsom -- your parents are here.  
Everyone else, the bus to town  
leaves in 15 minutes, have your  
parent notes and passes ready.

Guy enters.

GUY

Morning, Kazman. Have you seen  
Mrs. Baran?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

31

KAZMAN

No.

(to his students)

Has anyone seen Mrs. Baran?

The students shake their heads. Guy spots Erik.

GUY

Erik?

ERIK

No, sir.

Guy passes on. Erik smiles to himself...

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - AERIAL SHOT - DAY

32

Nicole's sedan heads south...

INT. NICOLE'S SEDAN - DAY (MOVING)

33

Nicole is driving; Mia's watching her. Nicole notices.

NICOLE

What?

MIA

When you found me Sunday... were you glad when I came to?

NICOLE

Why not?

MIA

Because if I'd died, you'd have had Guy all to yourself.

NICOLE

Yeah. Lucky me.

(a moment)

Not Sunday. But months ago.

When he told me your heart was bad... I used to imagine...

MIA

You don't sugar the pill, do you?

NICOLE

Don't ask if you don't want to hear. We can't do this if we start lying to each other.

Mia nods, turns back to look out her window.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO SKYLINE - DAY

34

Late afternoon. The sedan crosses the Richmond - San Rafael bridge. San Francisco is visible to the south.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - OAKLAND - DAY (DUSK)

35

A grimy street, full of one-story bungalow duplexes not yet gentrified. Nicole's sedan pulls up in front of one of the duplexes. A window is lit in the occupied half of the house; a hand pulls back the curtain. Nicole looks at it sourly.

NICOLE

Busybodies.

MIA

They'll see--

NICOLE

-- what we want them to see.  
They're our alibi. Come on. You  
take my bedroom, it's by the  
bathroom.

Nicole gives Mia the keys, indicates the door to her half of the duplex. She crosses to the matching porch, knocks on her tenants' door.

NICOLE

Stay till she sees you.

The door opens and EDIE DANZIGER appears. She's in her sixties with an air of overdone graciousness, especially when talking to her landlady. A small dog YAPS inside.

EDIE

Nicole, what a surprise!  
(to someone inside)  
Irving, it's Nicole!  
(to Nicole)  
Miss Horner, I should say, now  
that you're the landlady! I  
think of your poor mother every  
day!  
(apparently to the dog)  
Bijou!  
(to Nicole)  
Come in, come in.

NICOLE

Thank you, Mrs. Danziger, I can't  
stay. I'm just here for the  
weekend. This is my principal,  
Mrs. Baran.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

35

MIA

Hello.

EDIE

Oh dear, how nice. Welcome to Oakland and the entire Bay Area, Mrs. Baran. Can you manage those?

(to someone inside)

Irving!

MIA

It's fine, thank you. Nice meeting you.

Mia enters Nicole's side of the house.

INT. NICOLE'S OAKLAND DUPLEX - DAY (DUSK)

36

As Mia enters, we see it's a small house, meanly furnished. Obviously Nicole hasn't changed anything since her parents died. Mia finds the first, smaller bedroom and leaves Nicole's bag inside. She finds the larger bedroom, puts her suitcase on the bed. Outside in the hallway, she sees another door. She goes to it unwillingly. She opens it, flicks on the light.

THE BATHROOM

37

Old linoleum, a sink, a toilet, a large tub with a douchebag hanging over the shower rod. The shower curtain is notable: it's semi-opaque plastic with brightly colored fish and seaweed stencilled on it. Mia turns off the light, stands looking down at the tub. The small window makes this room very dark, gloomy. Mia shivers, leaves.

EXT. - NICOLE'S OAKLAND DUPLEX - DAY (DUSK)

38

Nicole and Edie on Edie's front porch. It's evidently been an unpleasant conversation for Edie.

EDIE

-- it must be the post office, then. Half of them down there aren't even American anymore. I'll send another check tomorrow.

NICOLE

I'll drop by for it.  
(crossing to her side)  
Tomorrow night, say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

38

EDIE

Bring your houseguest if you like.

NICOLE

She'll be busy.

EDIE

(trying to be nice)

You look more like your mother every day. From behind you can really see it.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - HALL/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

39

Nicole closes and locks the door behind her. She hears a voice.

NICOLE

Mia?

Nicole traces Mia to THE LIVING ROOM, where she's on the phone.

MIA

How soon? Yes. Thank you.

She hangs up.

NICOLE

Who was that?

MIA

I'm taking a cab to the bus station. I'm not going to do this, Nicole.

Nicole stares at her for a moment, then goes to the phone. She presses one of her speed buttons. We think it's "Redial".

MIA

If you cancel it, I'll walk there, I swear.

Someone picks up at the other end. Nicole hands it to Mia. Mia looks resigned.

MIA

All right, I'll walk.  
(she takes the phone)  
Hello?

And through the receiver, WE HEAR GUY'S VOICE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

39

MIA

Guy!

She turns to Nicole, terrified. Nicole wordlessly hands her a piece of paper. Mia takes the paper. It shakes as she reads from it.

MIA

(into phone)

Don't yell at me. I'm in San Francisco -- Oakland, with Nicole. I know, well, it was last-minute. I've been to see a lawyer and he tells me a divorce would be very simple. I could even keep the school.

(listening)

I don't want to talk about it. Guy -- Fine. We're at Nicole's house--

(to Nicole)

What's the address -- Oh. Fine. Tomorrow night is best, we'll be out tomorrow. After eight. Okay. Goodbye.

She hangs up.

NICOLE

Now that's behind you. We've got the rest of the night to ourselves.

(she goes to the phone)

I should take him off speed-dial, shouldn't I?

MIA

He knows the address.

NICOLE

Don't tell me you're surprised.

A CAR HORN BEEPS outside.

NICOLE

Your cab. I'll send it away. Hungry?

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

40

Lit only by the flickering TV screen, Nicole and Mia eat takeout out of styrofoam. Nicole watches TV -- but Mia seems suddenly transfixed by the coffee table: a large wicker trunk...

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

41

From her doorway Mia watches Nicole go into the bathroom. She hears the water being turned on; evidently the pipes run through the wall behind the headboard. Mia looks around the room. Her suitcase is still unpacked. She goes to the closet, opens the door. She finds a man's jacket, takes it out. She smells it. From her expression we know it's one of Guy's...

MIA'S VOICE

(filtered)

When we're grown up, we know, we know happiness isn't automatic. But our childhood, well, that must have been happy...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS - MIA - DAY (TV SCREEN)

42

Mia is being interviewed on the grounds of the school. She talks to an unseen interviewer.

MIA

(onscreen)

At least that's how we remember ours as we grow older. It gets romanticized. Every day was summer...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - BUCHET'S EDITING ROOM - DAY

43

Noon. Buchet and Pingel are looking at the TV monitor. One or both are stoned, or maybe this is how they look straight.

MIA

(on the monitor)

And we were safe, protected from everything bad. Compared to now, when we know what life can be like.

Behind them, outside, Erik watches through a window. Then he HEARS A CAR DOOR SLAM, and he's off.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY

44

A woman, LISA CAMPOS, 28, sits on the hood of her car. She picks at her fingernail polish till Guy comes out onto the drive. He throws an overnight bag into his car. She's angry, annoyed. She stalks off down the grounds; Guy follows.

Erik, hidden behind a tree, watches them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

44

MIA'S VOICE

But if we know more now, we also  
have more defenses. Children  
have nothing, really.  
Everything's unknown, unsafe.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

45

Erik watches as Guy has sex with Lisa. Guy's standing,  
his trousers down around his ankles; Lisa's blouse is  
pulled up to expose her breasts as she leans back against  
a tree. Erik tears himself away, runs up towards the main  
building.

MIA'S VOICE

A lot of the difficult boys are  
covering up their fears. There's  
a lot of acting tough.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - THIRD FLOOR - DAY

46

Erik quietly walks down the deserted corridor to Guy and  
Mia's room.

MIA'S VOICE

...breaking rules... rebelling  
for the sake of rebelling.

INT. BARAN BEDROOM - DAY

47

Erik rifles through Mia's chest of drawers, touching her  
things.

MIA'S VOICE

... a lot of it's just a plea for  
attention, for someone to notice  
them...

INT. BARAN BATHROOM - DAY

48

The door opens and Erik enters. He notices the curtains  
have been tacked back up. He sees the tub. He gets in,  
lies down. He studies his wrists, makes practice cuts,  
then crosses his arms over his chest and closes his eyes.

MIA'S VOICE

... I don't really believe in bad  
kids. We've never really had one  
here...

He starts up when he HEARS TWO CARS STARTING UP. At the  
window, he sees Lisa drive off first; then Guy has a word  
with GANNON, the sixtyish gardener/janitor; hands him a  
little money; then he drives off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

48

MIA'S VOICE  
Just confused or scared or  
lonely. Sometimes angry.

INT. BUCHET'S EDITING ROOM - DAY

49

The two filmmakers stare at Mia's image.

MIA'S VOICE  
Like their parents, probably.  
Like all of us.

Buchet freezes the image.

BUCHET  
Christ, what a downer. What the  
fuck is her deal?

PINGEL  
Only one thing worse than a nun.  
An ex-nun. Look at her. Like  
Audrey Hepburn on Thorazine.

BUCHET  
Her whole thing's a swipe at the  
parents. You fucked up  
yourselves and you fucked up your  
kids. Just don't fuck up your  
tuition checks.

PINGEL  
(fiddling with a remote)  
I say we leave some of it in. It  
gives it heart. The female  
touch... Lay down lots of  
strings, dissolve to a kid  
smiling or something -- like  
right here. Speak of the devil.

ON THE MONITOR, Mia is officiating at a foot race. She  
raises a starter's pistol, fires. The boys begin running.  
Mia is smiling. Nicole joins her, puts an arm around her,  
talks in her ear as they watch the boys race. The picture  
FREEZES...

PINGEL  
Nice. We beat the shit out of  
them, but we care.

NICOLE'S VOICE  
(from next scene)  
Use the hammer.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

50

Mia is on the bed, panic-stricken, frozen. The bottle of Tuenols and a hammer is on the bed next to her.

MIA

I can't do this.

NICOLE

Oh, for God's sake. Here.

Nicole crosses to her, takes the hammer and the Tuenols over to her vanity. She dumps the pills into a Ziploc bag, seals it, then taps the pills with the hammer, crushing them. She talks to Mia in the mirror.

NICOLE

You're like a kid, everything's got to be done for you. Where's the booze?

Nicole finds the whiskey on the vanity, unscrews the cap, pours some into an empty coffee cup.

NICOLE

It'll look more natural if there's some missing.

She takes a swallow, holds it up for Mia.

MIA

No, thank you.

Nicole shrugs, downs the rest of the cup. Then she cuts a corner of the plastic bag and taps the powdered Tuenols into the whiskey bottle. She recaps it, shakes it to dissolve the drug.

NICOLE

It'll be quick, I promise. One good drink should do it.

(she eyes Mia)

Look at you. You're going to scare him away.

MIA

I can't do it, Nicole. We don't have to. I'll leave him, I'll get away.

Nicole stands up, eases Mia into the vanity seat she vacated. She rummages around the cosmetics, begins applying them to Mia's face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

50

NICOLE

He's not going to let you alone.  
Has he left me alone?

MIA

(more to herself)

I don't care about the school, he  
can keep it or sell it, whatever  
he wants.

NICOLE

(still untroubled)

What about the boys? If the  
school closes, where will the  
future Lee Harvey Oswalds come  
from?

MIA

If I give him everything, he'll  
let me go.

Nicole begins brushing Mia's hair.

NICOLE

But will you let him go? He can  
still make it fun. He does for  
me--

(indicating her eye)

-- even with this. How many men  
have made it fun for you?

MIA

I don't love him. You don't love  
people who treat you this way.

NICOLE

So every time you've had sex it's  
been rape? It was rape the night  
before we left?

MIA

Yes! Do you think I want him  
touching me?

NICOLE

I told you we couldn't lie to  
each other, Mia. You never give  
in? You never get wet?

MIA

(disgusted)

That doesn't mean anything.

HEI

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

52

NICOLE (CONT'D)

(off Mia's silence)

Give him ten minutes. If you feel anything -- do you know what I'm saying? -- then that's your answer. If you want to fuck him, you've got to kill him.

MIA

I won't. I know I won't.

Nicole studies her, then wipes off some lipstick in the corner of Mia's mouth. She leans in and, eyes open, kisses Mia.

NICOLE

Courage.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - DANZIGERS' FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

53

The door opens on Nicole.

EDIE

Nicole! Come in. Are you sure your principal can't join us?

NICOLE

She has a headache. Thank you.

Nicole looks around her and sees nothing. She slips inside.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

54

Mia hears the kitchen door opening.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN - NIGHT

55

Guy has let himself in. He's struggling out of his wet coat. He's obviously had a few for the road.

MIA

Guy.

GUY

(tossing the coat to her)  
Here. Christ, what a night. Are you two trying to make me look ridiculous?

MIA

Why, does anyone know you're here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

55

GUY

Yeah, I had those idiots tape me jumping into my car and chasing after my wife. Where's Nicole?

MIA

Next door. Do you want something hot to drink?

GUY

She put you up to this, didn't she?

(at the liquor cabinet)

Look at this. What the hell does she spend her money on?

MIA

There's a bottle in the bedroom.

He goes down the hallway. As he brushes past Mia, she flinches, afraid he'll hit her.

GUY

Bring me some ice.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

56

Guy is plugging in an electric heater when Mia arrives at the door, holding a glass of ice.

GUY

Always saving on the heat...

(gesturing for the glass)

Get yourself one--

MIA

(cold feet)

I want you sober when you hear this, Guy. I'm serious, you know I'm serious.

GUY

Ooooh, Mia's serious. Come on, give me the goddamned ice. It's for your own good.

(raising the bottle)

I'll be a lot easier to handle with some of this in me. Right?

MIA

Right.

Mia hands him the glass and watches as he pours himself a drink. He swirls it around a little, squints at it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

56

MIA  
(nervously)

What?

GUY  
It's a little cloudy. Whatever.  
(he smiles at her)  
L'chaim.

He takes the drink. Mia watches him breathlessly. He lowers his glass, catches her.

GUY  
You want to talk or you want to stare at me all night?

MIA  
(pulling herself together)  
Oh. Well, it's like I said last night. The lawyer says I can get a divorce and keep the school. He says the money was mine before I married you, it's not community property--

GUY  
You put me on the title. You need me to sign a quit claim deed. He didn't mention that?

He's drained the drink. He reaches for the bottle -- and miscalculates, almost knocking it over.

