

FATAL ATTRACTION

by

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Screenplay by
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1 EXT. NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

The CAMERA IS HIGH ABOVE Manhattan, surveying the city skyline. Low clouds glow dimly, reflecting the illuminated buildings and the street lamps below. The SOUND OF TRAFFIC filters up, faint and distant.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

2 EXT. UPPER WEST SIDE - NIGHT

The CAMERA DRIFTS toward the upper stories of a group of thirties style apartment buildings. Most of the windows are lighted.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

3 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

CAMERA CLOSING IN on one individual window. Through the slatted blinds we glimpse a bedroom. A WOMAN in bra and pants closes the blinds with a quick swivel of the blades.

4 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - NIGHT

Amiable chaos. BETH, a good-looking woman in her thirties, leaves the window, going to and from the bathroom. She trips over an earphone extension cord, which leads to DAN, her husband, also mid-thirties, with open good looks, flipping through law texts and legal pads, bifocals sliding on his nose. We can faintly hear Schubert's SYMPHONY #4 through the HEADPHONES.

ELLEN, an adorable child of five holding a coloring book, is lying sprawled on the next couch, intently watching TV. Now and then, Dan holds up his hand in front of her face, blocking out the TV screen. Ellen oblivious to Dan's attempts to distract her, moves her head around his hand for a clear view.

BETH

(laughs)

You better get going, kiddo; we're gonna be late...

ELLEN

(overlapping)

He can't hear you, Mommy...

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

The PHONE RINGS, overlapping...

BETH
(overlapping)
Oh, great.

She goes into the bathroom, leaving the PHONE RINGING and Dan, happily oblivious. Ellen sizes up the situation and goes over to her father. In a familiar gesture, she pulls off one side of the earphones.

ELLEN
Daddy! Telephone!

DAN
(startled)
Huh? Oh, thanks, honey...

He stands up and heads for the phone, revealing that he's only dressed from the waist up, in crisp white shirt and tie. Below the waist it's shorts and socks.

On his way to the phone, he trips and stubs his toe.

5 INT. KITCHEN AND HALLWAY - NIGHT

DAN
(grimacing)
Hello?

HILDY (O.S.)
Dan, are you okay? It's Hildy.

DAN
Hi, I'm fine. I just stubbed my
toe. Hang on...
{shouts}
Beth? It's Hildy!

He calls out to the passage, to the open bathroom door.

6 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

BETH (O.S.)
I'll call her back.

DAN
(to Hildy)
She's in the bathroom.

HILDY (O.S.)
Can you ask her what she's
wearing?

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

DAN
She wants to know what you're
wearing.

INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Beth is standing in her bra and pants in front of the mirror above the hand basin, starting on her makeup. Ellen stands beside her in a nightdress, playing with her mother's makeup, which is scattered chaotically.

Beth is harassed, panicky, late. Ellen is twisting up a column of lipstick.

BETH
(shouts)
My black suit...!
(to Ellen)
Don't do that, honey, you'll get
it all over your hands.

DAN
(to Hildy)
Her black suit.

HILDY (O.S.)
Oh... it's going to be smart?

7 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

DAN
You know what these things are
like. It's business.

HILDY (O.S.)
Ask her if she thinks my red dress
is okay.

Dan smiles to himself, shaking his head good-naturedly.

DAN
(to Beth)
Do you think her red dress is
okay?

INT. GALLAGHER'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

BETH
(full of toothpaste)
Perfect!

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

DAN

She says it's perfect. Okay,
'bye. (See you later.)

She looks down at Ellen, who has completely flattened
the tube.

BETH

(dismayed)

Ellen... now look what you've
done.

She takes the lipstick away, registering its condition.

BETH

(continuing)

I needed that.

ELLEN

I'm sorry.

BETH

It's okay, honey, it's okay.

8 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Now Dan is rummaging in the wardrobe, searching among
the clothes.

DAN

Where's my blue suit?

The DOORBELL RINGS --

DAN

(continuing)

Dammit, there's Christine...

9 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Beth straightens up in response to Christine's arrival,
knocking a jar of cream onto the floor where it SHAT-
TERS with a SPLAT.

BETH

Shit!...

(shouts)

It's on the back of the door!...
(Watch out for the glass.) Don't
come in here, honey!

She stoops to pick up the pieces.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

BETH
 (continuing; mutters)
 Shit, shit, shit!

DAN
 (in bedroom)
 Oh... (thanks, honey).

Ellen waddling down the corridor.

ELLEN
 (sing-song)
 Shit-shit-shit.

BETH (O.S.)
 Ellen!

9A OMITTED
 10
 10A

11 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dan and Beth are giving CHRISTINE, the babysitter, a mildly "new wave" teenager with a red streak in her hair, instructions. Sam pads around excitedly. Beth looks elegant in a black tailored suit, her hair pinned up with a comb.

BETH
 There's some lasagne in the fridge, and I've left the numbers where we'll be on a pad by the kitchen phone.

CHRISTINE
 (self-confident)
 Sure.

DAN
 (teasingly)
 And no partying, d'you hear?

CHRISTINE
 But I've already sent the invitations.

DAN
 (grins)
 Can I come?

CHRISTINE
 You're too old.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

DAN

Thanks, kiddo.

BETH

I thought we were late?

She pulls him out into the outer hallway with her.

12 OMITTED

6

13.

14 INT. JAPANESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A large reception. The restaurant has been taken over for the evening and cleared of tables so that the guests can mill about. Waitresses in kimonos pass in and out with trays of tasty sushi goodies and glasses of champagne. A publishing house is launching a new book -- A Japanese exercise manual, hence the theme of the occasion. Dan and Beth, looking elegant, work their way towards the stairs. Dan grabs hands, pounds backs, working the room.

BETH

Oh, look at this!

DAN

Hey, Chuckie, you playin' ball on Friday? Great, we're in the cellar, can use every lawyer we got... Hi, yeah, I mean, no, next week... uh, Wednesday, yeah, see you in court... Jesus!

He and Beth have reached the stairs to the main room. Beth pats her hair.

BETH

Is my hair okay?

DAN

(eating)
You look great.

BETH

Dan, I'm asking you.

DAN

Honey, you're the cutest girl here... Hey!

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

Before Beth can say what she thinks of "cute," Dan's face has suddenly assumed a mask-like smile as he sees someone approaching. He nudges Beth in the ribs and she follows suit.

DAN

(continuing)

Hi, Bob! How are you?

BOB DRIMMER, senior editor at Robbins and Hart, arrives alongside, working his way around the room. He's wearing a neck brace. His eyes dart from side to side as he pumps Dan's hand, his mind already on his next move.

DRIMMER

Glad you could make it, Dan.
Sorry about the meeting
tomorrow... I know it's Saturday,
but we've got a real crisis.

DAN

That's okay. This is my wife,
Beth -- Bob Drimmer.

BETH

How do you do?

DRIMMER

Pleased to meet you.

15 ACROSS THE ROOM

A woman waves to them over a sea of hands.

HILDY

Beth!...

16 BETH, DAN AND DRIMMER

Beth lights up on seeing HILDY. She waves back. Drimmer seizes the opportunity to move on.

DRIMMER

I hope you like sushi!

DAN

Love it.

Beth and Dan push forward through the crush and meet up with Hildy and JIMMY.

BETH

What happened to his neck?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

DAN

He was making love to his wife.

BETH

(always falls for
Dan's stories)

Are you serious? Dan!

DAN

It's the truth.

JIMMY

You should see his wife -- they
had to take her away on a
stretcher!

17 Laughter. The two women compliment each other on their respective outfits. Jimmy and Dan gravitate towards each other. Jimmy works in the same law firm. He raises his glass, only to have his arm jogged by a MAN elbowing past. Champagne goes all over his shirt front.

JIMMY

Thank you!

The Man half-turned, with a shrug.

MAN

(moving on)

Sorry.

Jimmy dabs his shirt front with a handkerchief.

JIMMY

Fuck!... What great cultural event
are we here to celebrate, anyway?

DAN

Some new exercise manual.

JIMMY

(groans)

Not another one.

DAN

This one's different. It's by
some Japanese guy. It's based on
ancient Samurai disciplines.

THEIR POV

Over the other end of the room, the Japanese Author in question is being introduced to the Guests in front of a table display of his books.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

He keeps nodding and bowing politely.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Look at that man nod! Do you think it's part of the treatment?

They branch off into their version of Samurai Delicatessen, amusing each other but slowly getting separated from their wives. Lots of pidgin Japanese.

18 ANGLE

At that moment, an extremely attractive blonde GIRL passes by, heavily ogled by Jimmy.

JIMMY

Hi, there...

She turns and gives him a look to make hell freeze over. She holds the look a fraction longer, then turns and moves on.

JIMMY

(continuing)

Shi-it. If looks could kill.

DAN

Very good, Jimmy, very good!! I see you haven't lost your touch. (I like your moves!)

19 GENERAL VIEW OF THE ROOM

Time has elapsed. Groupings have changed. It's even more crowded.

20 INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dan enters, passing someone standing at a urinal.

DAN

Hi, Arthur...

ARTHUR

That you, Gallagher?

DAN

Yeah... how's it goin'?

ARTHUR

Fine. You still thinking about moving to the country?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

DAN

We're still talking about it.

ARTHUR

I tried it once -- for about four years. Hartsdale.

DAN

Yeah? (And?)

ARTHUR

I couldn't take the commute. The trains were always breaking down.

(pointedly)

What I should have done was waited 'til they made me a partner.

DAN

(Well, Arthur.) I'll see you later, Arthur.

ARTHUR

Yeah... If I ever finish here.

21 INT. RESTAURANT AREA - NIGHT

Dan tries to make it to the bar. His route takes him past the Girl who cold-shouldered Jimmy. They almost bump into each other. Dan is slightly distracted by what Arthur seemed to hint at.

DAN

(to bartender)

Can I have a champagne?

Their eyes meet and they smile.

DAN

(continuing)

I'm not saying... I'm not even looking at you!

ALEX

Was it that bad?

DAN

Put it this way, I'm glad I wasn't on the receiving end.

ALEX

I hate the way some guys think they have a right to come on like that.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

DAN

Jimmy's okay... a little insecure
-- like the rest of us...

There is a slight pause. She's looking at him with evident interest, so he doesn't move on. And she really is sensational-looking. She must be in her thirties, but she dresses younger, trendily, and gets away with it.

DAN

(continuing)

I'm Dan -- Gallagher.

ALEX

Alex Forrest.

They shake hands.

DAN

Alex... What's your connection here?

ALEX

I work for Robbins and Hart. I'm an (associate) editor... And you?

DAN

(smiles)

I'm with Miller, Goodman and Hurst. I do all your legal work. I'm surprised I've never seen you around.

ALEX

I just joined them a couple of weeks ago.

Something across the room catches Dan's attention.

22 HIS POV

Beth has seen him and is signaling they all want to leave.

23 BETH'S POV

Dan waves back and indicates he's coming.

24 DAN AND ALEX

He shrugs apologetically.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

DAN

I've gotta go.

ALEX

Is that your wife?

DAN

Yes.

ALEX

{teasingly}

Well, you'd better run along then.

DAN

Very nice to meet you. See you
around. (Some time.)

ALEX

Nice to meet you.

He walks away. She watches him go, clearly intrigued.

25 INT. GALLAGHER HALLWAY - NIGHT

The conversation of the women drifts in from the dimly lit hallway.

BETH (O.S.)

Thanks, Christine.

CHRISTINE (O.S.)

Any time, Mrs. Gallagher.

26 INT. GALLAGHER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth enters the bedroom and sits down in the nearest chair to take her shoes off. She looks across the bed. She is looking at Dan, sitting and starting to take his shirt off.

BETH

Aren't you forgetting something?

She gestures. Dan follows her look. Sam is waiting.

27 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dan and Sam re-enter. All the lights are off. Dan takes off his jacket and feels his way into the hall. He unbuttons his shirt and moves cautiously forward.

28 INT. GALLAGHER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan enters tentatively, and stops in the doorway, looking at the bed. His face drops.

Ellen is curled up next to her mother.

BETH

(half asleep)

She had a bad dream... just for tonight, honey...

DAN

Yeah, yeah.

He smiles resignedly and walks toward his side of the bed.

28A OMITTED

&

29

30 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT BUILDING LOBBY - DAY (SATURDAY)

The elevator doors open. Beth, Dan, Ellen and the dog are crammed inside with a small bicycle. They hurry through the lobby.

DAN

(If you like it) when you see it, don't say anything, for God's sake, or we can't negotiate...

BETH

Honey, what are you worried about? Ellen, are you chewing gum again?

DAN

(You know) we can't afford this house.

ELLEN

Daddy... Daddy...

DAN

What, darling...

BETH

No harm looking, is there? It's just up the road from Mom and Dad.

DAN

That's another good reason for not buying it.

[CONTINUED]

30 CONTINUED:

BETH

I didn't hear that. Ellen, I want that gum...

DAN

Good morning, Chris.

DOORMAN

Good morning, Mr. Gallagher...

We continue TRACKING them up to a little Volvo station wagon parked at the curb.

BETH

Let's not worry about it now, okay? I haven't even seen the damn place yet. I may not even like it!

(holding out her hand)

Ellen, the gum, please...

She surrenders it. Ellen climbs into the back seat. Quincy the dog naturally follows.

DAN

(grabbing him)

No, Quincy, not this time...

ELLEN

But, Daddy, I want him...

DAN

Daddy will be all alone!

He holds the dog by the leash. Beth starts around the car to the driver's side.

BETH

(consolingly)

I'm sorry, Quincy... You won't forget to walk him, will you?

DAN

I promise!

BETH

Have a good meeting! Love ya...

DAN

Thanks... (I love you too)...

He throws her a kiss as she gets into the car. Ellen waves at her window.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

ELLEN

'Bye, Daddy!

DAN

Say hello to Grandma and Grandpa!

The car moves off. Dan walks away with the dog.

31 OMITTED

32 INT. ROBBINS AND HART - OUTER OFFICE/LOBBY - DAY

33 INT. ROBBINS AND HART - CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Bob Drimmer and a couple of guys from the business affairs department are seated around the conference table with a SECRETARY. Dan comes in with a briefcase. General hellos -- everybody seems to know each other.

There's a general air of emergency. Drimmer is still wearing a neck brace. People are drinking take-out coffee and noshing on bagels.

DAN

Hi, Bob.

DRIMMER

Hi, Dan. I'm sorry to ruin your weekend. Please give my apologies to your lovely wife.

DAN

(laughs)

No problem, she's used to it. How's your neck? Any better?

DRIMMER

Don't ask. Henry's out of town, so I've asked Alex Forrest to stand in for him at the meeting... Has anybody seen her?

SECRETARY

She's on her way.

DAN

(twinkling)

While we're waiting, you wanna tell us what really happened to your neck, Bob?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

DRIMMER

That's cute, very cute. I was
planting geraniums...

Dan can hardly suppress a laugh. At this moment, however, Alex comes through the door, slightly out of breath. Moment of recognition as her eyes meet Dan's.

ALEX

Sorry, I was just getting the
file.

DRIMMER

Dan, this is Alex Forrest, our new
associate editor.

DAN

(smiles)
We've met before.

He and Alex shake hands.

ALEX

(businesslike)
Hello. Hi, Ed.

Alex sits down. The meeting begins.

DRIMMER

Let's get started, if we may.
Okay, Dan...

DAN

Okay, here's the deal (story)...
You want to publish a novel in
which one of the characters is a
Senator from New Jersey who sleeps
(fools) around. A Congressman
from Ohio claims the character is
based on him and has filed an
injunction against publication.

DRIMMER

Look, the Congressman's bald, this
guy has hair, he's from another
state, for Chrissakes... Look, if
we can't sell these books, we're
screwed.

DAN

Well, that's all fine... but if
I'm gonna go into court and prove
the Senator isn't based upon this
Congressman, I have to know the
truth.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

DAN (CONT'D)

Now, strictly (strictly speaking)
between these walls, did the
author have an affair with Mr.
Ohio or not?

Drimmer glances at Alex, nods imperceptibly.

ALEX

Yeah, she did. But then, she's
also had an affair with a lot of
other politicians. Any one of
them could make this claim. She
swears the character's fictitious
-- I just got off the phone with
her. (I just talked to her on the
phone.)

DAN

And you believe her?

ALEX

Yeah, I believe her.

Dan takes a bite of his bagel and leaves a dab of cream
cheese on his nose. Alex smiles and signals to him.
Gratefully, he wipes it off, smiles back.

DRIMMER

Good. Now that that's on the
table, let's see if we can move
ahead. How soon can we have this
injunction lifted? I've got
25,000 books in a warehouse
gathering dust...

34 OMITTED

35 EXT. ROBBINS AND HART BUILDING - AFTERNOON

It's pissing rain. Dan emerges, wrestling futilely
with a portable umbrella. It's a losing contest as we
DOLLY BACK to reveal he has arrived at the curbside
next to Alex, who's searching for a taxi.

Abruptly, all the rods tear through the flimsy material
simultaneously: Dan sees he's next to her. She's got
an umbrella. She approaches him, smiling.

ALEX

Is it "Made in Taiwan"?

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

DAN

Hey, look, these are tough to find... Don't laugh! (Do you believe this??)

He chucks the umbrella in the trash bin and puts his briefcase over his head.

His face lights up.

ALEX

Oh, wait, wait... Here, I've got one...

DAN

Hey, buddy, come on!! (How about giving us a break!)

THEIR POV - A SINGLE CAB

drives towards them.

Dan and Alex crane their necks hopefully as the cab turns on its "Off Duty" sign and passes.

ALEX

Oh, come on!!

DAN

Can you believe this?

They stand there, getting wetter as the rain intensifies.

DAN

(continuing)

This is hopeless. Do you wanna get a drink someplace till it stops?

ALEX

Yeah, come on.

They run off down the street.

36 INT. BAR/RESTAURANT - LATER

They sit at the bar of a nearby restaurant. The place is packed. A NOISY HUBBUB comes from the dining area. Alex finishes her drink.

THEIR POV - A MAN

comes in from the street, drenched and cursing.

(CONTINUED)

DAN
(reacting to this)
Want another one?

ALEX
(looks at her
watch)
I'm starving. Have you got to be
anywhere?

DAN
No... you wanna eat?

ALEX
(smiles)
I have to make a phone call.

She gets up and goes to the pay phone. Dan watches her go, intrigued by the developing situation.

37 LATER

They sit opposite each other at a snug table for two. The atmosphere is comfortable and relaxed. They're evidently getting along well. He's telling her a story, putting it over with zest, performing for her benefit. (Various AD CUES leading into dialogue below.)

DAN
Strangest case I ever handled?
Well, the truth is I never
actually handled it, but the
strangest case I ever came near
was when my parents decided to get
divorced and my mother asked me to
represent her.

ALEX
You're kidding.

DAN
That's what I said to her.
"Whaddaya mean," she told me, "you
know what a bum the guy is, you've
been an eyewitness to this
marriage for twenty-nine years!"
Can you imagine this -- from my
own mother?

ALEX
How did you get out of it? (What
did you do?)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

DAN

Well, you can't just turn down
your mother. I escaped on a
technicality.

ALEX

(laughing)

Which was?

DAN

I told her I didn't practice
family law -- which was true. She
bought it.

A waiter moves in to clear the table.

ALEX

(You're making this up.)

DAN

(Who could make this up?
(shakes his head)
Waiter!)

The waiter walks on, ignoring him.

DAN

(continuing)

It takes a special touch. (I
don't have the special touch)...
This is my favorite restaurant. I
have a lot of pull here (in this
restaurant)!! Oh, miss...

A WAITRESS comes over.

DAN

(continuing)

You want coffee?

(as Alex nods)

Can we get two coffees, please.

The Waitress goes off. Alex is watching her with a
little smile. She lights a cigarette, offers him one.

DAN

(continuing)

No, thanks. It's funny, being a
lawyer's a lot like being a
doctor. People let you in on
their innermost secrets.

ALEX

You must have to be discreet.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

DAN

That's right.

ALEX

(smiles)

Are you?

DAN

Am I what?

ALEX

Discreet.

DAN

(ironically)

I'm very discreet.

ALEX

(without emphasis)

Me too...

She holds his gaze for a beat, teasingly.

The Waitress returns with their coffee.

WAITRESS

(to Alex)

Cream?

ALEX

(coldly)

Black.

The Waitress turns to Dan with the cream.

DAN

I'm fine, thank you.

She leaves. Dan offers the sugar to Alex.

ALEX

Not for me.

She watches as he stirs sugar into his cup. There is a momentary lull.

DAN

You know what really surprises me... (Can I ask you something) (I don't understand)... You were free... Why don't you have a date ... Saturday night! (Someone as attractive as you)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (3)

ALEX

I did have a date. I stood him up. That was the phone call I made.

Dan is flattered by this information, as was no doubt intended. He cannot suppress a little smile. Alex notices and laughs lightly.

ALEX

(continuing)

Does that make you feel good?

Dan makes no reply, changes his mind, laughs.

DAN

It doesn't make me feel bad.

ALEX

So. Where's your wife?

Taken by surprise, Dan fumbles for his words, almost choking on his coffee.