MIA  
(noticing)  
Are you all right? You want to sit down?

GUY  
I'm fine, I knocked the bottle, big fucking deal. What are you so jumpy for?

MIA  
Nothing. I just... you said it was a long drive.

Guy pours himself another drink, shakes his head a little.

GUY  
What were we -- oh yeah, the title. You forget I'm on the title.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

56

MIA

I... I could buy you out -- I  
could get a loan.

GUY

You give me a quit claim deed and  
I'll give you a divorce.

(smiling)

Frankly, I didn't have to get  
married to have lousy sex.

MIA

No, I did.

Guy looks at her; it takes him a moment to figure out he's  
been insulted. He's amused; he takes another drink.

GUY

Funny. See, Nicole's definitely  
a bad influence on you.

(plaintively)

Why don't you have a drink with  
me? You don't like me, do you?

MIA

I just don't want a drink.

GUY

I like you, Mia. You're like my  
little dog. I kick you and then  
you lick my hand.

(he laughs)

Sometimes my hand.

He approaches her; Mia backs herself against the wall.  
Close to her, he looks at her breasts, then puts his hand  
on her hip, smoothing out her dress.

MIA

I'm not your little dog.

GUY

Your hair's different. And your  
face...

(he laughs)

Come here.

He reaches out and touches her hair. She pulls away, but  
he continues.

GUY

It's okay. Close your eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

56

She does so; he fingers her lids, the makeup there. He seems now very drunk, amorous.

GUY

Isn't that nice? See? You don't want to split up.

MIA

(pulling away)

It's never going to be good, for either of us. We should both let go.

Guy grabs her tighter.

GUY

But you don't want to let go.

MIA

Stop it!

She wrenches herself away from him.

GUY

God damn it!

He reaches after her, knocking over a lamp...

INT. DANZIGER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

57

Nicole, IRV DANZIGER, and Edie are watching a talk show; Nicole's holding a baby glass of Mateus. Bijou, the small yapping dog, stares at her. Nicole, when she can be troubled, returns a look of contempt.

EDIE

But they promised it would be processed by Tuesday, so I can mail you a check then--

They hear Mia's YELP from next door. Bijou YAPS.

IRV

What was that?

NICOLE

Something on TV.

EDIE

Good Bijou. That's her alarm bark, see, it's very close to her stranger bark, but higher.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

37

EDIE (CONT'D)

(at more NOISE from next door)

It's not good for a headache,  
that kind of noise.

NICOLE

Can we turn this up a little?

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

58

Mia struggles, tries to pull away from Guy. He pursues her, grabs her from behind, and moves his hands up from her waist to cup her breasts.

GUY

Don't you run from me! When's  
she coming back?

MIA

(struggling)

No, Guy!

GUY

Come on, Mia. Come on.  
(pushing himself against  
her)

Feel that?

Even though we're ON MIA'S FACE, we know he's caressing her nipples.

GUY

Yeah, you do, don't you? What'd  
you do for feelings before I came  
along? And you know it. You  
play all hurt and angry but you  
always let me back in. You can't  
help yourself. You're just  
weak...

He's right. ON MIA, as she makes her decision. Her face hardens.

MIA

Okay, Guy, okay. But have  
another drink first.

He stumbles, sits down on the bed.

GUY

Whoa. You shouldn't make me mad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

58

MIA

It won't happen again.  
(handing him the drink)  
Go on. You deserve it.

He takes the drink from her -- and drops it on the floor. The glass shatters. A moment as Guy looks at it, his brow furrowed. Suddenly, we can see him freeze. A moment, then he looks up at Mia.

GUY

(thickly)  
What are you doing to me?

MIA

Nothing, Guy. Just go to sleep.

GUY

No!

He lunges up, tries to stand, knocks against some furniture. Mia screams with fright.

INT. DANZIGER LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

59

Eddie jumps, hearing THE NOISE FROM NEXT DOOR. She grabs the remote, MUTES HER TV.

EDIE

Listen!

A moment as they listen to the struggle from next door. Edie turns to her remote, turns on the sound, flips channels until "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" comes on. Edie nods: mystery solved.

EDIE

Saw it. She never got that weight off again.

She flips back to the talk show. Nicole is hardly listening to her...

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

60

Guy is lurching towards Mia, who's terrified.

GUY

You bitch! You bitch! You're trying to kill me!

Mia can't say anything; she kneads her chest in pain. Behind her is the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

60

GUY

Give me the phone. Call someone.  
Mia!

Mia is weakening. She's about to call when suddenly, through the wall, Mia and Guy HEAR WATER GUSHING through the pipes. They're both startled.

GUY

What's that?

MIA

Say you're sorry, Guy, please...  
Before God, say you're sorry.

One final lunge and Guy is on her, bringing her to the floor. She's pinned beneath him; he's staring down into her eyes. His mouth is open; he's gasping for breath. Then his eyes roll back, and a string of saliva drips from his open mouth onto Mia's face. She shudders, turns aside, as he falls on her and rolls off onto the floor. He is still.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - NIGHT

61

Nicole is filling the tub. She looks up to see Mia in the doorway.

MIA

I didn't hear you come in.

NICOLE

How is he?

MIA

It wasn't quick like you said.

NICOLE

Or quiet. But he's asleep?  
(off Mia's nod)  
Well, it's attempted murder now,  
if he wakes up. We have no  
choice. Come on.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

62

Guy is passed out on the floor. Nicole comes in and looks at him, apparently without remorse.

NICOLE

Get his wallet. It's fine if  
your fingerprints are on that.  
Go on.

Mia gets out his wallet. Guy MOANS, twitches restlessly. Both women freeze until he's quiet again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

62

NICOLE

Any gas station receipts?

MIA

No. Nothing.

NICOLE

Put it back.

She's looking into Guy's face. She slaps it. He's out cold.

NICOLE

I'll put his shoes on now. If we don't his feet will swell and we'll never get them on. Turn on the TV in case there's more noise.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - HALLWAY - NIGHT

63

The TV is ON in the living room; we can see Jane Whitney's talk show. In the f.g. is the large wicker trunk. In the b.g. Nicole and Mia are dragging Guy into the bathroom.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - NIGHT

64

The tub is full. Together Mia and Nicole drag Guy into the bathtub. As they do, they bang his head against the wall, and the pain brings him back to consciousness.

Panicking, he starts thrashing furiously, fighting for his life. He claws at Mia.

NICOLE

Don't let him mark you!

Guy begins screaming, piteous noises that echo in the tiled bathroom. Nicole scrambles to the radio, switches it on. It's Whitney Houston's cover of "And I Will Always Love You", and Nicole turns up the volume to drown out the sounds of the struggle. Mia is knocked against the wall, half-falls into the bathtub...

INT. DANZIGER DUPLEX - NIGHT

65

Eddie in her bathroom, brushing her teeth, mouthing the occasional, approximate lyric to the song that bleeds through the wall she shares with Nicole.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - NIGHT

66

With adrenalin fueling his movements, Guy has managed to stand, as Nicole and Mia, both wet now from the bathwater, try to force him into the tub.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

66

GUY

No, no, no, no...

Finally, Nicole manages to topple him into the tub.

NICOLE

Push his head!

Mia can't, so Nicole forces Guy's head under the water. He struggles to break the surface. Once or twice he does, his eyes bulging, his mouth open in a strangled scream.

NICOLE

Get something heavy to hold him down! The water bottle!

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN - NIGHT

67

There's a dusty capped Arrowhead water bottle on the floor. Mia struggles with it, rolls it down the hallway. The SOUNDS FROM THE BATHROOM are less violent. The MUSIC is turned OFF.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - NIGHT

68

In the tub, Guy's body is still. Nicole is drenched, her chest heaving. Mia enters with the bottle.

MIA

Is it over?

NICOLE

Don't let him up.

Mia takes over from Nicole, holding Guy's body underwater, trying to avoid seeing Guy's open, unseeing eyes. Nicole hoists the bottle onto Guy's chest. It weighs him down. Mia, suddenly remorseful, starts to struggle with Nicole, wanting to save him. Nicole turns on her, pushing her harshly away. The body stays underwater.

NICOLE

It's over. He's dead! Go into the other room.

Mia backs away, but she can't leave. Nicole rips down the plastic shower curtain overhead. She places it over the submerged body.

NICOLE

That's done. Come on.

Mia is still staring at the bathtub. Her hand goes to heart. Nicole watches her, puts her hand on her arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

68

NICOLE

You all right?

Mia nods. Nicole turns off the light. Locks the door.  
Puts the key in her pocket.

NICOLE

Bed.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN - NIGHT

69

The door underneath the sink is open. Nicole empties the bottle of liquor down the drain, washes it over and over again, then tosses it into the waste basket under the sink and closes the door. She wipes down the kitchen for fingerprints, then puts hers back over all the surfaces.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - NIGHT

70

Mia's in bed, wide awake. Nicole, at the door:

NICOLE

Don't blame yourself.

Mia looks at her.

NICOLE

I mean, for wanting him. I was the same.

MIA

Good night.

Nicole closes the door. WE SEE a chip of the glass Guy dropped under the bed; it was overlooked in the clean-up. Mia listens:

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - NIGHT

71

In the moonlight coming through the frosted glass we can see water dripping from the spout onto the stretched plastic of the shower curtain.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - DAY

72

Mia is asleep, tortured. She's awakened by a SUCKING SOUND -- the water draining out of the tub.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - DAY

73

Mia enters; Nicole's draining the water out of the tub. The plastic shower curtain is still covering the body.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

73

MIA  
I dreamed he was alive.

NICOLE  
See for yourself.

She pulls down the shower curtain, exposing his head.

MIA'S POV - GUY'S BODY

Horrible. His eyes are open, milky-white. The large Arrowhead bottle rests on the chest. One hand is on it.

BACK TO MIA

MIA  
He tried to move, he was alive!

NICOLE  
Get the trunk. Go on!

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - DAY

74

Hoisting the body into the trunk is a job; Mia and Nicole are drenched in seconds. The body seems too big to fit in, but finally, the lid closes. Nicole fastens the wicker hasp.

NICOLE  
God, I need to pee.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - DRIVEWAY - DAY

75

Later. Mia is putting the suitcases into the sedan. Nicole bumps the wicker trunk out the front door.

NICOLE  
Mia!

Suddenly Edie and Irv open their front door.

EDIE  
Nicole! Let Irv help.  
(to her husband)  
Go on, look at them, it's too heavy. Mrs. Baran, this is Irv!

Irv comes across the lawn to help Mia and Nicole. Edie follows to kibitz -- and Bijou, the small terrier, comes last.

IRV  
Allow me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

75

NICOLE

No, Mrs. Danziger, we're fine.

EDIE

He's good at this kind of thing.

Bend your knees.

Bijou has come over, starts sniffing the trunk. Nicole's aware of her, but can't do a thing about it.

IRV

What've you got in here?

Bijou begins BARKING.

NICOLE

Oh, books, books. They're a ton.  
I'm giving them to the school  
library.

(regarding Bijou)

Ah, her stranger bark. This is  
Mrs. Baran, Bijou.

EDIE

But -- what books? I didn't --  
careful!

The wicker trunk hasp snaps and the lid opens slightly.  
We can see the plastic shower curtain before Nicole shuts  
it. Bijou's really BARKING now.

IRV

This thing's too cheap. You need  
smaller boxes. Easier to handle.  
I've got some inside. Edie!

EDIE

I'll get them. Bijou!

Mia stands by, paralyzed.

NICOLE

No, no, please. This is fine.  
The janitor at the school will  
help us unload.

Mia comes to life; she pulls up the coat hanger that  
serves as Nicole's antenna.

MIA

Here. Wrap this around it.  
Thank you, we'll be fine.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

75

She quickly, nervously fastens the wicker lid with the piece of wire. Then Irv and Nicole push the wicker trunk into the backseat of the car.

IRV

One, two, three. There we go.

MIA

Oh, thank you. Nice meeting you.  
Nice dog. Bye bye.

EDIE

I've got a coffee cake for the  
trip back!

Nicole and Mia get INSIDE THE SEDAN.

NICOLE

(calling out)

No, no, we're fine. Thank you!

(to Mia)

You can think on your feet.

MIA

Let's just go.

Nicole puts the sedan in gear, drives off.

IN THE DRIVEWAY, Irv and Edie watch them go.

IRV

Nice shape on the principal.  
That Nicole's always been a cold  
fish.

But Edie is looking at the ground. It's wet where the wicker trunk used to be. She turns on the dog.

EDIE

Bijou, bad!

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - DAY

76

The tub, empty. The full bottle of Arrowhead water by the toilet.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LIVING ROOM - DAY

77

The remote, the magazines, and the ashtray which used to lie on the wicker trunk are on the carpet, which bears the faint outline of the missing wicker trunk...

EXT. OAKLAND STREET BEHIND THE DUPLEX - DAY

78

The switch: Nicole's sedan is parked next to Guy's Grand Cherokee. Nicole and Mia push the wicker trunk into the back of the Cherokee, close the door. Nicole looks at Mia, who's weak.

NICOLE

(handing her the keys,  
pulling on gloves)

Take mine. I'll drive his.

MIA

Let's stay together.

Nicole nods, gets into the Cherokee. The two cars pull out.

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - DAY (AERIAL SHOT)

79

Mia drives north in Nicole's sedan. We can see Guy's Cherokee in front.

INT. SEDAN - (MOVING) - DAY

80

Mia, driving, has her eyes fixed on:

MIA'S POV - CHEROKEE - (MOVING)

81

The wicker trunk is just visible in the back...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - DAY

82

Late afternoon. Mia and Nicole, in caravan.

INT. SEDAN - (MOVING) - DAY

83

For some reason, Nicole is driving fast. Unreasonably so, because Mia can't keep up with her. Finally, Mia loses her.

MIA

Jesus.

But she can't risk driving any faster; it's starting to rain. She eases up on the gas.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SEDAN - (MOVING) - DUSK

84

It's raining hard now. Suddenly ahead it's all brake lights. Mia slows down. Her car shakes and slides, but it stops. The traffic moves forward at a crawl.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

84

It's one of those California multi-car freeway accidents: twenty vehicles have collided and line the shoulder. Police and emergency vehicles have arrived. Mia edges past the caravan until SHE SEES THE CHEROKEE, pulled over by the side of the road. The back door has sprung open, the back fender dented; there are disabled cars in front and back of her. Nicole's standing by the back, apparently muttering to herself, struggling to close it. One of the CHP OFFICER has pulled over; he's getting off his motorcycle.

Mia pulls over to the right lane, passing Nicole and the CHP Officer.