DAN

(splutters)

My wife...? She's... er... in the country... for the weekend... visiting her parents.

ALEX

(teasingly)

And here you are...

He holds up his hands as if to protest his innocence.

ALEX

(continuing;

shakes her head)

Being a naughty boy...

DAN

We're having dinner. Is that a crime?

ALEX

(smiles)

Not yet.

DAN

Will it be?

ALEX

I don't know. What do you think?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (4)

DAN

(smiles)

I think... it's gonna be up to you.

She smiles. She's enjoying the game.

ALEX

Well... I can't say yet. I haven't made up my mind. (I can't decide.)

She holds his gaze. There is a moment of complicity.

DAN

At least you're honest.

ALEX

We were attracted to each other at the party. That's obvious. You're on your own for the night. We're adults.

DAN

Let's get the check.

38 OMITTED
thru
42

43 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A pot of coffee is percolating. Alex and Dan are pressed against the kitchen sink, kissing savagely. He lifts her up onto the counter as they grope at each other's clothes, dropping his pants, lifting her skirt.

As she leans back, her hands bracing herself in the sink, she accidentally starts the faucet running. She splashes water all over him with her wet hands.

There is something savage about their lovemaking.

Finally Dan picks Alex up and, with her legs still wound around him, makes his way clumsily from kitchen to bedroom.

His pants, which are still gathered around his ankles, threaten to trip him up, but he manages to make it to the bed.

They fall on it together.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

He turns her over, and during the wild rolling and pushing that follows, they get closer and closer to the edge of the bed, and finally land on the floor, exhausted.

Some time later, we find them lying on the bed, still breathing heavily.

ALEX

That was great!...

DAN

Thank God.

She starts to nuzzle him.

ALEX

Are you feeling energetic?

DAN

What did you have in mind?

ALEX

Wanna go dancing?

He looks at her incredulously, not quite sure whether to laugh.

44 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT HALL - DAY

The hall is in semi-darkness, a shaft of light coming through from the sitting room. Sam is lying asleep against the front door. The PHONE starts to RING.

The machine cuts in. The TAPE IS WHIRRING with Dan's announcement.

45 INT. "CAT CLUB" - NIGHT

The place is packed out, the MUSIC overpowering. This ain't Regine's; it's lower East Side, very punk. Serious dancing. The dance floor.

The CAMERA TRACKS over the dancers until it LOCATES Dan and Alex. They're expending a ton of energy. Alex looks at him and grins.

ALEX

(shouts)

You're a great dancer!

DAN

What...? (I can't hear you...)

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

ALEX
(hoarsely)
I said... Forget it!

Alex shrugs, with a big, laughing smile. Suddenly, she exposes a breast. Dan looks quickly around. It was just for him.

46 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

It's almost morning.

47 DAN AND ALEX

are walking through the deserted meat market area.

Alex has her hand in Dan's.

DAN
(uncertain)
This is where you live??

ALEX
Yeah.

DAN
Know where I can get a cab?

He looks at her uncertainly. She simply pulls him into the building.

48 OMITTED

49 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

They make their way to the huge, old-fashioned freight elevator.

Dan steps into it and leans against the far wall.

Alex deftly pulls at the heavy iron gates.

ALEX
Have you ever done it in an elevator?

DAN
Not recently.

ALEX
I'll bet you haven't.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

She slams the gate shut and pushes the button. As the elevator slowly rises out of sight, she throws herself at Dan.

50 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

They are making love, bouncing off the walls of the elevator.

Their bodies and faces are briefly illuminated by the passing neon lights seen through the windows.

51 Finally, Alex reaches to stop the elevator between floors.

She drops to her knees in front of him.

As he moans loudly, we hear the STEPS OF SOMEONE APPROACHING. Dan almost strangles himself trying to be quiet as he sees a pair of feet walk by on the eye-level floor.

Desperately, he reaches out and pushes the button, starting them down.

52 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dan and Alex are recomposing themselves. He clears his throat. His hair is disheveled. She clings to his arm as they walk the few yards to her apartment.

They lean against the wall at the apartment door, exhausted.

DAN

(hoarse)

Holy shit!!

Alex kisses him, then briefly leans away from him.

She reaches up outside her apartment door and produces a hide-a-key; trembling, unlocks the door, while Dan kisses her on the neck. The door opens. They enter like Siamese twins.

53 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAWN

The early morning light filters in through the curtains, cold and grey.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

We FADE IN to a CLOSE SHOT of Alex, fast asleep, and slowly PULL FOCUS onto Dan's face, large in foreground. His eyes flicker and open. As we TRACK BACK, he carefully disengages himself from her arms and gets out of bed without disturbing her.

53A ANOTHER ANGLE

Dressed, Dan places a note by the bedside.

54 OMITTED

5

55

56 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT HALL - EARLY MORNING

Quincy is asleep against the front door, awaiting his master's return. He wakes at the SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS, wagging his tail in anticipation. A KEY IS INSERTED in the lock, the door opens, and Dan comes in. Quincy jumps up eagerly.

DAN

Good boy, Quincy. Yeah, I'm gonna take you out in a minute. (We'll go out in a minute.)

He sees the message indicator winking on the answering machine and goes to REPLAY THE TAPE. There are a COUPLE OF CLICKS before BETH'S VOICE comes on.

BETH (V.O.)

Hi. What happened to you? I tried you earlier... I guess you're not back. I'm going to bed now, so call me in the morning.

The MACHINE BEEPS and starts to rewind. Dan looks pensive. He MOVES OUT OF SHOT, revealing a framed photo of Beth and Ellen.

57 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT BATHROOM - DAY

Dan luxuriates in the streaming jets of cleansing water. A large inflatable Mickey Mouse doll grins in the b.g., suspended from the ceiling.

59 INT. ROGERSON HOUSE - GREENHOUSE - DAY

JOAN ROGERSON answers the phone.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

JOAN

Hello? Oh, Dan (darling)... We were expecting you!

58 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

Dan is pacing. He looks clean and fresh after his ablutions. He's on the phone.

DAN

Yeah, I know. I'm sorry I couldn't make it...

59 INT. ROGERSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Joan Rogerson, Beth's mother, is an attractive fifty year old. The house is comfortable and large, without looking expensive. It's the house Beth grew up in.

JOAN

Yes... It's a pity, we really wanted you to see this house...

59A INTERCUT - DAN

DAN

Well, I'll see it next time.

JOAN

Yes, of course; you want to speak to Beth, I guess...

DAN

Yes, please.

JOAN

Yes, hold on a minute... Beth, phone...!

Joan opens the kitchen window and calls to Beth, who is playing a game of football in the garden with Ellen and her father, HOWARD. Beth comes into the greenhouse.

JOAN

It's Dan.

BETH

Well, hello. What happened to you?

(CONTINUED)

59A CONTINUED:

DAN

(vaguely)

Oh, I ended up having dinner with Bill.

BETH

You sound like you got a hangover.

DAN

(defensively)

No, I feel fine.

BETH

How is he?

DAN

He's, uh, same as ever. You know Bill. (just Bill)

Joan runs outside.

JOAN

Ellen, be careful!

BETH

Is he still with that girl?

DAN

Well, he wasn't last night... I think it's over. He didn't seem to want to talk about it.

BETH

So, are you getting any work done?

DAN

Yeah, I'm working (very) hard.

BETH

Sounds like it. Listen, there's some of the spaghetti sauce in the fridge if you get hungry.

DAN

Right... How's Ellen doing?

BETH

She's having the best time. I just hope Dad survives it. I don't know how to tell you this, honey...

She takes the phone and sits down, bracing herself.

(CONTINUED)

59A CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

(continuing)

... She wants a rabbit.

DAN

No rabbit! Honey, this family's gonna turn into Noah's goddamn ark. Give her a kiss and no promises. When are you coming home?

BETH

Well, it's getting complicated...

DAN

(How come?) Why is that?

BETH

There's a problem with the house.

DAN

(hopeful)

They sold it?

BETH

Very funny. No. It turns out that we can't see it until late this afternoon. Darling, I'm not up to fighting all that traffic. I thought I'd drive in (first thing) tomorrow morning.

DAN

(disappointed)

Doesn't Ellen have school?

BETH

She's five years old; what's she gonna miss, trigonometry?

DAN

(reluctant)

Yeah. Okay. I'll see you when I get home from work.

BETH

Okay... 'Bye, sweetie.

DAN

Take car, okay? Have a good time.
(Love you a lot.)

(CONTINUED)

59A CONTINUED: (3)

He hangs up. He remains there for a moment, sitting pensively. Almost immediately, the PHONE RINGS again. He picks it straight up, assuming it's Beth calling back.

DAN

Yeah?

60 ALEX'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The room is in semi-darkness, the only light coming through a crack in the curtains.

Alex squats on the bed, in a black kimono, lighting up her first cigarette of the day. She is still a little groggy from sleep and looks very disheveled -- in a word, rough.

ALEX

What happened? I woke up and you weren't there. (I hate that.)

60A INTERCUT - DAN

DAN

Didn't you see my note?

ALEX

What note?

DAN

I left you a note, by the bed.

ALEX

(seeing it)

Oh...

(reads it)

That's nice. But I thought we were going to spend today together.

DAN

I've got so much work...

ALEX

Why don't you just come over? I'll cook us lunch.

DAN

I've got this dog to look after. (This dog hasn't been out of the house all day) I can't leave him alone all day.

(CONTINUED)

50A CONTINUED:

ALEX

Bring the dog. I love animals...
Come on... I'm a great cook.

DAN

(weakening)

Listen... I'd love to, Alex,
really, but --

ALEX

Look, do what you have to do and
then come over. We can always eat
late, if you want.

DAN

Okay... Maybe later on.

ALEX

(persisting)

Or... you can work here. I won't
disturb you. I'll be a good girl,
you'll see.

DAN

(amused)

You don't give up, do you?

ALEX

You should be flattered.

DAN

(laughs)

I am... Okay, but I'm gonna do
some work here first, then I've
got to take the dog to the park
for a walk.

ALEX

Alright -- I'll meet you at the
81st Street entrance at one
o'clock.

61 EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

Quincy is running in the park with Dan and Alex. They catch up with each other, and start rolling around in the grass, fighting for Quincy's ball. Dan gets up, throws the ball. Alex catches it and throws it back to Dan. Dan sends the ball high in the sky towards Alex. This time it looks as if Quincy won't even bother chasing it.

DAN

Go on! Quincy, cover your man!!

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

AD LIBS re football game.

Alex has to run backwards to catch the ball high above her head.

ALEX

Oh... Oh God...

She just manages to get there.

DAN

Throw it back! Gallagher is the name, football's the game!

Alex laughs.

Dan yells more AD LIBS about football as he fades back for the ball.

She throws the ball back, but this time it lacks length. Dan sprints forward to intercept. He and the dog are on a collision course, the ball bouncing towards Dan. He lunges for it, catches it. He runs on for a few paces, carried forward by his own momentum. Suddenly he pulls up, his knees buckling under him. He sinks slowly to the ground, clutching his chest.

61A ALEX

She is no longer laughing. She starts toward him in horror.

ALEX

Dan...?

She breaks into a run.

ALEX

(continuing;
panicking)

Dan!

She reaches the spot where he lies. He is unconscious. She shakes him gently. He doesn't move.

ALEX

Dan...! Can you hear me...? Oh God! [On shit!]

She is really worried now. She puts her head to his chest to listen for his heartbeat. She straightens up. Suddenly he pulls a grotesque face and makes a spooky noise. She practically jumps out of her skin.

(CONTINUED)

61A CONTINUED:

ALEX

You bastard!

Dan hoots with laughter.

DAN

Your face! Your face!

ALEX

That was a shitty thing to do.

She sits up. She's really quite upset.

DAN

Hey, I'm sorry. I was just
fooling around.

She stares into the distance. Her voice is stony.

ALEX

My father died of a heart attack.
I was seven years old. It
happened right in front of me.

Dan shakes his head numbly. He feels terrible.

DAN

(Oh honey) I'm sorry. Really I
am... that's awful. I apologize.
If I'd known, I never would
have... *Alex sits there, watching him squirm. Suddenly she
bursts out laughing.

ALEX

Ha, ha!

He's taken aback. It takes him a second or two to
catch on.

DAN

(Your dad's okay?) Your dad
didn't die? He's alive??

ALEX

He's alive and well and living in
Phoenix.

DAN

(ruefully)
Well, you got me. I certainly
deserved that one!

(CONTINUED)

61A CONTINUED: (2)

He looks at Alex out of the corner of his eye, as if to say "What have I got myself involved with here?"

She smiles sweetly. Butter wouldn't melt.

62 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

A TAPE of "Madame Butterfly" PLAYS as Dan and Quincy awkwardly examine the apartment.

Alex comes by, wearing an apron, looking efficient, on her way from the kitchen. She TURNS UP THE VOLUME of "Butterfly."

ALEX

Let's hear it.

CAMERA HOLDS on Dan's reaction; how nice to be with someone who likes to listen to music loud.

ALEX (O.S.)

(continuing)

I hope you like spaghetti...
specialty of the house!

DAN

Goes with the opera --

He uncorks a bottle of wine, trying not to notice Quincy sniffing about this strange place. He pours two glasses and heads out.

63 She's cooking up a storm. Dan uncorks the bottle.

6

64

DAN

That smells so good...

He takes the bottle to the table and pours two glasses.

DAN

Anything else I can do to help?

ALEX

No, no, just make yourself at home. You could put on another tape if you want.

DAN

No, this is great. I love "Madame Butterfly."

ALEX

(pleased)

Really? It's my favorite opera.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

64 Dan brings her a glass. He remembers, twirling his glass.

DAN

Mine too. It's the first opera I ever (heard) saw. My dad took me to (see it at) the old Met when I was five years old.

ALEX

Did it make sense at all?

DAN

Oh, yeah, I got the gist of it. I understood about this U.S. sailor setting up house with this Japanese girl -- I got all that. But in the last act, after he left her and my father told me that she was gonna kill herself, I was terrified (freaked out) and climbed right under the chair.

(he listens)

Right here, isn't it? (Listen...)

She nods. They listen for a moment. Dan remembers.

DAN

(continuing)

Funny.

ALEX

What?

DAN

I remember it as being one (well it had to be one) of the few times my Dad was really nice to me... comforting me at "Madame Butterfly."

He shakes his head at the memory and takes a drink; he fails to see how moved Alex is by this "confession."

65 INT. ALEX'S DINING AREA - LATER

66

"Butterfly" in b.g. Dan and Alex look at each other over their glasses.

DAN

What?... What are you thinking?
(about?)

[CONTINUED]

65 CONTINUED:

66

ALEX

(shakes her head)
I'm wondering: why are all the interesting guys always married?

DAN

Maybe that's what makes them (why they're) interesting -- the fact that you can't have them.

ALEX

How long have you been married?

DAN

Nine years.

ALEX

Have you got kids?

DAN

Yeah. A six year old girl.

ALEX

Sounds (pretty) good.

DAN

Yes. Well, I'm a lucky guy.

ALEX

So what are you doing here?

DAN

(uncomfortably)
Boy... You (sure) know how to ask 'em.

ALEX

I really want to know. Look, I had a wonderful time last night. I'd like to see you again. Is that so terrible? (awful?)

DAN

No... I just don't think it's possible. Alex... really... this is very unusual for me. I don't do this...

ALEX

It's strange. I feel like I already know you. I just wanna know where I stand.

He looks her squarely in the eye.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: (2)

66

DAN

I think you're terrific... but I'm married. What can I say? (So I don't know what else to say...)

ALEX

(I guess) Just my luck, (I guess.)

She raises her glass ironically and drinks, covering her disappointment.

67 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EVENING

The fading evening light casts voluptuous shadows through the window. Alex and Dan are in bed, naked under the sheets. Dan is asleep. Propped up on one elbow, Alex looks down at him tenderly, watching him. All is still.

Suddenly Dan's eyes open. For a moment he doesn't know where he is. He looks at his watch.

DAN

Shit!

He swings his legs out of the bed. For Alex the mood is abruptly shattered.

ALEX

What are you doing?

He pulls on his shirt.

DAN

I have to go.

ALEX

What for? I thought you said she didn't get back till tomorrow.

DAN

(patiently)

Look, there are things I have to do. I gotta go home.

ALEX

(angrily)

You know... I don't think I like this!

DAN

Like what?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

ALEX

The way you keep running off every time we make love.

He looks at her and sees that she is in earnest. Indeed, there is an edge of almost manic desperation to her voice. He tries to take the heat out of the situation.

DAN

(gently)

Alex, whether I leave now or in the morning, the fact is, I gotta go.

ALEX

Well, you're not gonna go now!

She grabs hold of his shirt.

DAN

This is... Stop it... Stop it!!

ALEX

I mean it!

There is a loud RIP as the shirt tears. They are both angry now.

DAN

What's the problem?? (What are you doing?)

ALEX

I'm sorry.

DAN

(You gonna be) Be reasonable.

ALEX

Be reasonable? What? -- thank you, goodbye, don't call me, I'll call you.

He starts to button up his shirt.

DAN

You knew all about me. I didn't hide anything. I thought it was all understood.

ALEX

What was understood?

DAN

The opportunity was there and we took it. We're both adults, aren't we?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

ALEX

What's that supposed to mean?

DAN

(lame)

I thought we could have a good time.

ALEX

No, you thought you'd have a good time. You didn't stop for a second to think about me.

DAN

This is crazy!... You knew the rules --

ALEX

(contemptuously)

What rules...?

DAN

Look, Alex, I like you. I do. I'm not saying if I wasn't with someone else... In another time and place... That we couldn't have had... I'm not free.

ALEX

(groans)

Please! Don't justify yourself. It's pathetic! If you just told me to fuck off I'd have more respect for you.

He looks at her with calm deliberation.

DAN

All right. Fuck off.

ALEX

Okay... And you -- get out!

She lashes out with her foot, kicking him off the edge of the bed.

68 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Alex stands over one of the worktops, her back to the entrance. She's wearing only a T-shirt. As Dan comes in, she drops something onto the surface with a metallic CLATTER.

DAN

(flatly)

(Okay) I'm leaving.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

She turns around, a smile on her face.

ALEX
Why don't you come here and say
goodbye nicely... Okay? Let's be
friends.

He advances warily. She puts her arms around his neck
and kisses him.

ALEX
I'm sorry if I upset you.

DAN
It's okay. It's okay.

She kisses him again, more fiercely this time, holding
his face in both hands. She releases him and takes a
step back. She has a triumphant gleam in her eyes. He
raises a hand to his cheek.

DAN
Your hands are all wet.

He looks down at his own hand, which is smeared with
red, then back to her. She brandishes her wrists,
giggling crazily. Blood oozes from two ugly gashes.

DAN
(horrified)
Oh Jesus (Christ)... Jesus!!

ALEX
(taunting him)
Afraid of a little blood?

He drags her to the sink and runs cold water over the
cuts. She winces with pain, her laughter turning to
tears.

DAN
Hold on... keep it under the
water. Jesus Christ!!

ALEX
I'm sorry... I'm sorry!

DAN
You have a first aid kit?

ALEX
(sobbing; shakes
her head)
(No.)

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

DAN

(unnerved)

Have you got a bandage? Have you got anything I can use as a bandage?? Here! Hold it up... hold tight.

69 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan bursts into the room, goes to a chest of drawers and searches for something to use as a bandage. He finds a shirt and tears it into strips.

70 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alex is sitting on the tub, Dan crouches in front of her. He finishes bandaging her wrists. She is silent, head bowed, submitting passively to his ministrations.

DAN

(gently)

Is that too tight?

Alex shakes head.

DAN

(continuing)

We gotta go to the hospital. You may need stitches.

ALEX

No... (I'm okay.) (All right) I'm fine.

Dan looks into her eyes, searching for an explanation. She turns her head away.

ALEX

Don't look at me like that. (Why are you looking at me like that?)

A solitary tear trickles down her cheek. She tries to fight it back.

DAN

Why? Can you tell me why? Why are you so unhappy??

She looks at him, starts to speak, bursts into tears and finally gets it out through strangled sobs.

ALEX

I'm so alone!

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

The words come out in a protracted, almost primeval wail, a terrible cry of pain. She starts to weep uncontrollably, burying her face in her bandaged hands. Moved, Dan holds her in his arms, stroking her hair.

ALEX

(between sobs)

Sometimes... I come home... and I just... sit here... and there's a kind of tightness in my chest. It's like I can't breathe...! I'm so sorry...

DAN

Don't be sorry, don't be sorry... Okay, it's okay. You don't have to be sorry. (No reason to be sorry.)

The tears are streaming down her face.

We CUT BACK WIDE to show her cradled in his arms, a touching, pathetic sight.

71 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dan opens a mirrored cabinet above the basin. He is confronted by rows and rows of pills. He finds the bottle he is looking for and closes the door, coming face to face with his own grim reflection.

72 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex is in bed. Dan sits beside her, watching as she swallows two of the pills. She lies back, looking very pale. All her defenses are down. She is totally vulnerable.

DAN

You'll feel better when you get some sleep. I'll stay here tonight.

ALEX

You don't have to. I'm okay now.

DAN

(sincerely)

No... I want to.