EXT. HIGHWAY 101 - ROADSIDE - NIGHT

85

Mia hurries from the sedan to the Cherokee. Nicole, speaking to the CHP Officer, looks up, sees her. She's alarmed, stares daggers at her.

MIA

Hello!

CHP OFFICER

Yes?

MIA

May I help, Officer?

CHP OFFICER

Everything's fine, ma'am.

MIA

Can I give the woman a lift to the next exit?

NICOLE

(trying to get rid of her)

Thank you, it's driveable.

CHP OFFICER

As soon as we tie this door shut.

The driver who rear-ended Nicole has finished his cigarette and helps tie the door shut. But:

CHP OFFICER

You got a flat here.

NICOLE

Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

85

REAR-ENDER

Got a spare?

NICOLE

Yeah. In the back.

Mia watches as the Rear-Ender and the CHP Officer lift out the wicker trunk.

NICOLE

I'm sorry, it's so heavy. Books.

REAR-ENDER

It's gonna get wet.

CHP OFFICER

(a little puzzled)

It already is.

To interrupt his train of thought, Mia comes forward.

MIA

I've got a jack in my car--

CHP OFFICER

(to Mia)

Ma'am, please return to your car.  
There's nothing you can do.

But her interruption worked; the CHP Officer has forgotten about the wicker trunk. He wrestles with the jack.

NICOLE

Thanks anyway.

Mia reluctantly returns to her car, drives on.

INT. SEDAN - (MOVING) - NIGHT

86

Mia drives on nervously.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - GATES - NIGHT

87

Mia is parked in the sedan, scared to death. Finally, in her rear view mirror she sees the headlights of an approaching car. It's Nicole in the Cherokee.

Mia gets out of the car, runs to the Cherokee. Nicole is winding down her window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

87

MIA

What happened? I waited for you at the next exit, then I turned around and passed you again--

NICOLE

Relax, they changed the tire, it took forever. You shouldn't have stopped. Park behind the school, meet me at the swimming pool.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - POOL COURTYARD - NIGHT

88

Nicole, with her headlights out, parks the Cherokee some distance away from the swimming pool. She gets out, silently closing the door, goes around to the back. Mia runs across the courtyard from the garages, joins her, out of breath.

NICOLE

Hold these.

Nicole hands Mia her keys so she has both hands free to maneuver the trunk halfway out of the cargo area. Together they struggle and lift the wicker trunk to the ground. Suddenly, they're bathed in a rectangle of light coming from a window on the third floor of the school. They drop the trunk, hide behind the car. They wait. Suddenly, Nicole's car alarm double-beeps on. Mia, in her nervousness, has triggered the remote. They freeze. Finally, the light goes out. They wait a moment, then:

NICOLE

You push.

Together they push the heavy wicker trunk across the cement towards the pool. Nicole unfastens the trunk's clasps.

NICOLE

Turn it on its side.

They do, and the plastic-shrouded body spills out.

MIA

My God, what have we done?

NICOLE

Don't look at it. It's almost done. Take a foot.

Together they drag the shrouded body to the edge of the pool. But Mia has seen something: the glow of a cigarette across the yard. She clutches Nicole's arm. Together, they watch:

GANNON

Gannon, the gardener, drunk, a cigarette dangling from his mouth, emerges from the direction of the tool shed. He fiddles with a box near the pump area. The underwater pool light comes on. He has a box of Snarol, snail poison, which he sprinkles among the beds.

BACK TO MIA AND NICOLE

MIA

(whispering)

What's he doing?

NICOLE

Slugs. They come out at night.

And only then does Mia notice the slimy, shiny trails of the snails covering the cement around the pool. Gannon does this for awhile, then goes to the edge of the pool, unzips, and while he smokes, urinates into the pool. Finally, he leaves.

NICOLE

Turn it off!

Mia scampers across the pool, opens the control box, tugs at the switches. Briefly, she mistakenly illuminates the entire pool area; she switches that off instantly, finds the underwater pool light, turns that off too. She returns to Nicole, who is sweating now.

NICOLE

Grab your end.

They tug on the plastic shower curtain, and the body spills out onto the edge of the pool. Mia reaches instinctively to protect the head -- and the sunglasses she had tucked in her blouse pocket fall into the water. They quickly sink into the murky water.

NICOLE

Idiot!

Nicole and Mia try to ease the body into the water to avoid making a splash. It's heavy, and it retains the cramped shape it had in the wicker trunk. Eventually they get it into the water. It floats on the surface for a moment. An empty pack of cigarettes floats nearby.

NICOLE

Push it down.

MIA

No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

88

Exasperated, Nicole climbs down a few rungs of the metal ladder, pushes the body below the water line. After a moment, it goes down quickly, quietly, disappearing into the blackness. Mia, at the edge of the pool, weakens, almost falls in. Nicole saves her.

NICOLE

Not here! Come on!

But Mia is frozen, looking at the water.

NICOLE

We have to get inside!

They go to the car. We HEAR the engine starting while WE STAY ON THE MOVING BLACKNESS of the pool's surface.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

89

Nicole is turning down the bed for Mia, who's standing at the window, looking down at the pool.

NICOLE

Don't.

Mia comes back. She takes a cigarette, lights it. Nicole watches her closely.

NICOLE

He'll never hurt you again. Or me. Anyone.

MIA

What do we do now?

NICOLE

Wait for the body to surface. They'll do an autopsy, maybe. He was drunk, he tumbled in.

MIA

When will it come up?

NICOLE

Soon. Tomorrow.  
(taking the cigarette  
from Mia's mouth)  
You can't carry that off. Get to bed.

She pulls Mia away from the window, leads her to bed.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - POOL - NIGHT

90

The ever-so-slightly moving water...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

91

Dawn. WE SEE the surface of the swimming pool, dark, muddy, covered with algae and leaves. This is the POV of Mia, who's at the window of her room. Behind her the bed hasn't been slept in; a blanket and a pillow are on the floor. Nicole joins her.

MIA

Why hasn't he risen?

NICOLE

It'll happen, be patient.

MIA

I'm not going to be able to do this--

NICOLE

I suggest you try. You didn't burn the toast, Mia, you killed your husband. It's off the chart demerit-wise, understand?

MIA

Why are you so calm? Look at you. Your hair's combed, my God, you've got makeup on.

NICOLE

It's a day like any other, okay? We did what we had to do, it's done. It was self-defense. For ten years -- for thirty-five years, you've been taking it. Yessir, no sir, three bags full, sir. You finally said fuck off. Stick with it. Fuck him, fuck them...

MIA

Everything except fuck you.

Outside, the battered Baran School bus pulls up to the school entrance, disgorging its load of students returning from the holiday weekend.

NICOLE

Roughly. Now come on. Places.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

92

Leo Kazman, Simon Veatch, and Tina Goss are talking in the hallways.

GOSS

I'm sorry, I hope I'm not a prig, but really. We teachers set an example. Our lives are a lesson.

KAZMAN

"Don't let this happen to you."

VEATCH

If Dr. Baran wishes to absent himself for an unspecified time, that's entirely his affair. Our job is to fill the gap. No doubt business called him away. Ah...

Mia and Nicole come down the hallway, which is crowded with students.

VEATCH

... perhaps Mrs. Baran can enlighten us.

(to Mia)

Welcome back, Mrs. Baran. Miss Horner. How was your weekend? Not too wet, I hope.

NICOLE

Fine. And yours?

VEATCH

Productive, thank you. A small point -- your husband forgot to inform us of his schedule change. I took his study hall Sunday and last night -- my pleasure, of course -- and I was wondering if I'm to take his classes today.

NICOLE

He's not here?

GOSS

I can't take on anything extra.

KAZMAN

He's been away since Saturday afternoon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

92

MIA

Oh. We got back from Oakland late last night...

KAZMAN

He didn't tell you where he was going?

VEATCH

When's the last time you spoke to him?

MIA

I'm sure it's nothing... It must be business. He... mentioned something to me.

A BELL RINGS.

VEATCH

Yes, well, never mind. We'll all lend a hand. Won't we?

GOSS

I'm sure people would notice if I never showed up.

KAZMAN

Mmmmm.

MIA

Thank you all. I'm sure it won't be long. My class...

She moves down the hallway, along with Kazman and Goss. Veatch walks with Nicole.

VEATCH

He didn't tell you either, huh? Trouble in paradise?

NICOLE

(about to say so many things, then:)

Excuse me.

She moves off. Veatch watches her, thinking...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S CLASSROOM - DAY

93

Mia is teaching geography in a classroom overlooking the swimming pool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

93

We see Erik Scanlon watching her, noting her distracted mood. She's drilling the students in state capitols, calling out the name of a state. The students respond in unison with the name of its capitol city. She breaks off as she sees:

MIA'S POV - THE SWIMMING POOL

94

Gannon, the gardener, is carrying a rake across the courtyard when he stops at the pool. He's seen something. He reaches out his rake to catch something floating on the surface of the pool. He pulls it out -- but it's only a plastic bag. He goes on.

BACK TO MIA

95

who breathes out, visibly relieved.

MIA

Montana.

BOYS

Helena.

Shaken, Mia continues. Erik watches her silently...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - DINING HALL - NIGHT

96

Nicole enters, passes the line of students waiting for their meal. There's an excited buzz in the room from the students, who are obviously pleased with their meals: fried chicken and mashed potatoes. Nicole looks at the plates, then shoots a look at Mia, who's up on the dais, already seated at the faculty table.

THE FACULTY TABLE

as Nicole sits down. Veatch smiles at her.

VEATCH

Ah, Ms. Horner.

(he indicates his plate)

When the cat's away...

NICOLE

Apparently.

MIA

Not at all. Guy and I talked to a new supplier Friday. We've been meaning to.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

36

GOSS

The portions are smaller.

KAZMAN

(to Mia)

Is Dr. Baran here? His car's  
back in the garage. It was gone  
all weekend.

MIA

Excuse me.

She steps away from the table and begins walking up and  
down the long tables of boys, asking them about the food.

NICOLE

Why are you torturing her? Isn't  
it obvious she doesn't know where  
he is?

VEATCH

At least he could make an effort.  
For your sakes. I mean, for  
hers.

MIA

with the students. They are all eating eagerly. She  
comes to Erik's place. His plate is clean.

MIA

Guess you didn't like yours,  
Erik.

ERIK

It was okay. It's just food.

Mia's smile fades a little, but she goes on.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - GROTTO - NIGHT

97

A leftover from the convent days: a stone and cement  
representation of Lourdes, with a statue of the Virgin  
Mary in the stones above a kneeling one of Bernadette, a  
peasant girl who's been defaced with a pencilled-in  
moustache, by a scum-covered fake pond. Mia is standing  
at an iron rack which used to hold votive candles; at the  
top of the rack is an rusting iron cross which she is  
bending back and forth. It's ready to snap. Nicole comes  
up behind her. Mia senses her there.

NICOLE

(re the cross)

You're going to break that. Mia?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

97

NICOLE (CONT'D)

(as Mia stops)

You're drawing attention to yourself.

MIA

I'm a woman whose husband's disappeared. I'm allowed to brood.

Nicole sits on the bench facing the grotto, lights a cigarette.

NICOLE

Just hang on. You'll feel better once the body surfaces.

MIA

Yeah, that always perks me up.

Nicole gives her a look, surprised at her dry tone.

NICOLE

What do your saints say?

MIA

I said I was brooding, not praying.

NICOLE

Lost your faith, huh? One up on me. I never believed anything. God. The Virgin Birth. Among other things. That life begins at forty. That being nominated is the real award. And that in spite of everything, people are really good at heart.

MIA

Pretty soon we'll be the same person.

NICOLE

See how nice things worked out.

(she stands up)

I'm going in. You know, changing the food wasn't too smart. If he were alive you'd never dare.

MIA

What was the point of killing him if we can't make it better for the boys?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

97

NICOLE

Still, if it's all the same to you, I don't want to hang for fried chicken.

MIA

Nicole?

Nicole stops, turns.

MIA

Why did you kill him? Isn't it funny, I never asked myself before. You could have left him, you could have left here. Why did you kill him?

NICOLE

(simply)

I was underestimated.

She leaves for the house. HOLD on Mia, chilled...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - POOL AREA - DAY

98

Down the hill, Kazman is conducting 50-yard dashes; the SOUND OF THE STARTER PISTOL wafts up to the pool area. Here other students are playing with a bat and a whiffle ball; Buchet and Pingel, shouting instructions, are videotaping them. Mia and Nicole are watching from across the pool, which is still black, its depths invisible. Mia flinches each time the pistol goes off below.

NICOLE

Don't look at it, people are watching.

MIA

I can't stand it much longer.

One of the kids, DESANTIS, 12-years-old, accidentally hits the ball into the pool.

NICOLE

Finally. I've been waiting for that.

Across from Mia and Nicole, the boys crowd to the edge of the pool, splashing the ball to bring it to the side. Erik stands slightly away from the others, his eyes on Mia and Nicole.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

98

BUCHET

Hey, guys, watch it!

NICOLE

(calling to the boys)

Get the net from the shed. Here.

She holds up her keys. The boys yell for the toss.

NICOLE

DeSantis!

DeSantis readies himself to receive her throw. Nicole tosses the key and it falls into the pool.

NICOLE

(undertone to Mia)

Now we'll have to drain it.

DeSantis, though, is already peeling off his clothes.

DESANTIS

I'll get it!

MIA

No!

But Nicole is curiously untroubled about a child diving in to discover a drowned body.

NICOLE

Why not?

MIA

He's a child!

NICOLE

(to DeSantis)

Go on, see if you can find it.

DeSantis dives into the chilly water. Tense seconds pass as he fails to reappear. Finally he bursts up, out of breath.

DESANTIS

Something down there!

Nicole and Mia run to him.

NICOLE

What?

DeSantis opens his hand and shows them a lighter.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

98

DESANTIS

It's a lighter.

BUCHET

That's Dr. Baran's.

(to Pingel)

The single in the office? He plays with it.

NICOLE

Did you see anything else?

DESANTIS

No. Does it work?

NICOLE

Go inside and change. We'll have to drain the pool.

PINGEL

(hopeful of his frolicking shots)

And re-filled?

NICOLE

That's up to Dr. Baran.

(to the boys)

All right, enough's enough. Back to class.

(to Pingel)

That's enough for today. You've got them over-excited.

She and Mia head back to the building. Pingel raises his eyes, as if to say, "Who made her boss?"

Near the school, Nicole and Mia pass Gannon.

NICOLE

Mia?

MIA

Uh... Mr. Gannon, will you drain the pool, please?

GANNON

I've got orders not to--

NICOLE

My keys are down there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

98

MIA

Please, Mr. Gannon. Right away.