She attempts a brave smile.

DAN

I'll be in the other room if you need me.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

ALEX

Thank you for being so kind.

DAN

(paternally)

Go to sleep, okay?

He gets off the bed, switching off the bedside light.
She turns over and curls up into a fetal position.

73 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Dan dials a number. The leaves of a large potted palm cast ominous, jagged shadows over his face. When he speaks, he keeps his voice low afraid of being overheard.

BETH (V.O.)

Hello?

DAN

Hi.

BETH (V.O.)

Hi!

DAN

(tentatively)

(How are you?) Did you just call
me?

BETH (V.O.)

No.

DAN

(groping)

I was in the shower and the phone
rang. I thought maybe it was
you...

BETH (V.O.)

(suppresses a yawn)

Nope...

DAN

How are you? Did you have a good
day?

BETH (V.O.)

(reviving)

We went to see the house.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

DAN
Yeah? And...?

74 OMITTED

74A INT. ALEX'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex lies still, eyes closed, as Dan's conversation can be faintly heard. We can't tell if she's listening or not..

DAN (O.S.)
You did? Really? Babe, that's really terrific. You really sound excited...

74B BACK TO DAN IN ALEX'S LIVING ROOM

DAN
... yeah... yeah. You know I'm not against it, don't get the wrong idea. It's just a question of the money.

BETH (V.O.)
(the good scout)
I know. If we can't afford it, we can't afford it. What are you up to?

DAN
Nothing much. I think I'll get a bite, kick in early (go to bed early). I'm wiped.

BETH (V.O.)
See you tomorrow.

DAN
Okay, darling. I love you.

BETH (V.O.)
I love you too.

DAN
Okay... 'Bye.

BETH (V.O.)
'Bye, darling.

Dan puts down the phone, deep in thought. Feeling like shit.

75 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex is fast asleep. Dan wanders around the kitchen and the living room, looks in on Alex on the way.

Later, he sits on the living room couch, deep in thought.

76 INT. ALEX'S LOFT - BEDROOM - DAWN

Dan is lying on top of the bed, fully clothed, his eyes open.

Softly, he gets up and steps to the window.

77 POV

The meat market on the corner is already in full swing. Dan leans over the bed.

DAN
(softly)
Alex?

She wakes drowsily. She takes a second or two to focus on him. She smiles weakly.

DAN
(continuing)
How are you feeling?

ALEX
Okay.

DAN
Does it hurt?

She moves her wrist from side to side.

ALEX
(winces)
A little.

DAN
Yeah. I gotta go now.

ALEX
Will you call me sometime? You don't have to if you don't want to.

DAN
No, no. I will. If you promise me you'll see the doctor.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

ALEX

Okay.

He bends forward and kisses her chastely on the forehead.

DAN

Goodbye.

ALEX

Goodbye.

DAN

You take care.

ALEX

You too.

He pauses at the door and looks back. Alex turns over and goes back to sleep.

78 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING

Dan ruffles the bedclothes until satisfied the bed has a suitably slept-in look.

79 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

He opens the refrigerator, takes out a pan of spaghetti sauce and gives it to Quincy who consumes it with relish.

79A INT. DAN'S OFFICE AND HALL - 8 A.M.

MARTHA, Dan's secretary, crosses the hall and sees Dan's door open. She goes into his office.

MARTHA

What are you doing here? It's eight a.m.

Dan looks up from his work, glasses sliding down his nose.

DAN

(Martha, I'm in the spithouse.)
I'm supposed to be in court by two
and I'm really behind. Do me a
favor, cancel everything and call
Drimmer -- tell him we're fine and
I'll see him there at two.

(CONTINUED)

MARTHA
(backing out)
At two. O---kay...

DAN
Good morning, Martha!...

80 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Dan puts the key in the door and enters, somewhat
bushed.

DAN
Hello?

As he starts to take off his coat, ELLEN charges down
the hall and jumps into his arms.

ELLEN
Daddy...!

DAN
Hey, how's my main squeeze?

He holds her awkwardly in his arms and walks toward the
kitchen.

ELLEN
We had a great time! I went for a
walk with Grandpa and we saw
rabbits and Sally chased them but
she didn't catch any and...

DAN
(laughs)
Hey, slow down! I can't
understand a word you're saying!

Beth is standing in the kitchen, a big smile on her
face.

ELLEN
But, Daddy, I want a rabbit...

BETH
Hi, darling...

DAN
Hi, babe... I really missed you.

Ellen picks up his briefcase and carries it off.

BETH
Liar.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

DAN

I did.

He kisses her tenderly. He puts his arm around her and holds her tight. He kisses her again, almost sagging with relief.

BETH

(laughs)

I should go away more often.

81 INT. GALLAGHER KITCHEN AREA - NIGHT

Dinner is over and Beth is putting away dishes. START on Ellen's tiny hands, attempting to shuffle a deck of cards which she then presents to Dan. An aura of calm and serenity pervades. Low light.

ELLEN

Now pick a card.

DAN

Any card?

Ellen looks at her mother, who nods.

ELLEN

Yes.

Dan picks a card. Beth is clearing the table.

DAN

Where'd she learn this?

ELLEN

Grandpa showed me! (Of course, Grandma is too old.)

Dan does. With great absorption, much to his delight, she begins to deal with the cards into rows.

DAN

Do I show it to you?

ELLEN

No... Put it back.

The trick is gonna take forever.

DAN

(to Beth)

So... How was it?

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

BETH
 (putting things away)
 How was what?

DAN
 Come on, I'm a big boy, tell me.
 I can take it.

Ellen leans to tell him in his ear.

ELLEN
 It has a place for rabbits.

Dan makes a terrible face.

Beth re-enters with two coffee mugs and sits down.

DAN
 (dying gasps)
 She said it, she said the "R"
 word.

BETH
 What can I tell you... It's
 perfect!

ELLEN
 (points)
 Is it in this row?

Dan lifts one eye and peeks.

DAN
 No.

BETH
 (offhand)
 So... when are you gonna come up
 and take a look -- just for the
 hell of it?

ELLEN
 (points)
 In this row?

DAN
 No. How about first thing in the
 morning?

Beth reacts, surprised, very excited.

ELLEN
 Daddy. Which row?

DAN
 (looking at Beth)
 This one, sweetheart.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

You mean it?

DAN

Yeah, I mean it -- if you can get me back by one o'clock.

He's smiling, so happy to be home with them.

ELLEN

Wait, that's wrong, I made a mistake. Now I hafta start over.

She gathers up the cards. Fine with Dan if it takes all night.

82 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

In LONG SHOT, a small two story timber house, painted white, the paint somewhat flaked. Their Volvo is parked in the drive next to another car.

83 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Their FOOTSTEPS ECHO on the bare floorboards of their empty house. Light streams in through the wide windows. There is a spectacular view over open countryside. Dan looks around, impressed. Beth sees this and senses victory.

BETH

Well?

DAN

(smiles)

It's okay...

He is trying not to let his enthusiasm show.

BETH

What do you mean, "okay"! It's fantastic!

DAN

(temporizing)

Sh, sh... Fantastic! It's great, it's great.

BETH

(excitedly)

Just think of all the money we'll save by not living in New York. And I can get a job teaching, once I get my diploma.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

DAN
(dubiously)
Oh! Yeah...

84 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALL - DAY

They continue through toward the hall, where the AGENT, a primly dressed woman in her forties, has been hovering in the doorway.

AGENT
The local high school's excellent.
My own children went there.

BETH
You see?

AGENT
This really is a terrific area for
kids.

DAN
No, I'm sure. Would it be okay if
I...

He points to the stairs.

AGENT
Please. Go right ahead. I'll
wait (for you) down here (for
you).

They carry on up the stairs. Dan's resistance is weakening, his objections sounding less and less convincing.

DAN
We'd still have to decorate.

BETH
There's nothing we can't fix
ourselves. We can have painting
parties.

DAN
Painting parties? Beth, you're
making me very nervous.

85 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LOFT ROOM - DAY

The trap door swings open and Dan's head appears, followed by Beth's.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

DAN

Wow! Look at this! This is fantastic! This is great!

They step up into the room. The floor is varnished wood. Two windows have been cut in the sloping roof. The ceiling has been plastered over between beams, leaving the wood exposed. A really skillful conversion.

BETH

This'd make a terrific playroom.

DAN

(completely won over)
What are you talking about, playroom?? This is my den!

BETH

I knew you'd like it!

DAN

How about making it a nursery?!

He put his arms around her and gives her a big kiss. He pushes her back toward the floor, pretending to ravish her. She resists laughingly.

BETH

I already did that... Dan, stop it!

She manages to trip him. They fall together on the floor with a loud bang. He starts to make love in earnest.

DAN

Why don't we christen this little sucker right here?

AGENT (O.S.)

Are you all right up there?

DAN

Yes, thank you!

They giggle -- but they don't stop.

86 EXT. LAW FIRM BUILDING - DAY

Their car pulls up outside the entrance. Dan jumps out and runs into the building.

87 INT. BUILDING LOBBY - DAY

Dan enters the building and crosses toward the bank of elevators. Several people, including a stunning BLONDE and a baby in a stroller, are about to get onto an elevator. Dan runs to catch it.

88 INT. LAW FIRM BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

Dan is standing next to the extremely attractive girl.

He looks at her, then studiously ignores her. He looks around, at the floor, and finally at the baby in the stroller.

The baby stares back at him, quizzically.

89 INT. LAW FIRM - RECEPTION - DAY

Dan comes out of the elevator and into the reception area.

MAN

I'll be in court.

EUNICE

Thank you.

MAN

Hi, Dan, how you doing?

EUNICE

Good afternoon, Mr. Gallagher.

DAN

Hello, Eunice. Martha back from lunch yet?

EUNICE

She just got back.

Sitting there, waiting, is Alex. She looks somewhat severe in a well cut dark suit, but still very beautiful. She is obviously ill at ease.

ALEX

Hi.

DAN

Hello.

He glances towards the receptionist, who is watching them. She looks away.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

ALEX

I hope this isn't inconvenient. I was in the area... I figured...

She trails off.

DAN

No, no... Would you like to come into my office.

90 INT. LAW FIRM - CORRIDOR - DAY

They walk along in silence. Alex is watching him out of the corner of her eye. They pass the open door of an office, inside which we glimpse Jimmy. He sees Dan and pokes his head out the door.

JIMMY

Hey! Dan!

Dan stops and turns. So does Alex.

JIMMY

(continuing)

Will you be in your office later? There's something I need to go over with you.

DAN

Sure.

Jimmy is looking curiously at Alex, trying to place her.

JIMMY

Haven't we met somewhere?

ALEX

(coolly)

I can't imagine.

DAN

Well...

He and Alex continue up the corridor. Jimmy goes back into his office, still trying to figure it out.

91 INT. LAW FIRM - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

They enter the office. Martha, his secretary, is visible through the door, staring after them, obviously intrigued by Alex. Dan closes the door on her.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

He goes and sits at his desk, pointing Alex to the chair in front. There is a bizarrely formal air to the proceedings.

DAN

Have a seat.

ALEX

Thanks.

She sits. Dan can't help glancing at her wrists, which are covered by her long sleeves.

DAN

(awkwardly)

Are you okay...? I was going to call you today.

ALEX

I'm fine. Listen... I find this terrible embarrassing... I wanted to say "sorry" for what happened. I had no right to put you through all that.

DAN

Nothing happened. Okay?

But she seems determined to explain herself.

ALEX

The fact is, I'd been going through a bad time. I was coming to some sort of crisis. I feel much better now, thanks to you. (So, thank you.)

DAN

You don't have to thank me.

ALEX

Oh yes, I do. Most guys would have just taken off. (run away.) I don't know what might have happened... (what I would have done) if you hadn't been there.

DAN

You're looking good. As a matter of fact, you look great.

He looks at her with a smile. And indeed, it's true. He's beginning to warm to her, now he realizes she's sane again.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (2)

ALEX

(quietly)

Thanks.

There is a moment's silence. Dan isn't quite sure what's coming next or where the conversation is leading.

ALEX

(continuing)

So... all that's in the past. I was wondering... Would you do me (I'd like to ask) one more favor.

DAN

What's that?

He shifts awkwardly in his chair.

ALEX

I've got tickets for Madame Butterfly two weeks from Thursday. I'd be very grateful if you'd let me take you. A peace offering.

DAN

It's very kind of you, but I really don't think this is a good idea...

ALEX

(smiling)

No strings attached.

DAN

(gently)

Alex, under different circum --

AIDE

You don't have to explain. I just thought I'd ask.

(she gets up)

I'll see you sometime.

They go to shake hands. Dan suddenly finds the formality rather ridiculous.

DAN

Hey!

He kisses her.

DAN

(So long.) Take care.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (3)

ALEX

Goodbye.

He escorts her to the door, and closes it after her. He shakes his head and lets out a deep breath.

92 INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT

On stage, the beginning of Act 2 of Madame Butterfly is in progress. BUTTERFLY sings of her love for Pinkerton and dreams of his return "one fine day"...

The CAMERA GLIDES over the heads of the audience until it discovers Alex. She sits alone, next to an empty seat, elegantly dressed for a night at the opera.

We MOVE CLOSER, until her face FILLS THE SCREEN. She listens to the MUSIC with a fixed expression, impassive, devoid of emotion. It's a strangely unsettling image.

93 INT. BOWLING ALLEY - NIGHT

Dan and Beth are seated at the scoring table with HILDY and JIMMY.

They take turns getting up to bowl in the alley before them. The ladies really don't know how to bowl, the men profess to be experts.

There is beer and shouting, lots of laughter and lots of warmth.

The MUSIC from the previous scene ("MADAME BUTTERFLY") continues over the SOUNDTRACK.

94 INT. OPERA HOUSE - CLOSE SHOT - ALEX - NIGHT

The image of Alex hovers over them like some malevolent bird of prey. Who knows what dark thoughts are palpitating behind those impenetrable eyes.

95 ON STAGE

The opera is coming to its climax. Butterfly collapses to the ground, mortally wounded by her own hand. As she finally expires, we hear PINKERTON'S desperate CRIES offstage.

96 INT. LAW FIRM CORRIDOR - DAY

We TRACK BACK from Arthur and Dan, past office after office.

ARTHUR

... about Rogers versus
whatchamacallit --

DAN

(overlapping)
Winitzky...

ARTHUR

Right. I got your memo. You're
gonna go for summary judgment?

DAN

Why not? The facts aren't in
dispute. Rogers admits he read
Winitzky's article. The only
question is, did he plagiarize it
in his book? As you well know,
(As we both know), you can't
copyright an idea, just the
expression of an idea. Rogers
certainly didn't use any of the
words in the book!

ARTHUR

Lemme think about it, okay? So, I
hear you're about to become a
suburbanite.

DAN

Yeah, we took the plunge...

ARTHUR

Got a buyer for the apartment...

DAN

Not yet...

ARTHUR

Got cold sweats about your escrow?

DAN

Maybe a little...

Arthur stops.

ARTHUR

But not about Rogers and Winitzky?

DAN

No, sir.

Arthur eyes him shrewdly, appraising.

97 INT. LAW FIRM - MARTHA'S OFFICE - DAY

Martha is talking on the phone.

MARTHA

He's still in a meeting... Yes, I know, I did expect him to be through by now...

98 INT. LAW FIRM - CORRIDOR - DAY

Dan and Arthur are walking towards Dan's office.

ARTHUR

(he's decided)

I'd like you to have lunch with me on Tuesday, if you're around.

DAN

Oh that'd be great, Arthur. (Thank you, Arthur, it'll be my pleasure.) Let me just check my diary.

99 INT. LAW FIRM - MARTHA'S OFFICE - DAY

They arrive outside the door. Martha is still talking. She's having a hard time getting off the phone.

MARTHA

You are on his list of calls...

She looks up as Dan enters. He looks at her quizzically. She covers the receiver.

MARTHA

It's Alex Forest.

DAN

(frowns)

Again? I thought you told her I'd call back?

He can't help glancing back to where Arthur is still hovering in the doorway.

MARTHA

I did.

DAN

Let me see the diary. Put her on hold.

She hands it to him. He hurriedly looks for the relevant page.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

MARTHA

Would you mind holding? He'll be free in a moment.

DAN

(to Arthur)

(Arthur,) Tuesday'd be great
(Arthur), thank you.

ARTHUR

Good. I look forward to it.

He leaves. Once satisfied he's gone, Dan turns to Martha.

DAN

Put her through.

100 INT. LAW FIRM - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan picks up the phone.

DAN

Hello? Look, Alex, I thought we'd agreed this wasn't a good idea.

ALEX (O.S.)

I have to see you.

DAN

Why? What for?

ALEX (O.S.)

There's something we have to discuss.

DAN

I'm sorry. I thought you understood. If I've somehow given you the wrong idea, I apologize. But I think it's best if we don't talk to each other anymore.

101 OMITTED

102 Dan hangs up, then pushes the button for the intercom to Martha's office.

DAN

If she calls again, tell her I'm out.

103 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth is sitting in front of the mirror, fixing her makeup, getting ready for the evening. She's looking great in bra and panties. Dan comes up behind and puts his arms around her, kissing the nape of her neck.

DAN

Humm... You smell good.

He strokes her breasts.

BETH

(gently)

Dan... They're gonna be here in a minute.

He kisses her on the lips. She responds, enjoying the moment.

DAN

Just let me look at you... God, you're beautiful!...

Beth is surprised and touched by his romanticism, but she respects his intensity.

Dan sits behind her and starts to stroke her legs, her breasts.

He looks into her eyes. They are about to kiss again. The DOORBELL RINGS.

BETH

(smiles)

Wouldn't ya know?

104 OMITTED

105 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Jimmy pries the cork off one of the bottles with a LOUD POP. He rushes to fill the glasses. They are all seated around the sofa. General AD LIBBING of cheers and excited chatter as frothing champagne spills over the table. Jimmy raises his glass in mock solemnity.

JIMMY

(AD LIBS re insurance, cold sores, etc.)

Ladies and gentlemen, my wife (my ball and chain), (mother of some of my children...

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

(HILLY

You should have such a ball and chain!

JIMMY

A toast! Here's to Miller, Goodman, Hurst... and Gallagher!!

DAN

Guys, all he did was ask me to lunch.

HILLY

... and they're moving to their country estate; they'll forget they ever knew us plebs...

DAN

(too straight)

Now wait a minute. I want you to know I've been reading one of those self-help books lately...

JIMMY

Published by Robbins and Hart, of course...

DAN

Of course. "Samurai Self-help." And it tells how to deal with the anxieties of friends as you move up the corporate ladder and they stay put, or, God forbid, move down...

JIMMY

(DeNiro in "Taxi Driver")

You talking to me? To me? Well, there's no one else here...

HILLY

He's been trying to get DeNiro for ten years... It's pathetic (a sad thing)...

DAN

Moving right along. And in this book it tells you not to coddle the anxieties of these friends. So I'm not gonna make a lot of false reassurances. I can't say you'll be up every weekend. Let's face it, things have changed.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: (2)

DAN (CONT'D)

This isn't a classless society.
As a matter of fact, this is
goodbye, guys!...

JIMMY

I knew it. Well, at least you're
running true to form...

BETH

Dan...

DAN

Well, honey, it's best to make a
clean break. We're on our way, we
wanna travel light...

The PHONE RINGS. Beth answers. The others go on chat-
ting

105A CLOSE ON BETH

She picks up the phone.

BETH

Hello...? Hello...?

Dan looks over towards her, alerted by a sixth sense.
Beth replaces the receiver with a frown, and returns to
the table.

BETH

(continuing)

Nobody there. That's the second
time tonight. I hate that. It
gives me the creeps.

HILDY

I'm always afraid it's someone
trying to case the joint.

JIMMY

Oh, no, don't worry -- it's
probably one of Dan's girl
friends.

Laughter.

105B CLOSE ON DAN

A sudden reaction, as he's caught off guard by Jimmy's
jibe. Of course, it's exactly what he's thinking. He
quickly laughs it off.

(CONTINUED)

105B CONTINUED:

DAN

Yeah, but which one?

But as the CAMERA LINGERS on his face, we sense his anxiety.

106 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The CAMERA SLOWLY TRACKS towards the bed, where Dan and Beth are asleep, CONTINUING PAST TO END ON A CLOSE SHOT of the TELEPHONE next to Dan's head. It CLANGS into life.

Dan's eyes open wide as he is jolted awake. Almost on instinct, he reaches for the phone before it can ring again. Beth stirs drowsily in her sleep.

DAN

Yeah?...

107 ALEX'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - BIG CLOSEUP - NIGHT

Alex's face is set hard.

ALEX

At last.

107A BACK TO DAN

He shoots an anxious glance in Beth's direction. She is slowly waking up, intrigued by a call at this late hour.

DAN

Oh, Richard. It's kinda late, isn't it?

ALEX (O.S.)

If you keep refusing my calls at the office, you leave me no choice.

DAN

Yuh, it's two in the morning here. Can't this wait till tomorrow morning?

ALEX

Oh... Is it awkward for you to talk?

DAN

You could say that.

(CONTINUED)

107A CONTINUED:

ALEX

I've got to see you.