Gannon shrugs, nods. Nicole turns to Mia.

NICOLE

It'll be over soon. Come on...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S CLASSROOM - DAY

99

The shades are drawn while Mia's class views a 16 mm movie on human anatomy. There is the usual hilarity at anything relative to sexuality, which Mia ignores. She is at the window, peeking through the blinds to see Gannon at the pool's edge. He's squinting at something. From where she stands, SHE CAN NO LONGER SEE WATER.

Mia whips up the blind -- to the dismay of the students, who cannot see the movie in the light.

MIA

(calling through the window)

Mr. Gannon! What is it?

Gannon, surprised, turns to her.

GANNON

Something blocking the drain.  
It'll take time.

Mia, sickened, lets the blind fall. She catches Erik's eye. He smiles at her, almost reassuringly.

DISSOLVE TO:

LATER

100

Geography. Already on the blackboard is a scrawled, "CONTINENTS AND LAND MASSES". Nunez, a younger student, writes a companion heading: "OCEANS AND BODIES OF WATER". He turns to Mia.

MIA

Go on, Mr. Nunez.

NUNEZ

(haltingly)

Atlantic, Pacific, Indian...

He peters out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

100

MIA

Arctic?

NUNEZ

Artic.

But nothing more. Tired, Mia turns to the class.

MIA

Class.

The class recites the rote list.

BOYS

Atlantic, Pacific, Indian,  
Arctic, Mediterranean, Gulf of  
Mexico and Caribbean,  
Australasian, Hudson Bay, Baltic  
Sea, North Sea, English Channel,  
Irish Sea, Bering Sea...

But Mia's attention is caught again by the flash of something outside. It's the aluminum pole Gannon holds as he stands over the pool, poking at something on the bottom. He drops the pole, starts climbing down the pool ladder. Mia turns to her class.

MIA

Again.

She runs out of the room. The boys rush to the window.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - SWIMMING POOL - DAY

101

Mia runs out. She looks down:

MIA'S POV - THE SWIMMING POOL

It's empty. No body. Gannon is sweeping the mud and the leaves into a pile at the bottom.

BACK TO SCENE

A moment, then Mia faints at the side of the pool.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S CLASSROOM - DAY

102

The boys run out of the classroom.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - SWIMMING POOL - DAY

103

Nicole runs out of the school towards Mia. Reaching her, she bends down, lifts Mia's head off the ground.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

103

NICOLE

Get a doctor!

And then Nicole, too, stares at the empty pool...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - THIRD FLOOR CORRIDOR - NIGHT

104

Nicole is just about to let herself into Mia's bedroom when Veatch calls to her.

VEATCH

Oh. Ms. Horner. I was wondering how poor Mrs. Baran is.

NICOLE

The doctor just left. I'll let her know you were the first to inquire.

VEATCH

With Dr. Baran away... well, at times like these the presence of a male can be very calming.

NICOLE

If I find one, I'll send him your way.

VEATCH

No, I mean--

NICOLE

(opening the door)

Thank you, Dr. Veatch.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

105

Mia is pacing the room, unable to sleep or even sit. She practically pounces on Nicole when she enters.

MIA

Did you find it?

NICOLE

Shhhh. No. What did the doctor say? He wouldn't tell me anything.

MIA

The usual. Take the medication. Watch for chest pain, tingling in the arm.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

105

MIA (CONT'D)

(sourly)

Avoid stress. I said I'd try.  
Where is it?

NICOLE

I don't know -- I've looked  
everywhere. The body's not here.  
It's just... gone. I checked the  
pool for your sunglasses. Gone  
too.

MIA

What's going on?

NICOLE

I don't know. Someone moved the  
body, that's obvious. We must  
have enemies...

MIA

Someone saw us put it in?

NICOLE

No. Maybe. I don't know.

MIA

(getting up, starting to  
dress)

I've got to find him!

NICOLE

Mia! We have to stick to our  
story. It's even better now -- I  
mean, even we don't know where he  
is. We know as much as anyone  
else here. He'll turn up, he'll  
have to -- and if he doesn't,  
then that's all the better.

Mia moans, sinks back into the cushions.

NICOLE

(re the bottles on the  
nightstand)

Have you taken these?

Mia shakes her head. Nicole frowns, gets up to fill Mia's  
water glass. She opens the bathroom door.

NICOLE

We have to do what looks natural.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

105

NICOLE (CONT'D)  
(she fills the glass  
o.s.)

You have to start asking for Guy,  
be more concerned. That's how  
you'd be if he were just missing-

ON MIA

terrorized. Her mouth is open. She points at Nicole --  
at the open bathroom behind Nicole.

NICOLE

What?

She turns around -- and sees, hanging on the inner  
bathroom door hook...

GUY'S SUIT OF CLOTHES

Neatly pressed, fresh from the dry cleaners.

NICOLE

Oh my God.

Mia has joined her, holds on to her arm to steady herself.  
Safety-pinned to the lapel of the suit is a small brown  
envelope with the words "FOUND IN POCKET" written on it.  
With trembling fingers, Nicole opens the envelope. It  
contains an undeveloped roll of film and a plastic card-  
type motel key labeled, "Sea Breeze Motel."

NICOLE

What the hell is going on?  
(reading the motel key)  
Eureka.

EXT. EUREKA, CALIFORNIA - DAY

106

Mia and Nicole park Nicole's sedan outside the Sea Breeze  
Motel. They whisper a moment, then Mia enters the motel  
and Nicole crosses the street to a "20-Minute Photo" shop.

INT. SEA BREEZE MOTEL, EUREKA - LOBBY - DAY

107

Mia enters. The MOTEL DESK CLERK looks up expectantly.  
He's the officious type. Mia smiles.

MIA

I'm waiting for someone.

She lingers by the front desk.

INT. 20-MINUTE PHOTO SHOP, EUREKA - DAY

108

Nicole hands over the roll of film returned with the cleaning to the girl behind the counter.

NICOLE

4 by 6. Twenty minutes?

PHOTO SHOP CLERK

Could be.

NICOLE

May I use your phone? Local call.

Ungraciously, the Photo Shop Clerk pushes the phone towards her. Nicole dials the phone number she reads from a scrap of paper.

NICOLE

(into phone)

Hello? I'm trying to reach a guest of yours -- I called before.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. SEA BREEZE MOTEL, EUREKA - LOBBY - DAY

109

Mia alertly watches the Motel Desk Clerk, who's on the phone to Nicole.

MOTEL DESK CLERK

(into phone)

Thank you, one moment--

NICOLE

(into phone)

What room--

MOTEL DESK CLERK

(into phone)

We're not allowed to give you that information. Hold, please.

He rings the phone through. We see on his TELEPHONE BOARD that the phone rings and rings and rings. Mia is now at the desk.

MIA

May I have a rate card, please?

The Motel Desk Clerk gives her one. Mia tries to read the switchboard, but the writing is too small. Finally, the Motel Desk Clerk returns to Nicole on the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

109

MOTEL DESK CLERK

I'm sorry, there's no answer.  
Would you like to leave a  
message?

NICOLE

Yes -- would you have him call  
his wife, please? Thank you.

INT. PHOTO SHOP

110

Nicole hangs up, looks across the street to the motel.

INT. SEA BREEZE MOTEL - LOBBY

111

Mia watches carefully as the Motel Desk Clerk places the  
message slip into a numbered box behind him. She sees the  
room number pasted over the cubbyhole: 134.

INT. SEA BREEZE MOTEL - CORRIDOR - DAY

112

Mia and Nicole go down the hallway, see Room 134. The  
door's ajar; from inside we hear VOICES. Mia and Nicole  
enter. The TV IS ON. The bathroom door is closed; the  
shower is on. Suddenly the bathroom door opens: it's a  
MAID.

MAID

(in Spanish)

Oh my God!

MIA

Where is the man who's staying  
here?

The Maid looks at her blankly.

MAID

(in Spanish)

I'm sorry, I don't speak English.

NICOLE

(in Spanish)

The man who stays here -- where  
is he? This is his wife.

MAID

(Spanish)

I don't know. I haven't seen  
him.

NICOLE

(to Mia)

She hasn't seen him. Neither has  
the clerk downstairs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

112

MIA

Ask her if he slept in the bed  
last night? Did she have to make  
it this morning?

NICOLE

(in Spanish)

Was this bed slept in last night?

MAID

No.

Nicole gives her twenty dollars and scribbles a phone  
number on the desk pad.

NICOLE

(in Spanish)

If you see him, if he arrives  
here, call this number. He's  
disappeared.

The Maid looks at Mia.

MAID

(in Spanish)

I'm so sorry, ma'am. God will  
deliver him to you.

MIA

What did she say? *Dios*, that's  
God. *Vaya con Dios*.

NICOLE

She said he'll turn up. Feel  
better?

EXT., ONE-HOUR PHOTO SHOP - DAY

113

Mia and Nicole are heading to the sedan. Nicole indicates  
the photo shop.

NICOLE

I had the pictures developed.  
Maybe they're done.

She's about to go in, but Mia stops her. She's looking at  
the window, where the equipment inside is arranged so that  
the finished photos exit the machine and drop into a tray  
in full view.

MIA

Nicole...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

113

WE SEE THE PHOTO TRAY as the developed prints slip in. They are pictures from months ago -- one of Guy and Nicole at Christmas in a pose that'd be embarrassing for Nicole if she were easily embarrassed. In the middle of the roll are shots of Nicole and Mia this past weekend outside Nicole's Oakland duplex.

NICOLE

He came down early. He was watching us.

MIA

Why?

And then, most frightening of all, shots of Guy afterwards. Looking very normal, very undead...

MIA

He's alive.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - FRONT DRIVE - DAY (THRU VIDEO CAMERA) 114

Late afternoon. Tina squints AT CAMERA.

TINA

I'm so nervous -- is this magic hour? I read in Premiere everyone looks gorgeous at magic hour.

BUCHET (O.S.)

(under his breath)

Then this ain't it. Okay, let's go. "In this peaceful setting..."

Now we're off the video image and can SEE Buchet and Pingel shooting a walk-and-talk. Pingel's on camera; Buchet holds the boom. They walk backward as Tina walks forward.

GOSS

(stopping as she recites her lines)

"In this peaceful setting in the hills of Northern California...

(a few steps and a stop)

... we do all we can to encourage the young men inside our little boys..."

PINGEL

"The young men inside our little boys" -- does that sound right to you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

114

BUCHET

Ms. Goss -- Tina -- don't stop when you say your lines. It's a walk-and-talk. And, not or.

TINA

It's simultaneous? No one said.

But all three are distracted when Nicole's car drives up and stops suddenly, spraying gravel. Nicole and Mia get out, Nicole helping Mia, who can barely walk unaided, into the building. Neither acknowledges the filmmakers or Tina.

TINA

He's gone three days and they fall apart. You'd think it was made of gold, if you know what I'm saying.

BUCHET

What? It's a menage-a-trois?

TINA

Trois-plus-one, if he had his way. But Tina Goss knows how to say no.

(sudden fear)

That's not taping, is it?

BUCHET

(a warning look at Pingel)

No, the red light means it's off. Keep talking...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - DINING HALL - NIGHT

115

Mia is conspicuous by her absence from the faculty dining table. Nicole calls Hopkins over to her.

NICOLE

Fix me a tray for Mrs. Baran.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

116

Mia is working at the bills in the small downstairs office Guy allotted her. There's a KNOCK at the door, then Nicole comes in carrying a dinner tray and a large manila envelope under her arm. For the first time, she looks a little subdued before Mia, almost nervous.

NICOLE

Mia--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

116

MIA

Thank you, I'm not hungry.

NICOLE

It would be nice if you didn't faint again this semester. Go on.

MIA

(suddenly)

I saw him, Nicole. I know he's dead. But the pictures...

NICOLE

I've been thinking about them. Pictures arranged out of sequence and photographed onto a new roll. Anyone could do it.

MIA

But the pictures of you and me...

NICOLE

Maybe my neighbors...

MIA

You think they know?

NICOLE

We'll find out if they start blackmailing us. There's something else.

She puts the envelope in Mia's lap.

NICOLE

You asked me why I wanted to kill Guy. I didn't tell you the whole truth. Open it.

Mia opens the envelope. Inside are two stacks of currency sealed in Ziploc bags.

NICOLE

It's from the school accounts. That's why there's never money. It was for both of us. But it disappeared a month ago. I found it when we were looking for the body.

MIA

(stunned)

You killed for money. You lied to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

116

NICOLE

It wasn't the only reason. You know that.

(handing Mia half the money)

It's fifty thousand dollars.

We'll split it. That's for you.

(off Mia's reluctance)

Use it for the kids. You can pay for your goddamned fried chicken now.

MIA

I trusted you.

NICOLE

I didn't have to tell you. But I need to trust you.

MIA

Maybe you shouldn't. What if I go to the police. What if I tell them what we did.

NICOLE

What you did.

MIA

We both did it!

As Nicole talks she puts both shares of the money in Mia's desk drawer.

NICOLE

But how do I benefit? The wife gets the school, the money he embezzled, her freedom. The other woman gets nothing. That's how they'll look at it.

MIA

Don't you dare -- I'll say we were lovers, you and me. I'll say you did it for me!

Despite herself, Nicole's impressed.

NICOLE

Well, you can take the girl out of the convent...

Mia is looking at the drawer full of money.

MIA

I thought we killed him together.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

116

MIA (CONT'D)

I thought we had the same reason... I don't know why that matters, but...

NICOLE

We did have the same reason. I just had an extra one. Okay? Come on. Let's not turn on each other.

(she pushes Mia's hair out of her eyes)

I'm sorry I lied to you. I couldn't now.

But Mia's been thinking.

MIA

(looking at the money)  
What if you hadn't found this? You killed the one person who could have told you where it was..

NICOLE

He said we were partners. And then he acted alone.

The implied threat isn't lost on Mia. Nicole stands.

NICOLE

Eat something. And I'd keep that locked. You know people.

She goes. Mia hugs herself, terrified...

INT. HOSPITAL DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

117

Mia is in labor; Nicole is her labor coach. There's an air of crisis in the delivery room. Mia screams. Along the walls are full Arrowhead water bottles. Suddenly water begins spilling from the delivery table to the floor. The baby is delivered. Now Guy appears above Mia; he's the doctor, holding her newborn out to her. Mia smiles, takes the baby. His eyes are open but milky and unseeing -- like Guy's after he was drowned. The water keeps spilling off the table. Nicole takes the dead baby from Guy, begins to yell at Mia. A police SIREN is WAILING in short bursts...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

118

Mia awakens in the chair where she has been sleeping. THE SIREN BURSTS meld into the SOUND OF A RINGING PHONE. Mia collects herself, feels her belly. She picks up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

118

MIA

Hello?