DAN

I... uh... don't have the... the documentation here to answer that question. I'll call you from the office.

ALEX

No, meet me in front of the Robbins and Hart building at six.

DAN

Well, let me just think (about that)...

ALEX

Don't disappoint me.

DAN

You can rely on that.

ALEX

Be there.

DAN

Goodbye.

He replaces the phone. By now Beth is wide awake and looking at him with open curiosity.

BETH

Who in the hell was that?

DAN

A client. Jesus, these guys think they own you!

BETH

In the middle of the night?

DAN

It's only eleven in L.A.

BETH

(disgruntled)

Even so...

She turns over, trying to find a comfortable position, finally settling down. Dan remains on his back, staring up at the ceiling. This is beginning to get to him.

108 EXT. SIXTH AVENUE - EVENING

Dan and Alex are walking along Sixth Avenue. He is striding angrily along beside her. His loud voice attracts the attention of passersby.

DAN
This has got to stop.

ALEX
(calmly)
Dan, if you'd agreed to see me, I wouldn't have had to call you.

DAN
It hasn't registered, has it?
It's over. There's nothing between us.

ALEX
(chilling)
You mean you've had your fun, now you just want a quiet life.

He pulls her roughly into a doorway.

DAN
Why are you doing this?

ALEX
(scornfully)
Doing what?

DAN
(exploding)
You need help!!

He moves away. She hurries to catch up with him.

DAN
(continuing)
You need a shrink!! (a fucking doctor!)

109 INT. SUBWAY STATION & CORRIDORS - DAY

Dan and Alex are walking along the endless corridors. He looks grim.

ALEX
Why are you so hostile? It really isn't necessary, you know. I'm not your enemy.

DAN
Then why are you trying to hurt me?

{CONTINUED}

109 CONTINUED:

ALEX

(pained)

I don't want to hurt you, Dan. I love you.

DAN

You what?

ALEX

(quietly)

I love you.

DAN

You don't even know me.

ALEX

(intensely)

How can you say that?

DAN

(baffled)

We spent the weekend together. That's as far as it goes.

ALEX

You stayed that second night. You must have liked me a little?

DAN

I was worried about you. Why do you have to read so much into everything?

She suddenly looks very vulnerable. He realizes she really does believe he must feel something for her.

DAN

(gently)

Can't you understand? I've got a whole life going with someone else. A very happy one.

ALEX

(bitterly)

Whole means complete. If your life's so damn complete, what were you doing with me?

DAN

Is this (why you had to see me?) what you want to talk about? Our imaginary love affair?

ALEX

I'm pregnant.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: (2)

His jaw drops. She stares at him coolly.

ALEX
(continuing)
Now tell me you don't believe me.

DAN
I don't believe you.

ALEX
(sighs; reaches
into her purse)
I saw my gynecologist on Monday.
Here's his number (if you want to
call him). You can call if you
want to.

She hands him a card. He takes it, stunned.

DAN
Don't you --

ALEX
Use anything? No, I don't. I had
a very bad miscarriage last year.
I didn't think I could get
pregnant.

All Dan can do is stare at the card.

DAN
(You're sure it's mine?) How do
you know it's mine?

ALEX
(controlling herself)
Because I don't sleep around.

DAN
Okay, I'm sorry... I apologize.
Don't worry. I'm not going to let
you handle this on your own.

ALEX
Handle what?

DAN
Well -- the abortion. You don't
have to worry about the money.
I'll take care of it.

ALEX
What makes you think I'm going to
have an abortion?

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: (3)

DAN

(stunned)
No... No! You're not gonna have
the baby (kid)??

ALEX

Why not? There are plenty of
successful one-parent families.
At least they don't end in
divorce.

DAN

Do I have any say in (all) this?

ALEX

(firmly)
I want the child. It has nothing
to do with you. I'm going to have
it, whether you want to be a part
of it or not.

DAN

Then why the hell are you telling
me?? Why not just do it?

ALEX

(subdued)
I was hoping you would want to be
a part of it.

Dan shakes his head in despair.

DAN

This is crazy (insane)... This is
just crazy!

ALEX

I'm thirty-six years old... This
may be my last chance to have a
child.

DAN

Alex, for God's sake, think what
you're saying: (you're gonna)
this will affect both of our lives
forever!

ALEX

(earnestly)
Do you think I don't know that
...? (I've thought about it a
lot!...) I understand how you
feel. It's a big thing, but it
doesn't have to be a problem,
really it doesn't... Play fair
with me and I'll play fair with
you.

(CONTINUED)

109 CONTINUED: (4)

She rests a reassuring hand over his. But Dan feels far from reassured. He can see a nightmare future opening up in front of him.

110 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Beth sits at the dining table with Ellen, reading to her from an "Oink and Pearl" book.

BETH

"Agnes and Nellie and Oink giggled and laughed in the dark. Pearl listened outside the door."

111 DAN

working at his desk, or at least trying to. He cannot concentrate. He starts to listen to Beth's story, faint but distinct.

BETH (O.S.)

"Oooooo, it works," cried Nellie.
"Of course," said Oink. "Look at the flying dog," yelled Agnes.
"Wow!" cried Nellie.

112 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Beth continues the reading. Ellen is enthralled.

BETH

Pearl frowned. "Who cares about flying dogs," she said. Nobody heard her.

Sensing a presence, Beth looks up.

Beth smiles and goes back to her reading. She senses nothing amiss.

CLOSE ON DAN

He has a look of poignant tenderness. Never has his family appeared more precious. He cannot take his eyes away from them.

BETH (O.S.)

"Look out for the worm!" squealed Agnes. "Eeeeeek!" yelled Nellie and Agnes together.

112 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Alex exits her building and leaves for work. CAMERA PANS after her, coming to rest on Dan, watching from across the street.

Satisfied that she's out of the way, he races to the front door.

Looking anxiously around, Dan impulsively presses all the buzzers. He is hyperventilating. After a moment, people start ANSWERING on the INTERCOM. At least one person buzzes. He's in.

Instead of taking the elevator, he races up the stairs.

Dan arrives on Alex's floor, looks around and hastily feels for the Hide-a-key. He lets himself into Alex's flat.

113 INT. ALEX'S LOFT - DAY

Dan hurries through the apartment, looking around. He doesn't even know what he's looking for, anything to give him a handle on this person he's dealing with, anything to give him some leverage.

In the bathroom, he looks at all her many pills. Something catches his eye in the medicine chest.

CLOSEUP: a home pregnancy test. She was telling the truth.

At Alex's desk, Dan picks up some papers and looks through them...

He spins her Rolodex, looking for addresses... A scrapbook catches his eye. He pulls it down, thumbs through it -- ANGLES of Alex's family in Chicago. Suddenly he stops: CAMERA ZOOMS IN:

A newspaper obituary of Alex's father.

He died of a heart attack when Alex was seven!

Dan can't do anything but gape. Who the hell, what the hell is she?

114 INT. LAW OFFICE - LIBRARY - DAY

A clerk is distributing and collecting books among the stacks. We discover Dan and Jimmy in a corner.

(CONTINUED)

DAN

So you know what happened... (then you know what I did?) Right, I call her doctor, and you know what he says? "Congratulations!" Can't you imagine what she must have said to him?

JIMMY

Oh, Jesus! Look, what do you think would happen if you just came out and told Beth?

DAN

Are you kidding? That'd be the end. This woman is having my child (goddamn baby!)... Beth could never accept that. Nobody could.

(runs his hands through his hair)

Anyway, you haven't heard it all yet. (That's not the end...) (When I got off the phone with her doctor), I broke into her place this morning. I know... me, a lawyer, breaking and entering. I was looking for something, anything to give me a handle on what the hell I'm dealing with here. I thought maybe I could find out if she was sleeping with anyone else...

He hears a noise, stops.

DAN

(continuing)

I came up with nothing. Jimmy, I've never touched family law; what kind of case does she have?

JIMMY

In New York State, the law will take a woman's word for paternity until the child is born and paternity can be tested. Until the baby comes to term, the putative father (you, pal, you the father) is responsible for all medical and maintenance costs. In other words, the law supposes you guilty until proven innocent.

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Thanks, buddy (Jimmy)... You sound like a lawyer!

JIMMY

Sorry. Hey, come on... look, once she realizes you don't want anything to do with her, she'll decide not to go through with it. She's probably hoping you'll leave your wife.

DAN

That's crazy!

JIMMY

She sounds a little crazy.

Dan looks at him, his face haggard with pain and anxiety.

DAN

She keeps calling the apartment. Every time Beth answers, she hangs up... I'm scared, Jimmy. I really am.

(desperately)

I don't want to lose my family.

He turns away, afraid of showing his emotions.

JIMMY

Listen, Dan, can I ask you something? I'd really like to understand. I know you. You don't fuck around. (How come?) Why'd you do it?

DAN

That's funny. She keeps asking me that. If I'm so happy, how come I went home with her?

He walks over to the window and looks out.

DAN

(continuing)

All I can think of is a combination lock -- you know, all the tumblers have to fall into place. If I hadn't been married ten years -- click. If I hadn't gone to that weekend meeting -- click.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: (3)

DAN (CONT'D)

If Beth and Ellen hadn't been in the country (gone away) -- click. If she hadn't been at the meeting -- click. If it hadn't been raining so hard, if she hadn't been so attractive (pretty) -- click, click, click -- You know... (I don't know...) I think everyone's got some combination that'll open them up... that can unlock them.

Long silence.

115 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alex is propped up in bed, wearing her kimono, eating an apple. She looks like she's been in bed all day. The TV IS ON, but she pays it no attention. She leafs through a manuscript distractedly. Eventually she picks up the phone and dials, punching out the numbers with a stabbing finger. An AUTO-VOICE comes on the line.

VOICE (V.O.)

I'm sorry. The number you have dialed has been disconnected and there is no new number.

A TONE is heard. Alex stares at the phone in disbelief, then dials 411.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Information, what city, please?

ALEX

I'm trying to reach 555-B129... 212. A recording says it's been disconnected.

OPERATOR (V.O.)

Just a minute... that's correct, the party has changed to an unlisted number.

ALEX

Operator, this is a real emergency. Please... you must give me that number!

OPERATOR (V.O.)

I'm sorry, we're not allowed to do that.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

ALEX
(exploding)
Well, fuck you!

Furious, Alex slams down the phone.

116 OMITTED

117 EXT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Dan is walking along his street, deep in thought. He starts to cross the street, and is stopped in the middle by a CAR HONKING furiously. He finally crosses and enters his building, helping a little old lady in.

118 INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT HALL - EVENING

Dan comes through into the apartment. He can hear women's VOICES coming from the main room. One is immediately recognizable as belonging to Beth. The other sounds uncomfortably familiar. The conversation is on the subject of babies, as far as can be made out. Dan moves towards the room with increasing trepidation.