Through the phone WE HEAR the sound of RUSHING WATER. Quietly, stunned, Mia puts the phone back in the cradle, settles back into her chair, and stares into the darkened room.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DRIVEWAY - DAY

119

Mia's driving the Cherokee; Nicole is running by the side of it, banging on the window with a rolled newspaper. Mia stops the car. She winds down the window after locking all the doors.

NICOLE

Where are you going?

MIA

I'm sorry, Nicole. I'll tell them you only helped afterwards.

NICOLE

No! You promised!

MIA

I want it to be over.

NICOLE

It is! They found him! Here, look!

She shows her the newspaper. WE SEE a small item headlined: "BODY WASHES UP ON SHORE."

NICOLE

It's him. The description, look. It's at Gold Beach.

MIA

That's twenty miles from here. How'd it get there?

NICOLE

Someone took him from the pool and dumped him in the ocean, I don't know. But it's him, it's got to be.

MIA

(grabbing the paper)  
I'm going.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

119

NICOLE

Let's just make a report to the police that he's missing. We should have anyway. Let them tell us the bad news.

MIA

No. I have to see him!

NICOLE

I'll go with you.

But Mia just guns the engine and goes. Nicole watches her, looks back at the article. Chilled, she walks back into the school.

EXT. GOLD BEACH, OREGON - DAY

120

A small town just over the California border.

INT. GOLD BEACH - COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

121

SHIRLEY KULP, sixty, is at the counter. She looks tired and tough. She's toying with an unlit cigarette and chewing gum. There's something funny about her chest, until you realize she's had a breast removed and doesn't use a prosthesis. She cannot be embarrassed.

SHIRLEY

No, I'll wait. Fine.

NICHOLSON, the uniformed young man at the desk, is probably being friendly, for him.

NICHOLSON

You can wait in there.

SHIRLEY

I'm fine. Just don't let him forget me.

NICHOLSON

You're not going to light that, are you?

SHIRLEY

You can light these? In America?  
No, I'm quitting. Gum. Patch.

She sits down, waits. She rolls up her shirt sleeve to reveal her circular nicotine patch. She slaps it once or twice, chews her gum. She looks up when Mia enters the room, goes to the counter, lays the newspaper on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

121

MIA

Excuse me. My husband is missing. I think this might be him.

NICHOLSON

(unimpressed)

How long?

MIA

Four days. Saturday.

NICHOLSON

Have you made a missing persons report yet?

MIA

No.

NICHOLSON

So he's left before without telling you?

MIA

(more firmly)

The description fits.

Nicholson taps something on his computer.

NICHOLSON

Okay. John Doe, six even, 180 pounds.

MIA

That's right.

NICHOLSON

Describe his clothing.

MIA

The body was naked, that's what it says here.

NICHOLSON

We don't always tell the press everything.

MIA

I think... I didn't see him the day he disappeared.

NICHOLSON

Does he own a red and white tie?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

121

MIA

No.

NICHOLSON

Any jewelry?

MIA

A wedding ring, that's all... He doesn't always wear that.

Nicholson looks at Shirley, as if to share a joke. Shirley won't play. Mia turns to look at Shirley, then turns back.

MIA

Can I just see the body, please?

NICHOLSON

Appendectomy scar?

Mia's beginning to think the body they have can't be Guy's.

MIA

No. I see. Well, thank you.

NICHOLSON

Hold on.

(picking up a phone;  
quietly)

Howie? I think Mrs. Doe's here.  
Right.

(hangs up, slides a  
clipboard to Mia)

We've had a lot of looky-loos  
today. Plus a car wreck. You'll  
need to fill this out.

He buzzes her through a door. They go. Shirley watches.

INT. GOLD BEACH - COUNTY MORGUE - ANTEROOM - DAY

122

A small waiting room just outside the morgue. Mia is filling out the form on her clipboard. The door has a glass window. Through it, she can see a young woman in the hallway outside, screaming with grief, being comforted by friends.

Mia fills out form.

INSERT - FORM

Her hand shakes as she writes "Husband" under "Relationship". And again, under a front-and-back drawing of a man, where she is to indicate distinguishing marks, her hand trembles, hesitates.

BACK TO MIA

as she considers the body she knew so intimately. She traces the outlines of the drawing gently. She HEARS something -- a DRIP. She slowly turns around to see:

THE WATER COOLER

dripping water onto the tray beneath which is overflowing. A rivulet of water runs from the base of the cooler to Mia. It comes slowly towards her...

SUDDENLY, there's a KNOCK and the door opens.

NICHOLSON

Finished? This way.

INT. GOLD BEACH - COUNTY MORGUE - DAY

123

Nicholson leads Mia into a room, where a covered body is on a table. HOWIE, a morgue worker, stands by it.

HOWIE

You gotta prepare yourself. The sand does a lot of damage. Like little pieces of glass.

Mia steels herself, nods. Howie lifts the sheet, lets her take a look.

THE CORPSE'S FACE

bloated. Howie was right about the sand. But it's not Guy.

BACK TO MIA

who shrinks back. She's on the verge of panic.

MIA

My God, my God!

NICHOLSON

I'm sorry, ma'am. It is your husband, then?

MIA

(looking at him in panic)  
No. No, that's not him.

NICHOLSON

Oh. Well, thank God, right?

INT. GOLD BEACH - COUNTY CORONER'S OFFICE - DAY

124

Mia hurries out through the waiting room, obviously terribly upset. Shirley watches her. Nicholson returns to his desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

124

SHIRLEY

Poor kid. So that was a match?

NICHOLSON

Never saw him before in her life.

Shirley is intrigued.

EXT. GOLD BEACH - DINER - DAY

125

INT. GOLD BEACH - DINER - DAY

126

Mia is on the phone, talking agitatedly. She hangs up the phone, takes a moment to compose herself, walks back to the table and stops when she sees Shirley sitting opposite the plate of food at Mia's place.

SHIRLEY

Mrs. Baran? Please, forgive me for intruding.

MIA

Who are you?

SHIRLEY

(indicating her plate)

Hot grease is better than cold.  
Come on, sit down.

Unsure of what to do, Mia sits. A Waitress passes.

SHIRLEY

Coffee, please.

The Waitress nods.

SHIRLEY

I saw you at the sheriff's station. Got your name off the view request.

(handing her a card)

Shirley Kulp.

MIA

You're the police?

SHIRLEY

Used to be. Cagney and Lacey, that kind of thing. You know they met with me once, research stuff. Nice girls -- I say "girls", that okay with you? I thought the blonde could've won an Emmy once in a while.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

126

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

Anyway, flash forward ten years,  
I'm on medical leave. The Big C.  
(she points to her chest)  
Air.

MIA

I'm sorry.

SHIRLEY

Whatever. I knew it was coming  
with my family. Never two boobs  
in a coffin.

MIA

I'm sorry, I don't know why  
you're here.

SHIRLEY

Remember your husband?  
(her coffee arrives; she  
sips)

This place, Jesus. It's no  
Sizzler, is it? Anyway, I'm  
driving down to L.A. to see my  
sister-in-law, and I stop here to  
have lunch with an old friend on  
the force but he blows me off.  
And I overhear your deal and I  
think, what the hell, Shirley.  
Make yourself useful. Help her  
out.

MIA

Oh, you mean... Oh, no, I'm sure  
he'll turn up.

SHIRLEY

Yeah, on a beach, apparently,  
blue. I mean, you drove here all  
the way from--

MIA

Crescent City. It's not far,  
it's just over the border.

SHIRLEY

It's on my way, is that  
convenient or what? Let me help  
you find him.

MIA

That's very kind of you, but--

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

126

SHIRLEY

-- who the hell am I, right? I don't blame you. Look, tell you what. Crescent City, that's near Eureka, right? I know a guy in the department there. I'll call him, he'll visit, get the details--

MIA

But I don't want to make it official. I mean, suppose it's just... you know, intentional.

SHIRLEY

I know what you mean. Men. How do they sleep at night?... Well, they have sex, that's how they sleep at night.

MIA

I mean, he may be home already. He'll be furious if I've gone to the police.

SHIRLEY

That's what I'm saying, keep it private. Believe me, once the boys get their hooks into you...

MIA

I couldn't afford you. I run a school, there's no money in it.

SHIRLEY

A school? Then forget the police, you can't afford that kind of publicity. Two, three days, I'll track him down to some girlfriend's house and scare the shit out of him.

MIA

That wouldn't be easy.

SHIRLEY

I'd want my expenses paid, that's all. Look at me. I'm chasing all over Oregon for lunch dates with guys I couldn't stand ten years ago. It'll give me something to do.

(she unwraps a piece of  
Nicotine gum)

You ever smoke?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

126

MIA

No.

SHIRLEY

(fumbling with the gum's  
safety seal)

Look at this security system.  
What the hell is it, a piece of  
the true cross? You're not  
hungry?

MIA

I thought I should eat, but...

SHIRLEY

You know what your problem is?  
You're feeling guilty.

MIA

No, I'm not.

SHIRLEY

It's not your fault. It's men.  
Testosterone. They should put it  
in bombs. You want that?

Shirley takes a french fry off her plate.

SHIRLEY

Like my sister-in-law'll care if  
I'm a couple of days late.  
(re the food)  
This'll heat up just fine at  
home, you know.

INT. MIA'S CAR - (MOVING) - DAY

127

Mia nervously looks in the rear view mirror. She sees a car behind her. She squints. She can't see much without the sunglasses she dropped in the pool the night they put Guy there. She opens the glove compartment. She sees something: a cassette she doesn't recognize. On the label is one word. "Guy". She puts it in the player. Nothing -- she's relieved. And then "And I Will Always Love You" begins to PLAY...

INT. SHIRLEY'S CAR - (MOVING) - DAY

128

Shirley's following Mia's Cherokee. Mia's car suddenly swerves, then rights itself. Mia's meal, transferred to a styrofoam takeout container, sits beside her. Shirley notices the Cherokee's crumpled fender, the bashed brake light. She scribbles down the license number.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

129

Late afternoon. Mia drives, followed by Shirley in her car. They pass groups of students, supervised by Kazman, who are clearing brush along the drive. Nicole meets the Cherokee as it brakes to a stop. Mia gets out. Behind them, a team of students are sanding window frames; others are raking leaves. The kitchen overlooks the parking area; we see kids inside, doing K-P.

MIA

(striving for a normal  
tone)

Hello, Nicole...

NICOLE

Hello. Who--

Shirley gets out of her car.

SHIRLEY

Hello, Ms...

NICOLE

Horner. Nicole Horner.

SHIRLEY

Shirley Kulp.  
(to Mia)

Does she--

MIA

Yes, she knows. Everyone knows  
my husband is missing. The  
faculty -- the students, too, I  
guess.

NICOLE

Excuse me, but how does this--

Shirley hands her a card, which Nicole reads unhappily.

SHIRLEY

Mrs. Baran would like me to help.  
Informally.

Nicole darts a glance at Mia, then turns to Shirley.

NICOLE

Frankly, Ms. Kulp -- or is it  
Detective?

SHIRLEY

Detective. While my leave is  
still temporary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

139

NICOLE

Well, Detective, we don't want to over-react, do we, Mia? We've been here before.

SHIRLEY

We have?

(to Mia)

We, we, we. What is she, the school nurse? When was the last time you saw your husband?

MIA

Saturday morning. He was asleep when I left at seven. Ms. Horner and I went down to her duplex in Oakland for the weekend.

Veatch and Goss drift over to the women. Shirley notices them, looks at them expectantly. Irritated, Nicole performs an introduction.

NICOLE

Detective Kulp, this is Professor Goss and Professor Veatch.

(to Goss and Veatch)

Detective Kulp is helping us locate Dr. Baran.

VEATCH

It's that serious?

(turning to Mia)

My dear, don't you think--

MIA

I have to find my husband, Dr. Veatch.

GOSS

It's been five days. It's a funny way to run a school, if you ask me.

SHIRLEY

When did you see him last?

VEATCH

Saturday afternoon. I saw him getting into his car around one.

SHIRLEY

And he didn't say where he was going?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

139

VEATCH

I didn't ask. He had an overnight bag, that's all. But he often does.

SHIRLEY

And were all of you away for the weekend?

MIA

Most of the children were gone for the holiday. We had a skeleton staff. My husband was scheduled to be here, though.

KAZMAN

So were you. I covered for you.

SHIRLEY

Something could've come up. A phone call or a letter...

NICOLE

If that's all, we really do need to get back to our students. Thursday afternoon we're all on crews.

SHIRLEY

So I noticed. Saves a lot of money, I bet, having the students keep the place up. These older buildings...

(seeing the pool)

Oh, look. Must be nice when it's full.

GOSS

They drained it. I think it's a hazard like this, without a fence.

NICOLE

(glaring at her)

We dropped some keys in it.

SHIRLEY

(to the teachers)

Thank you. Maybe I'll talk to you all individually later. And some of the students.

NICOLE

We don't want to make a mountain out of a molehill...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

129

SHIRLEY

Exactly. Imagine this place  
crawling with police. Wouldn't  
sound good in the letters home,  
would it? We'll tiptoe.

(to Mia)

May I see your husband's room?

Mia flashes a look at Nicole: what can they do?

MIA

Of course.

They head towards the school buildings, passing Erik  
Scanlon, who watches them. Shirley happens to catch his  
glance; she's taken aback by the resentment in his eyes.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

130

Mia and Nicole watch as Shirley rifles through the papers  
on the desk. There's a stack of bills, all stamped "PAST  
DUE" and "FINAL NOTICE".

SHIRLEY

This is lucky -- the phone bill.

MIA

(apologetically to  
Nicole)

It came this morning.

SHIRLEY

May I?

(she opens it)

None of his friends know where he  
might be?

NICOLE

We haven't asked. It's awkward.  
"Do you know where my husband  
is?"

SHIRLEY

Her husband. It won't be awkward  
for me, if it's okay with you,  
Mrs. Baran. Maybe I could have  
his address book?

(re the bill)

Oh, Ms. Horner, this must be you.  
Oakland. Earlier this month.

She shows her the bill. Nicole glances at it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

130

NICOLE

Sometimes I go down there for the weekend. Mia calls me.

SHIRLEY

Fifty-three minutes. Seventy-two minutes. Girl talk.

(on the last page)

This goes through Monday. He didn't call you there over the weekend?

MIA

No.

NICOLE

Mia, you called him Friday, remember? From my house.

SHIRLEY

What was he wearing the day he disappeared?

MIA

I don't know. Professor Veatch could tell you.

SHIRLEY

I had a word with him. He mentioned a gray jacket. Could I see his closet?

Mia goes with her to the closet.

MIA

Yes, it's missing. His gray jacket. It's kind of nubbly. And his black pants. And... black shoes, casual.

SHIRLEY

You just have to look and you know. Good for you. A place for everything, and everything in its place.

Suddenly, Nicole notices the dry cleaning that was Fed-Ex'd from Eureka: Guy's sport jacket and black pants. It's hanging over a chair by the door.

But Shirley's attention has been drawn to the window.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

130

SHIRLEY

(looking out)

I hope we're not too late.  
There's some video cameras out  
there. Is that the news?

Nicole comes to her side, wanting to guide her out of the  
room. She looks out.

NICOLE

No, no, that's just some P.R. for  
the school. Thank you,  
Detective, but I think that's  
enough for today.

SHIRLEY

Does your husband smoke?

MIA

Yes...?

SHIRLEY

(at the desk)

But he left his lighter here. It  
could mean he was planning to be  
away for just a few hours.

NICOLE

That's an old one of his.

MIA

The children found it in the pool  
a few days ago.

Nicole flashes Mia a look.

SHIRLEY

Water, water, everywhere. May I  
take it?

NICOLE

I don't see why--

MIA

Please, Detective. Take it if  
you need it. But you'll have to  
excuse me. I'm very tired.

SHIRLEY

The address book?

MIA

In his office down the hall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

130

SHIRLEY

I'll find it.

She passes the dry cleaning on the chair and doesn't seem to notice. Nicole holds her breath. Just when she thinks they've squeaked by, Shirley turns at the door.

SHIRLEY

One more thing. That's not the jacket there, is it?

Mia freezes. Nicole looks at it.

NICOLE

No. But close.

Shirley looks at both of them, smiles, leaves. A beat, then Nicole turns on Mia. In a furious whisper:

NICOLE

Why did you bring her here?

MIA

I couldn't get out of it. Anyway, I'm supposed to be concerned. At least it keeps the police out of it.

NICOLE

She should get a prosthesis. I hate that in-your-face survivor crap.

MIA

I'm really tired, Nicole.

Nicole studies her.

NICOLE

All right.

(at the door)

Just don't mention the pool again.

She leaves. Mia goes to the window.

MIA'S POV - SHIRLEY

in the yard below, chatting to Pingel and Buchet.

MIA (O.S.)

Find him...

INT. BUCHET'S EDITING ROOM - NIGHT

131

Shirley watches a copy of the Baran School video. ON THE TV SCREEN she sees shots of Guy, Mia, the teachers, Nicole. Pingel sits down beside her, holding another tape.

PINGEL

This is some real cool stuff. I mean, like, total Inside Edition.

BUCHET

Oh yeah. The Magic Hour tape... This guy gives prick a bad name. Which ain't easy.

But Shirley's not listening. She's looking at the screen. In one shot Guy's Cherokee is visible -- its brake light undamaged. Shirley rewinds this section and PLAYS IT AGAIN...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - NICOLE'S BEDROOM - DAY

132

Dawn. Nicole is sleeping when suddenly there's a KNOCKING on her door.

NICOLE

Who is it?

MIA (O.S.)

It's me. Hurry.

Nicole jumps up, goes to the door, opens it to see Mia, pale, frightened.

MIA

Look!

INT. MIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

133

Nicole enters -- and finds the room bathed in a curious, warm, stained-glass light. She sees shadows on the white walls -- colored shadows in the shape of fish. She stiffens, turns to the window.

NICOLE'S POV - THE WINDOW

is draped with the shower curtain from Nicole's duplex, the one they wrapped Guy in. The early morning light is shining through the colored plastic...

Nicole turns to Mia, stunned.

NICOLE

Someone knows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

133

Mia looks almost dead with fright...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

134

The strain is beginning to tell on Nicole. She's smoking at the window, her hair almost unkempt, when she sees something below. She takes off, half-running down the hallway. On the ground floor, just before exiting, she slows herself down, smooths her hair, tries to control her breathing. She walks outside.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

135

Shirley, leaning against her car, is talking to Mia. She sees Nicole exiting the building, waves her over.

SHIRLEY

I was just telling Mrs. Baran. I ran Dr. Baran's license plate through the DMV -- a friend, don't worry. That pileup Monday evening on the 101? He was in it. The report doesn't tell us much, but his car's right there on the printout, one of twenty-two.

(to Mia)

And here I somehow thought you said it was an old dent.

MIA

Did I?

SHIRLEY

Let's say he left Saturday -- in one of the gray jackets. Couldn't he have been heading towards San Francisco? He bought gas late Saturday afternoon at Ukiah.

NICOLE

Oh.

SHIRLEY

Yes, Mrs. Baran gave me his credit card numbers on the phone this morning.

(to Mia)

Now you know why I insisted. Anyway, doesn't it look like he was trying to see you?

NICOLE

San Francisco is a big town.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

135

SHIRLEY

You're sure you didn't hear from him after Friday?

NICOLE

It's not something we'd forget. Mia, aren't you on room checks?

MIA

Yes, excuse me.

SHIRLEY

Well, I'll be in touch.

(she waits till Mia leaves)

I'm glad she didn't ask -- there aren't any charges on the cards from Saturday on. What are room checks?

NICOLE

Oh, drug searches. A lot of the kids used to use.

Nicole begins walking Shirley to her car.

SHIRLEY

My son had a habit. Twenty years ago. My husband and I looked into this kind of place. He's dead now.

NICOLE

Your husband?

SHIRLEY

Son. IV drug users -- you know what happens to them nowadays. But my ex is alive. You got an ex?

NICOLE

Nothing official.

SHIRLEY

Mine thought he was God's gift to women. Like that was the first thing on my list: Lord, please send me something that'll wear black nylon socks to bed every night of his life.

(at the car door)

My idea of heaven's a place where they screw you barefoot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

135

NICOLE

I feel like passing a hat for you.

SHIRLEY

Don't feel sorry for me. I got him to leave. Which was a blessing, cause he was too dull to kill.

(indicating the school)

What about her? She ever want to kill her husband?

NICOLE

Why would she do that?

SHIRLEY

Maybe she found out you were sleeping with him.

A beat. Then Nicole laughs.

NICOLE

Clever. How'd you find out? Ask any one of the faculty or half the students? I think it's in our brochures.

SHIRLEY

So she knew?

NICOLE

Yeah, she knew. Ask her. Look, she's not a murderer. She's an ex-nun, for Chrissakes.

SHIRLEY

Remember them? They disappeared overnight. Like dial phones.

(beat)

What about you? What if he wouldn't leave her?

NICOLE

If I couldn't get a man to leave her, I wouldn't kill him. I'd kill myself.

SHIRLEY

(as she gets in the car)

He has left her, apparently. One way or another. Well, unless there's anything else...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

135

NICOLE

There is one thing.  
(she smiles)  
Guy did it barefoot.

She means that to be her exit line, but Shirley calls out through her rolled-down window.

SHIRLEY

"Did", Ms. Horner? Don't you mean "does"?

Nicole's smile fades. Then she turns and heads towards the school building. Shirley watches her go...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

136

Sunset. Mia is at the terrace, looking out over the school. Erik comes up to her. Squinting into the setting sun.

ERIK

Mrs. Baran?

Mia turns to see him, then continues looking out.

MIA

It's dinner time. Go inside with the others.

ERIK

Are you okay?

MIA

I'm fine.

ERIK

You don't miss him, do you?

Mia turns, studies him.

MIA

Who? Dr. Baran?

ERIK

I don't miss him. No one misses him. It's so bright.

Mia is staring ahead, and doesn't immediately noticed that Erik has slipped on the sunglasses Mia dropped in the pool the night she and Nicole returned from Oakland.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

136

ERIK

It's much nicer here since he left. I hope he never comes back.

MIA

You know the rules, Erik. Your table won't be able to eat until you're there--

She breaks off as she notices what he's wearing.

ERIK

What?

MIA

Where did you get those?

ERIK

I found them yesterday. They're good though. There's just a little rust--

MIA

(intense)

I said go inside! And give me those!

(to explain her reaction)

You don't just pick up something and wear it. Everything is dirty, that's how you have to look at things. Now go in to dinner!

But it's Mia who leaves with the glasses in her hand. Erik watches her, frowning...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

137

Nicole is putting Mia to bed in the chair. Perhaps to cover her own fear, Nicole is gruff with Mia.

NICOLE

It doesn't mean anything. The pool is empty, he could have seen them at the bottom.

MIA

I didn't. Did you? If they were so plain to see. Don't you see what it means?

NICOLE

It means we overlooked them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

137

MIA

It means Guy's watching us.  
Glasses means eyes, don't you  
see? He's alive!

Nicole hands her some pills.

NICOLE

For God's sake, Mia, don't go  
crazy on me, that's all I need.  
Here.

MIA

Don't you want to crush them in a  
Ziploc bag first?

NICOLE

(not too roughly)  
Just shut up and take them.

Mia does so. She settles down in her makeshift bed.

MIA

I'm afraid to go to sleep. I  
have terrible dreams.

NICOLE

Think of something happy.

MIA

Do you know when I was the  
happiest, Nicole?

NICOLE

Let me think. It had to be  
before your wedding night. What,  
your first holy communion?

MIA

No. The moment when the body was  
gone. When the pool was empty.  
Because I thought, maybe we're  
being punished.

NICOLE

What are you talking about?

MIA

Maybe there is a God. I haven't  
believed for so long. So when  
the pool was empty I thought,  
maybe there is a God, and he  
knows what we did, and he's  
coming for us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

137

NICOLE

That's not God, that's a lady  
detective with one breast.

MIA

(not the slightest bit  
angry)

You're always laughing at me. So  
was Guy. I think that's why I  
killed him. To prove I'm not  
ridiculous. He must be laughing  
now.

NICOLE

I'm not laughing at you, Mia.

MIA

You are a little. Inside.

Mia closes her eyes.

MIA

It's lonely without God, isn't  
it?

Nicole watches her for a moment.

NICOLE

I just say lonely period... Mia?

Nicole watches her breathe in and out for a while, smooths  
the hair from her brow. Then she leaves.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - NICOLE'S ROOM - NIGHT

138

She stares out the window looking at the pool.

EXT. CRESCENT CITY MOTEL - DAY

139

Early morning. Shirley gets into her car, pulls into the  
street, passes a sign that says, "Highway 1 - South".

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - DAY

140

Early morning. Mia is asleep, crumpled on the prie-dieu.  
Candles have burnt down in front of her wedding  
photograph. Hot wax from one of the candles drops on the  
palm of her hand, wakes her.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - BOYS' BATHROOM - DAY

141

Erik is brushing his teeth when suddenly a boy cries out  
and all the students rush to the window. He goes too, and  
looks below.

ERIK'S POV - THE SWIMMING POOL

142

Pingel and Buchet watch as water runs into the pool. Gannon emerges from the pump room. Pingel asks a question, looking at his watch. Gannon shrugs.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS - DINING HALL - DAY

143

Lunchtime. Mia and Nicole are at the table. Nicole sees Mia's burnt hand.

NICOLE

What happened?

Mia opens her hand and stares at the mark on her palm.

MIA

(smiling)

Just where they nailed his hand  
to the cross...

Nicole, alarmed, shushes her.

NICOLE

Don't talk like that.

MIA

Why not? I can say anything I  
like. What can they do to me  
that's worse than this?

NICOLE

They can execute your only friend  
if you don't shut up. I mean it.

Mia just smiles to herself, continues to play with her food.

MIA

You still think we're getting  
away with it.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - OAKLAND - DAY (MOS)

144

Noon. Shirley drives up, parks across the street. She goes around the house to the back door. She looks at the ground, finds one of those fake stone keyholders, uses the key it hides to open the back (kitchen) door.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - DAY (MOS)

145

Shirley enters, careful not to touch anything, even though she's wearing gloves.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - BATHROOM - DAY (MOS)

146

In the bathroom, Shirley notices there's no shower curtain. In the corner of the bathroom she sees the heavy Arrowhead water bottle: a funny place for bottled water. There's a radio/cassette player on a shelf.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LARGE BEDROOM - DAY (MOS)

147

Shirley finds the shard of glass from Guy's dropped whiskey under the bed...

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN - DAY (MOS)

148

Shirley smells the sink: whiskey. She looks around for a waste basket, checks under the sink.

Kneeling down, she paws through the waste basket. An empty whiskey bottle; she holds it with a butter knife through the opening to avoid getting fingerprints on it. The empty Chinese styrofoam containers. And then: the douchebag, cut into small pieces. No hose.

INT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - LIVING ROOM - DAY (MOS)

149

Shirley notices the rectangle of carpet in front of the sofa that suggests some object once rested there. She sees the remote, the ashtray and the pile of magazines on the floor. She thinks, goes to the window with the pieces of the douchebag to examine them more closely -- when there's a TAP on the window. Outside are Irv and Edie, and Irv is tapping the glass with his gun.

EXT. NICOLE'S DUPLEX - DRIVEWAY - DAY (MOS)

150

WE DON'T HEAR Shirley as she questions Edie and Irv, but we see her showing them her police I.D. and Guy's picture in the school brochure. Both of them nod; Edie goes on at length about him. At the door of her car, Shirley asks to see Irv's permit. He doesn't have one. She takes his gun, smiles a goodbye, gets into her car.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - NICOLE'S CLASSROOM - DAY (MOS)

151

Nicole, teaching a class, is interrupted by a Hall Monitor. She's annoyed, but as the Hall Monitor talks, she nods, turns her class over to a Teacher's Pet in the first row. Erik watches her...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

152

Nicole enters to face Lisa Campos, the woman Guy was with the day he drove down to Oakland. Mia's here, too, at the breaking point.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

152

MIA

Nicole! Thank God.

(turning to Lisa)

This is Ms. Horner, tell her what you told me. Nicole, this is Lisa Campos.

LISA

Hello.

(reluctantly)

Well...

MIA

-- Miss Campos is looking for Guy.

Nicole looks at Mia, annoyed.

NICOLE

As I'm sure Mrs. Baran has told you, Dr. Baran is away on business.

LISA

(to Mia)

You said you didn't know where he was.

(to Nicole)

Well, someone has to pay. He said he would, but I thought it over, I don't want to wait till next month like he said--

MIA

Ms. Campos is expecting.

(she almost laughs)

Can you believe that? Unto her a child will be born.

NICOLE

What's that got to do with Dr. Baran?

LISA

What do you think?

NICOLE

(trying to be calm)

What makes you think it's Guy's?

LISA

That's what he said, but come on, I would know. I don't sleep around. And he said he'd pay. I'm not putting it on a card, I'm maxed out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

152

For some reason, Nicole is thrown by this. Distracted, she stalls for time.

NICOLE

Three months? And you're sure it's Dr. Baran's?

LISA

(to Mia)

What does she have to say about it?

MIA

I don't do anything without Nicole. We're partners. We don't act alone.

NICOLE

Mia, please.

(turning to Lisa)

I'm just saying, this is a serious matter. You don't want to be hasty.

MIA

Don't be hasty. Abortion is murder--

LISA

-- Well, I'm going to have an anaesthetic, for God's sake.

NICOLE

All right, fine. Whatever. How much will it cost?

LISA

They want \$650. And that's a clinic. I'm not holding anybody up, you know. I just want what he promised.

Nicole scribbles out a check.

LISA

I wouldn't've come, only he said you knew about his girlfriends, Mrs. Baran.

(as she receives the check)

Thank you. And tell him not to call when he does come back, you know? It's boundary time.

Nicole, aiming to sound casual, tries to usher Lisa out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

152

NICOLE

Incidentally, when was the last time you saw Guy?

LISA

Saturday afternoon. I dropped by. He was really wired about something.

(to Mia)

I figured you two had a fight. Make him pay you back. Anyway, goodbye.

But Mia detains her.

MIA

Lisa!

(confidentially)

Sometimes the baby lives. Did you know that? You try to make it go away, but it lives. Don't let that happen.

LISA

(pulling away from her)

Right.

Nicole just indicates with her eyes that Lisa should go. When she does:

MIA

If the baby dies it's God's will. That's why I never got pregnant, or you. God doesn't want Guy to have children.

NICOLE

Just sex. He's been seeing her for three months.

MIA

Longer than that. Last summer.

NICOLE

You knew about her?

MIA

I knew about you.

NICOLE

You should have told me. You should have told me about her!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

152

MIA

Why?

Nicole can't answer. Outside, a BELL RINGS and the halls are filled with students. Nicole looks at the window. Sickened, she tries to put up a front for Mia.

NICOLE

Come on. We have to get this over with.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - DAY

153

Tina Goss, Simon Veatch, and Leo Kazman are making their way outside through a hallway crowded with excited students. They are all unusually well-dressed. Goss's hair has been tortured into an imposing structure.

GOSS

It's been six days. Sooner or later the parents are going to get wind of it.

KAZMAN

We're going to look bad if we don't call in the police -- the real police, not that amateur.

GOSS

I've got my career to think of. I don't mind telling you, I've had other offers. I don't want to start a bidding war, but I will if I have to...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - MAIN BUILDING - DAY

154

Buchet and Pingel's final shooting day on the promotional video: a staged "Parents Day". A dozen cars are parked behind the cameras, where Hopkins and other kitchen staff are serving coffee to about twenty extras from Crescent City. The faculty push through the students in their uniforms are crowding onto the front porch, some of them leaning out of the second-story windows.

Nicole and Mia are approaching Pingel's make-shift studio. They speak in an undertone.

MIA

We should have canceled this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

154

NICOLE

It'll be over in an hour.  
(calming herself)  
Everything's fine.

PINGEL AND BUCHET

see them approaching. Mia trips on something; Nicole supports her.

PINGEL

Five to one they killed him.

BUCHET

They gotta be dykes. We should check 'em for ice-picks.

As the women join them:

PINGEL

We really could use Dr. Baran for these shots.

NICOLE

He's still away. Business. We can do this without him.

MIA

I don't want to be in it.

Pingel takes up a megaphone and talks to the local extras and the students. Buchet is behind the camera, doing tests. We SEE what he sees on a color TV monitor.

PINGEL

Okay, it's Parents Day and these are your parents. Boys, you're happy but try not to look relieved. I'm glad to see you, Mom and Dad, but boy, is this a great school. No tears from the kids; mothers, one or two or you can look misty -- who wants to be misty?

Four of the women raise their hands.

PINGEL

You and you. And don't overdo it. Everyone have their numbers? Number one.

A student raises his hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

154

PINGEL

Mom and Dad?

A couple raise their hands.

PINGEL

Okay. Number two.

Buchet pops up from behind this camera.

BUCHET

Hey, he's here! Dr. Baran.  
Let's get him in on this.

NICOLE

What are you talking about?

BUCHET

Third story -- at the window.

He points, but there's no one at the window.

BUCHET

Wait.

They gather around the TV monitor as Buchet rewinds the videotape. Sure enough, ON THE TV SCREEN some figure -- it looks like Guy -- appears at a window on the third floor. He watches for a while and then draws back.

PINGEL

It's someone, that's for sure.

Nicole is dumbfounded.

MIA

No, it's Guy. It's Guy.

She reaches out a hand to steady herself. Nicole grabs her.

NICOLE

(whispering)

Call Father Connolly!

ON ERIK, watching intently.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - NICOLE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

155

Late afternoon. Nicole is proctoring a test. Most of the students are sweating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

155

At the window she sees a car pull up; a Roman-collared priest gets out and comes into the building. On Nicole's apprehension...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - DAY

156

Erik is on a work detail: chipping paint from window frames. He's sweating, even in the cold March air. He's done three windows. Through one he sees Mia IN A GROUND FLOOR ROOM with FATHER CONNOLLY, a Roman Catholic priest. O'Connolly puts on his stole. Mia kneels by his chair and confesses. The look on O'Connolly's face tells us he's hearing Mia confess to murdering Guy. HOLD ON ERIK, straining to listen. He's heard something; he looks across the yard to the garage.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - GARAGE - DAY

157

Erik's head appears in the hole in the floor of the loft. He looks around. He sees the wicker trunk.

INT. MIA'S OFFICE - DAY (DUSK)

158

Nicole goes into the office. She fishes around in the top drawer of Mia's desk, finds the key to the drawer. She opens the drawer. The manila envelope is there. She opens it: it's empty.

Nicole is alarmed. She looks out the office window and SEES MIA AT THE SIDE OF THE POOL, a can of spray-paint in her hand. She is painting numbers on the cement around the pool, one through twelve.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - SWIMMING POOL - DAY (DUSK)

159

Nicole arrives to find Mia kneeling in front of her spray-painted number three. She clasps a prayer book and a rosary.

NICOLE

My God, Mia, what are you doing?

MIA

Penance. See? The stations of the cross. I'm fasting and praying for our sins.

NICOLE

Come inside, you're ill.

MIA

Do you know what I thought of the first time I saw Guy naked? This picture, look.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

159

MIA (CONT'D)

(showing her the  
prayerbook)

"Jesus is stripped of his  
garments." That's what Guy  
looked like. And he's suffered  
like Jesus. We crucified him,  
Nicole. We crucified him and now  
he's risen from the dead.

NICOLE

No, Mia, someone's playing a game  
with us. Come inside, you're  
ill.

MIA

I don't want a doctor.  
(splashing Nicole with  
water)  
It's holy water. See how clean?

NICOLE

Come on, honey. We have to go.

Nicole helps Mia up. As she does, she notices the windows  
in the building surrounding the pool. They're full of  
students and staff watching.

NICOLE

What the hell you looking at?  
Little monsters!

They go inside.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

160

Two hours later. Mia's at the window when Nicole enters  
with her coat and purse. Mia, more rational now, has made  
a decision: she won't let Nicole suffer with her.

NICOLE

I'm going to pick up the  
prescription the doctor phoned  
in.

(off Mia's look)

Will you be all right?

MIA

Can you get me some water?

NICOLE

Sure, sure. Come on, get into  
bed.

Nicole puts her coat and purse on the bed, goes into the  
bathroom.

IN THE CONNECTING BATHROOM

161

Nervously, Nicole fills a glass with water.

NICOLE

(calling out)

I think you should consider the hospital, Mia. You'd be safe there. More comfortable.

BACK IN THE BEDROOM

162

Mia is settling herself in the bed as Nicole arrives with the glass of water.

MIA

You didn't hate Guy, did you?  
Not like I did.

NICOLE

What are you talking about? He was a shit. Killing him was a good thing. Like planting a tree.

MIA

I saw your face when that girl came here. You loved him. You killed him for me.

NICOLE

Because we're such buddies? Hey, you kill my husband and I'll give you a home perm? Come on. I wasn't thinking of you. Just like you weren't thinking of me when you gave away our money today.

(off Mia's look)

Yeah, I checked, the money's gone. You gave it to the church.

MIA

I think money should go to the people you love. The people who love you. Are you angry?

NICOLE

Fuck the money.

(she smiles)

Your eyes still pop when you hear that word.

MIA

Blow me.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

162

MIA (CONT'D)

(her smile fades)

There's one more thing, Nicole --

NICOLE

I gotta get there by ten--

MIA

(with difficulty)

I want you to leave. Pack some things tonight and don't come back.

NICOLE

What are you talking about? Why?

MIA

Because I can't take it any more. Every time I see your face, I see it that night... I know what a person looks like, killing someone. And I know I looked the same.

(turning away)

I just... I can't face you anymore, I can't take the reminding. I'm sorry.

NICOLE

You need some sleep, that's all.

MIA

I need you to go, Nicole. Please.

Nicole is surprised at her own unwillingness to leave Mia.

NICOLE

I don't want to leave you alone.

MIA

(she puts Nicole's purse in Nicole's hand)

I've been alone all my life... except for this past week.

She pulls Nicole close to her, kisses her, whispers in her ear what Nicole whispered when she left her to drug Guy:

MIA

Courage.

Nicole, shaken, nods and leaves.

INT. SHIRLEY'S CAR - NIGHT (MOVING)

163

Shirley's driving to the school, certain she knows what happened. As she approaches the gates, Nicole's car passes her heading towards Crescent City. Shirley slows momentarily, unsure as to whether she should follow. She decides to continue.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

164

Shirley parks her car. As she gets out, she senses someone watching her. She turns around. It's the garage -- upstairs in the loft there's a small window, unlit. She hesitates, then goes towards it.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - GARAGE & LOFT - NIGHT

165

Shirley enters, calls out to the loft:

SHIRLEY

Who's up there?

She climbs the ladder, pokes her head up and sees nothing. Just the empty attic -- and something she dimly sees against a wall: the wicker trunk. She continues up, goes to the loft light to turn it on -- then hears the FAINTEST CREAK. She turns around and--

A shovel connects with the side of her head and stunned, she falls to the floor.

ERIK

stands over her.

ERIK

Busybody.

INT. NICOLE'S CAR - NIGHT (MOVING)

166

Nicole is driving, fumbling in her purse. She brings out a cigarette -- broken -- swears, and starts rummaging. Annoyed, she turns the purse over onto the seat and looks down.

EXT. NICOLE'S CAR - NIGHT (MOVING)

167

The car swerves, then pulls over to the side of the road.

INT. NICOLE'S CAR - NIGHT (STATIONARY)

168

Nicole sees what Mia slipped into her purse before she left. The two packets of money. Nicole remembers:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

168

MIA'S VOICE

I think money should go to the  
people you love. The people who  
love you.

A moment, then Nicole looks behind her, reverses the car,  
and heads back north to the school...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - GROUNDS - NIGHT

169

Erik runs towards the main building -- the wing which  
houses Mia...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S ROOM - NIGHT

170

Mia is at the window, looking down at the pool. She makes  
a decision. She picks up the phone, dials from a scrap of  
paper.

MIA

(into phone)

Crescent City Motel? Mrs. Culp's  
room.

(she listens)

Tell her Mrs. Baran called. I'm  
driving into town to see her.  
It's important.

She hangs up. She sees herself in the mirror opposite the  
bed...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

171

Erik is running up the stairs to the third floor. He  
reaches the third floor door and starts to open it...

ON ERIK'S FACE

full of terror as he sees the last person he expects to.  
The timer switch in the stairwell goes out, and he  
SCREAMS...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - BARAN BATHROOM - NIGHT

172

Water is running into the tub. Mia stares at it -- and  
then she thinks she HEARS SOMETHING. She turns off the  
water. She goes to the bathroom door that leads into the  
corridor. She listens for a moment, then opens the door.

THE CORRIDOR

173

is dark. Mia reaches for a light switch. The bulb  
flickers and dies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

173

At the end of the hall is Guy's office. There's a light on, a strange blue light spilling from it into the hallway. Suddenly she stops. She smells something. She's terrified.

MIA

Who's there?

No one answers. She goes towards Guy's office.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - GUY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

174

No one. Mia looks around, then gradually becomes aware of a LOW HUM. She can see the back of the computer -- it's on. The screen is shining onto the black leather of the seat back that's facing it. Slowly Mia crosses to the front of the computer, stares at the glowing screen.

MIA'S POV - THE COMPUTER SCREEN

A screen-blanking program is showing a message: "All is forgiven. I'm waiting for you. Guy."

BACK TO SCENE

Mia is terrified. By the computer is a smoking pipe. She picks it up, dumps it out. Suddenly the phone machine BEEPS. Mia jumps, then turns up the volume. It's the actual RECORDED SOUND OF THE MURDER in Nicole's duplex. She listens, horrified, then stumbles out of the room...

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

175

Mia runs down to her room. The door is closed; she opens it with difficulty, goes in, locks it. There's a sound -- a drip. She tenses, then realizes it's the water she ran for her bath.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

176

Mia looks at herself in the mirror over the sink. Her hand is kneading her chest. Trying to convince herself:

MIA

He's dead, he's dead, he's dead,  
God forgive you, he's dead...

Suddenly, in the mirror, she glimpses something behind her. She freezes, turns around.

MIA'S POV - GUY'S BODY

in the bathtub, submerged. INTERCUT BETWEEN THIS AND

MIA

Stunned, she tries to stay calm. She gingerly moves closer to make sure she's not hallucinating. Guy's eyes are rolled up as they were when he died, and he's wearing the suit he drowned in that was later returned to them. As she stares the body seemingly comes to life: Guy stands up in the bathwater.

Mia backs into a corner, clutching her chest, bug-eyed. She's having a heart attack. Finally, she slumps to the floor.

THE SOUND OF RUNNING FOOTSTEPS in the hall. The bathroom door to the corridor opens. It's Nicole. She sees Guy, but turns to Mia.

NICOLE

Oh my God!

Guy is popping out the contact lenses and slipping them into his pocket.

GUY

She's a lot tougher than we thought, the little bitch.

NICOLE

Jesus, Guy.

GUY

Tougher than me. Sucking on that douchebag hose for eight hours -- and that ride up the coast in the back nearly killed me. I've still got a cold. Whatever the doctors say, that fucking heart was made of iron.

NICOLE

I tried to reach you to call it off!

He grabs a towel, starts stripping off his clothes.

GUY

What the hell for? You women. I wish I could've seen her face. Some of those gags were great.

NICOLE

We were supposed to be in touch...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

176

GUY

I think you should find the body.  
I'll show up tomorrow and you can  
break the news to me. I'll be  
grief-stricken...

Nicole has bent down to Mia and realizes Mia's alive: her eyes are open, blinking. Thinking fast, she tries to indicate that Mia should close her eyes; when Mia doesn't, Nicole reaches out with her hands, closes her eyes as you would a corpse's.

NICOLE

You'd better go. Change in  
there--  
(tossing him his wet  
clothes)  
Take these with you.

GUY

Hey, relax. It's over.  
(pulling her towards him)  
We can celebrate. Haven't you  
missed me?

He kisses her -- but he senses some change.

NICOLE

I don't want you to get caught.  
There'll be plenty of time for  
that later. Go.

GUY

All right, all right.  
(he looks down at Mia)  
Does this look natural? Maybe  
she should be undressed if the  
tub is full.

NICOLE

Guy!

GUY

I'll just loosen it.

He squats down and starts to untie her robe -- when she suddenly opens her eyes and looks him in the face.

MIA

Get your hands off me, you son of  
a bitch.

Guy jumps back, falls, scrambles to his feet.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

176

GUY

Jesus!

Mia struggles to her feet, clutching the towel rack. Guy can't take his eyes off her.

GUY

You said she was dead!

Nicole has to play along.

NICOLE

I thought she was!

GUY

What do we do with her?

NICOLE

What can we do? It didn't work, it didn't work, it's over! Just go. She can't do anything to us. She tried to kill you, that's attempted murder. You've got that on her. She'll give you what you want -- won't you, Mia?

A moment, then Guy strikes Nicole across the mouth, throwing her against the wall.

GUY

You lying bitch! You're with her!

NICOLE

(yelling at Mia now)

Go!

She attacks Guy, half-tackling, half-falling on him. For a moment, Mia wavers -- then she runs out the door down the hall.

Guy kicks Nicole off him, starts to choke her. She pushes him off her, and he starts down the hallway after Mia. Nicole falls back; her eyes close.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

177

Guy runs down the hallway. Through a window he sees into another arm of the school. A door to the stairwell is swinging shut.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

178

Mia runs down the stairs. Above her, she hears a door opening.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - BARAN CORRIDOR - NIGHT

179

Choking, Nicole staggers out into the hallway. She tries to scream, but she can't make a noise. Instead, she sees the FIRE ALARM, pulls it down. The ALARM SOUNDS. Inside the building, an automatic sprinkler goes on. She goes to the window to see:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

180

The ALARM IS SOUNDING, and lights go on all over the student and staff wings of the building.

NICOLE

181

She smiles. Then she SEES Mia exiting the building at the ground floor. Nicole pulls herself together, starts limping, then running to the stairwell.

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - POOL AREA - NIGHT

182

Students and teachers are pouring out of the front door, massing in the parking lot, while here, in the back, Guy pursues Mia. She knows it's hopeless; she's crying. He grabs her from behind, throws her against the fence around the pump enclosure. He's breathing heavily, almost as heavily as she.

GUY

Shhhhh. Don't cry. It smarts, I know. After all these years of sainthood, finding out we're perfectly matched.

(touching her wet cheeks)

Such a nice bedtime story. "I married beneath myself. I'm not like him." But now you know. Soulmates.

MIA

Let me go.

Guy laughs, pulls her to him suggestively.

GUY

Was it a lonely week? Or did you two keep each other company?

She tries to wrest herself free; he tightens his hold with one hand, punches her in the stomach with the other.

MIA

(gasping for breath)

What's your plan now, I beat myself to death?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

182

He hauls off and punches her again. She slams against the enclosure wall. He continues beating her.

GUY

You bitch! You fucking killed me!

INSERT - MIA'S BACK

One of her hands is held up to ward off his blows -- but the other finds a half-empty bottle of chlorine for the pool. She desperately tries to work off the bottle cap.

BACK TO SCENE

Guy starts choking her now. Her face is darkening; her eyes are beginning to bulge. Suddenly, from behind him:

NICOLE (O.S.)

Guy!

He turns around, and in that moment Mia whips the opened bottle of chlorine and dashes it in his face! He SCREAMS in pain as the chlorine burns into his eyes, but even in his pain he reaches out, grabs Mia to prevent her from running. She falls to the ground.

Nicole runs to them, tries to pull the blinded Guy off Mia. A look passes between the two women, and together, in unspoken agreement, they start to push Guy towards the pool. Realizing what they're up against, he struggles, and at the pool's edge, he manages to take them over the side with him.

All three of them are in the shallow end of the pool now. Guy grabs Mia, dunks her, holding her under water, then raising her up. Nicole tries to pull him off Mia--

NICOLE

Get out! Run!

But Mia can't break free. Nicole sees something on the terrace. She struggles out of the pool, crawls toward the edge of the terrace where Gannon's been working on repairs...

Back in the pool, Guy is dunking Mia again and again. She can't fight him anymore.

MIA

(coughing with water)

Just do it. An eye for an eye.

He dunks her one more time; her arms reflexively flail and then are still.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

182

Suddenly Guy blinks as he feels a THUD against the back of his head. He lets Mia go. He turns to look up at Nicole. She has a loose brick from the terrace repairs in her hand; it's bloody now.

NICOLE

This is a week late, asshole.

He ROARS, lunges at her and she plunges the brick into his temple. He falls back into the water, his eyes open, unseeing. After a moment, he sinks.

Nicole grabs the floating, unconscious Mia, pulls her to the ladder. She pushes her up and out of the pool, climbs up the ladder. She turns Mia on her back, starts giving her the kiss of life.

NICOLE

Come on, Mia, come on.

While she's working on her, we MOVE TO:

THE POOL

where Guy sank. He's not there anymore.

BACK TO NICOLE AND MIA

It doesn't look like Nicole will save her -- and then suddenly Mia coughs, vomits water, opens her eyes. Nicole smiles.

NICOLE

Yeah, it's me again. The Blessed Virgin.

Suddenly, just behind them, Guy emerges from the water, heaving himself out of the pool and on top of them. He pins Mia, who SCREAMS. Nicole looks around desperately for any possible weapon. All she sees is the very old life preserver: hard, brittle compressed foam rimmed with a rope for grabbing onto. It makes a poor tool; still, Nicole beats Guy about the head with it, blows that damage the life preserver more than they do him. A chunk of the preserver breaks off, but the rest of it and the circle of rope holds. Unintentionally the rope slips over Guy's head like a noose. Nicole sees this, grabs it and pulls with all her might, snapping Guy's neck. On top of Mia, his head arched back like he's coming, Guy shudders, then falls on top of her. Revolted, Mia pushes him off so he's lying on his back at the edge of the pool.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

182

Suddenly, the pool goes black -- the underwater lights have been turned off. Mia and Nicole turn to see Shirley at the pool enclosure. She walks slowly towards the women. She approaches Mia. We're not sure what she'll do -- and then she strikes Mia hard across the face, bloodying her nose and mouth. Mia, shocked, looks at her.

SHIRLEY

This way it'll be easier to claim self-defense.

NICOLE

You mean you won't...

Shirley looks down at Guy's body at her feet, the rope of the life preserver still around his neck.

SHIRLEY

So that's Guy. Not bad. Looks a bit like my ex.

Suddenly, we see Guy's hand quivering: he's not quite dead. Calmly, deliberating only a second, Shirley gently, with her foot, noses him into the pool. He sinks into the blackness as Shirley peels off her nicotine patch, takes a cigarette from a new pack, lights it and inhales.

SHIRLEY

(throwing the lit match into the pool)

I guess I should go get a paramedic. A slow one.

With a final look at the two women, she leaves. Nicole turns to Mia, solicitous.

NICOLE

Mia, I'm sorry --

Mia, torn, looks Nicole straight in the eyes. She tries to say something but can't; instead, she turns her back on her and moves away. Nicole, pained, wants to follow but lets her go...

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL - NIGHT

183

The pandemonium of a fire -- without the fire. Firemen, students, teachers, all milling about in front of the school.

Buchet and Pingel, burdened with cameras and battery-powered lights, struggle up the hill from their on-site studio to catch the action.

VIDEO IMAGE - A CLOSET DOOR

184

Lit by the portable light, the door of this closet is opened and WE SEE a bound-and-gagged Erik struggling furiously.

REVERSE ANGLE to show Pingel and Buchet, astonished. They look at each other.

PINGEL

You know what this means?

BUCHET

We're gonna get agents.

DISSOLVE TO:

SEVERAL CLIPS FROM TABLOID TELEVISION SHOWS

185

"A Current Affair", "Inside Edition", "American Journal", etc.

"A CURRENT AFFAIR"

WE SEE Buchet and Pingel's footage of the Baran School for Boys, now headlined, "Inside the School for Scandal".

WE SEE Buchet and Pingel being interviewed.

PINGEL

...We knew right away something was fishy. I could see it, personally, I'm a visual guy, I think in images...

BUCHET

...I felt we were gathering evidence, you know, as well as doing a PR job. It became a piece with many different levels... That's how we like to work, frankly... Texture is key...

NATIONAL AND LOCAL TV CLIPS

186

A) of Mia, accompanied by Shirley, being taken into police custody.

B) of Mia testifying at an inquest.

C) of Mia, free, leaving the inquest, cheered by onlookers, with a video caption reading, "GRAND JURY RULES: SELF-DEFENSE". Another: "WIDOW GOES FREE".

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

186

D) of Lisa leaving a hospital in a wheelchair, holding a newborn, surrounded by TV cameras and journalists. The video caption reads: "LIFE AFTER DEATH FOR SWIMMING POOL DON JUAN."

E) of Nicole's duplex in Oakland. Edie is giving a tour of the premises to "Inside Edition" cameras.

F) of Jane Whitney's talk show. The guests are all women. A closeup of one of them, with the video caption: "BETTY. HUSBAND'S MISTRESS IS HER BEST FRIEND."

G) of the closing of the Baran School for Boys. In the b.g. we SEE a Local Anchor talking into her camera with the empty pool as a backdrop. Veatch and Kazman try to hide their faces from the cameras; Goss, decked out in her best, makes the most of her fifteen minutes. The students are being collected by their parents. Erik's arm is held by his father, who roughly maneuvers him towards the car, until Erik pulls away, pushes him back, gets in the car without assistance, and slams the door. WE PULL BACK TO SEE WE'RE ON:

H) the Oprah Winfrey show; and Oprah is watching a monitor with the above footage with her guest -- ERIK SCANLON, who, with his slicked-back hair and knowing attitude, exchanges a wise, sad smile with Oprah. His video caption reads: "ERIK SCANLON. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ACTIVIST & ABUSE CONSULTANT. FOUNDER, JUST SAY WHOA."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BARAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS - NIGHT

187

A fall day. The school, closed since the killing of Guy six months ago, is clearly unoccupied -- except for one lit upstairs window in the main building.

Mia's car is parked outside the front door, the trunk open, a few cartons stacked by it. We HEAR A CAR'S ENGINE. Headlights illuminate the gate as someone unlocks the chain.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL FOR BOYS - MIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

188

Mia is packing to leave. Behind her, the familiar wicker trunk is open, full of books. When she turns around, she is startled to see:

NICOLE

standing in the doorway. She has changed since we saw her last.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

188

She's let her hair go gray, and her face is clean, unmade-up. There's a strange quality to the tension between Mia and Nicole: more hurt lovers than bitter enemies.

NICOLE

I tried to call. You've changed the number.

Mia rummages in one of the packing boxes. We see what she uncovers, but Nicole doesn't: a gun.

MIA

How'd you know I was here?

NICOLE

Shirley. She can't stand me but we keep in touch.

(looks around the room)

It hasn't changed. I thought it would change more.

(at the window)

You didn't drain the pool?

MIA

And take away their fun?

(off Nicole's look)

The kids from town. One night they put a dummy in there. What do you want?

A moment as Nicole realizes it's not going to be easy. She takes a thick envelope out of her purse.

NICOLE

This is yours. It's all there.

MIA

I don't want it.

NICOLE

Then give it to the church or the poor or the homeless, whatever, I don't care.

Mia won't take the envelope. Nicole puts it on a table. As Mia watches her:

MIA

You look terrible. You should stop smoking.

(realizing)

Oh. You miss him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

188

NICOLE

Not him.

Mia doesn't respond. Nicole tries to smile to disguise her pleading:

NICOLE

Mia, come on. It's not going to kill you to forgive me.

A moment as Mia weakens, almost gives in. Then, to protect herself, she turns cold.

MIA

I don't even know who you are.  
If I could think of a way to pay you back for that, even a little... Can you?

Of course Nicole can say nothing. Defeated:

NICOLE

Well. It was worth a shot.

MIA

Maybe to you. Goodbye.

Nicole leaves.

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - CORRIDOR OUTSIDE BEDROOM - NIGHT

189

Nicole starts towards the stairs, hesitant, wanting to go back, deciding not to. Suddenly, she HEARS A GUNSHOT from back inside the bedroom.

NICOLE

Mia!

INT. BARAN SCHOOL - MIA'S BEDROOM/BATHROOM - NIGHT

190

Nicole runs in, terrified. Mia's not there -- but she smells gun powder. Out of the corner of her eyes, she sees the door to the bathroom is swinging open.

NICOLE

Mia, no!

She runs INTO THE BATHROOM -- but there's no body. Suddenly, she knows. She turns to see:

MIA

standing behind her, almost smiling, holding the starter's pistol.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

190

MIA

I thought of something.

They look at each other, and then Nicole reaches out and embraces Mia. Gently, she whispers into her ear:

NICOLE

I was alone all my life, too.  
Except for that week.

Finally, Mia's arms come up to return the embrace.

MIA

I know.

NICOLE

(to cover her emotion)  
Come on. Let me give you a hand.

And Nicole goes to the window to get a box off the windowseat. She stops, looks down at the swimming pool. It's dark -- and then the pool lights suddenly go on.

NICOLE

God, I hate kids. You're really going to give that money to the poor?

MIA

(smiling)  
You know what? I'm poor.

MIA AND NICOLE (FROM POOL LEVEL)

191

Two small heads at the lit window move into the room and disappear from view. WE RACK FOCUS to the moving water that fills the front of the frame. Of course it's got to be the kids from town; we just don't see them. All we see is the POOL LIGHT GOING OFF, and all WE HEAR, just as the FINAL CREDITS begin to roll, is the SOUND of SOMETHING or someone FALLING IN...

FADE OUT:

THE END