119 INT. MAIN ROOM - EVENING

The CAMERA FOLLOWS into the room. There, sitting together on the sofa, are Beth and Alex!

Beth rises with a smile.

BETH
Hi, darling. This Alex -- I'm
sorry, I've forgotten your last
name...

ALEX
Alex Forrest. Hi.

BETH
Alex Forrest... My husband, Dan.

He moves forward, as if in a bad dream, almost in slow motion.

ALEX
Glad to meet you.

DAN
Nice to meet you.

(CONTINUED)

She gives him her hand. He has no alternative but to shake it. She holds onto him a fraction longer than is necessary, studying him with exaggerated curiosity.

ALEX
Haven't we met before? Your face
is awfully familiar.

DAN
I don't think so.

ALEX
No, no, we have. Weren't you at a
party at that Japanese place a few
weeks ago? A book launch.

BETH
Oh, darling... The exercise book!

DAN
Oh, yes... yes.

ALEX
You're a lawyer, right? You
work for that firm... what's
the name now...? Anyway, we
definitely met.

BETH
Miller, Goodman & Hurst.

DAN
You have an excellent memory.

ALEX
I never forget a face.

BETH
It's a small world.

ALEX
It certainly is.

She looks at Dan significantly. There is a pause. A slight awkwardness. Alex breaks the silence, turning to Dan.

ALEX
(continuing)
So... I gather you're moving to
the country?

BETH
Yes.

ALEX
Have you found somewhere?

He doesn't answer.

{CONTINUED}

119 CONTINUED: (2)

BETH

We're buying a house near Bedford.
Have you ever been out there?

ALEX

Yes, it's beautiful. So you'd be
ready to move out of here almost
immediately?

Beth looks to Dan for guidance. He is impassive, his
face a frozen mask.

BETH

We were planning to get some
remodeling done first. I guess
you're looking for a place (to
move into) right away?

ALEX

Well, I would really. I want to
settle in.

BETH

(to Dan)
Alex is expecting a baby.

DAN

(stiffly)
Oh... Would you excuse me? I have
some calls to make.

He turns to his desk. Alex checks her watch.

ALEX

Goodness, I've gotta run.

She moves to get her coat and starts across. She turns
to Beth with a sweet smile.

ALEX

Thank you for the tea, thank you
for showing me the apartment.

BETH

You're welcome.

ALEX

I like it. I like it a lot.

BETH

We've been very happy here.

ALEX

I'd definitely like to think about
it, if I could.

(CONTINUED)

119 CONTINUED: (3)

BETH

Let me give you our number
(direct), so you can call us
(direct) if you want to.

Dan looks on in dismay as Beth scribbles down the number and hands it to Alex.

ALEX

Thank you.

INT. GALLAGHER APARTMENT HALL - EVENING

Beth opens the door to let Alex out. For a moment, Alex looks at Dan standing in the doorway.

ALEX

(continuing)

I'll be in touch.

She gives him a tight little smile. Beth closes the door.

120 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dan is standing at the window, staring out at the city. Beth comes in to clear the coffee table.

BETH

She seems really interested...
It's funny, she didn't mention a
husband. I got the feeling she's
on her own (alone).

She moves towards Dan. He suddenly looks tired and haggard.

BETH

(gently)

What's up? You seem depressed.

DAN

(smiles weakly)

I'm fine. Just tired.
Everything's fine.

She kisses the side of his head.

121 INT. LAW FIRM - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

We're close on his speaker phone, answering.

(CONTINUED)

121 CONTINUED:

OPERATOR

Robbins and Hart...

DAN

Alex Forrest...

ASSISTANT

Miss Forrest's office...

DAN

Yes, could I speak with Miss
Forrest? Dan Gallagher.

122 INT. ROBBINS AND HART - ALEX'S OFFICE - DAY

Alex's ASSISTANT has answered the phone. He mouths
Dan's name to Alex, who is standing nearby. She sig-
nals that she's not in.

ASSISTANT

(personal call AD LIB)

She's in a meeting, Mr. Gallagher.
Can I have her return your call?

123 INT. LAW FIRM - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

He thinks for a moment, thwarted.

DAN

No... I'll call her back.

He slams the phone angrily.

124 INT./EXT. PHONE BOOTH ON MANHATTAN STREET - DAY

Dan is crossing the street to get to the phone booth in
the neighborhood of his office.

DAN

Hi, sweetheart, I gotta have a
drink with a client... (I'm gonna
be a little late.) I'm sorry. (I
won't be very late...) All right
Give my love to Ellen.

He presses down the receiver, puts in another coin and
dials again. He waits impatiently for the call to be
answered, rapping a coin against the side of the pay
phone. His nerves are on edge.

125 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

The PHONE RINGS a couple of times and then an answering machine cuts in. We hear Alex's announcement.

ALEX (V.O.)

Hi, I'm not in right now, but if you care to leave a message I'll call you right back.

126 BACK TO DAN

He hesitates, then puts down the phone and walks away.

127 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

As the ANSWERING MACHINE CLICKS OFF, we PAN across to the sofa. Alex is sitting there, smiling to herself.

128 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The street outside Alex's apartment. Dan ENTERS FRAME in f.g. and looks up at the building. He crosses the street and goes up to the entrance.

129 EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Dan presses the bell. And waits. He presses again. At last Alex's voice comes over the entry phone.

ALEX (O.S.)

Hello?

DAN

It's me.

ALEX (O.S.)

Who?

DAN

You know who it is!! (Let me in.)
I want to talk to you.

ALEX (O.S.)

Oh, now you want to talk!

DAN

Yeah, I wanna talk!!

She presses the buzzer. He goes inside.

130 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dan stands outside Alex's door. The door opens to reveal Alex. She looks stunning, at her most seductive. She has transformed herself from the earlier scene -- she knew he'd come. She stands aside with an ironic little smile to let him enter. He goes in. The door closes.

131 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tight-lipped, Dan follows her into the main room.

132 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Alex goes toward the kitchen area.

ALEX

What can I get you? I've got scotch, I've got vodka -- there's a nice Chablis in the refrigerator...

Dan remains standing. His anger is bubbling over.

DAN

Can we (please) cut the bullshit??
Can we just cut the bullshit now?!
I don't know what you're up to,
but I'm telling you, it's gonna stop. Right here, right now!

ALEX

(calmly)

No. It's not going to stop. It's going to go on and on -- until you face your responsibilities.

DAN

What responsibilities? What are you talking about?

ALEX

I'm pregnant. I'm having our child.

DAN

Alex, that's your choice, not mine.

ALEX

I just wanna be a (small) part of your life.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

DAN

And you think this is the right way to go about it...? Showing up at my apartment?

She moves back towards him.

ALEX

What am I supposed to do? You won't talk to me, you change your number. I won't be ignored.

DAN

(coldly)

You just don't get it, do you?

They are face to face now. She looks into his eyes, her lips moistly parted -- his for the taking.

ALEX

(huskily)

Don't you remember our weekend? Wasn't that wonderful? Why can't we be like that again?

She presses herself against him, coiling her arm around his neck.

ALEX

(continuing)

I know you feel it too. You want me, I know you do...

She moves her mouth towards his. At the last moment, he pushes her away.

DAN

Don't flatter yourself.

ALEX

Poor darling!... You can't help having dirty thoughts, can you??

He fixes her with a murderous stare.

ALEX

(continuing;
relentlessly)

Poor little Beth. I thought she was awfully sweet... but she was also kind of boring! Is she boring in bed too...? That's the problem, isn't it!!

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: (2)

He grabs her by the wrist, twisting her arm upwards. For a second there is rage in his eyes and fear in hers.

DAN

I'm warning you...! You leave her out of it!

She grins maliciously.

ALEX

Go ahead, hit me! If you can't fuck me why don't you hit me?

He releases his grip.

DAN

You're so sad, you know that... You're sad and lonely...

ALEX

Don't pity me. Ever! You smug bastard.

DAN

I do pity you. You're a very sick girl.

ALEX

Why? Because I won't let you treat me like some slut you can bang a couple of times then dump (in the trash can?) I'm gonna be the mother of your child!! I want some respect!

DAN

You want respect?...

He turns and walks towards the door. He's had enough.

ALEX

(suddenly panicking)
What are you doing?

She goes after him.

133 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

She catches up with him in the hall, grabbing his sleeve.

ALEX

I'm sorry, Dan, I didn't mean it. Please don't go.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

He pushes her away and carries on towards the exit. Alex tries to interpose herself between him and the door.

ALEX
(continuing)
I'll tell your wife.

Something inside Dan snaps. He grabs her by the throat and forces her up against the wall.

DAN
(hoarsely)
You do that and I'll kill you! I swear to God!

He releases his grip. Alex falls back, clutching her throat and gasping for breath. He goes out the door, slams it behind him.

134 ALEX

pulls herself together, shouts impotently after him.

ALEX
All it takes is a phone call,
Dan. I'm warning you, I won't
just disappear!

She turns and races back toward the living room.

135 ALEX

comes back into the main room, breathing heavily. She lunges for the phone and dials.

BETH (O.S.)
Hello...? Hello...? Who is
this...? Hello?

At the last moment, Alex's nerve fails her. Maybe she realizes it would mean the end of her hold over Dan. Maybe she's genuinely frightened of what he might do. At any rate, she suddenly slams down the phone, flings it violently against the wall and breaks down into uncontrollable, hysterical grief.

FADE TO BLACK.

136 OMITTED

137 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Dan is directing two movers as they start up the stairs with a mattress, while he is helping another man with a table.

DAN

(That's) Second door on the left,
upstairs.

The two movers struggle up with the mattress.

138 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Beth and her mother, Joan, are already unpacking crates, trying to get the place into some kind of order.

BETH

I never knew we had so much junk.

JOAN

I still think you were crazy to
move in before the remodeling was
done. You could've stayed in the
apartment.

BETH

(shrugs)
Dan couldn't wait to get out of
New York. Mom... is this you?
That's sweet!

At that moment, the PHONE RINGS. Beth glances over to the far end of the room, where it rests on the hall stairs.

139 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Dan is helping one of the movers with a large table, which is stuck in the door. He looks up anxiously. His immediate instinct is to answer it himself, but he is squeezed up against the door frame. Nevertheless, he releases his grip on the table, which drops to the ground, with the man still holding up his end.

Dan hurries to squeeze thru the doorway.

He lurches towards the phone.

140 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - MAIN ROOM - DAY

Meanwhile Beth is on her way to pick up the phone. Dan crosses past the doorway calling as he goes:

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

DAN

I'll get it! I've got it, honey.

Surprised by his eagerness, Beth stops in her tracks.

141 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Dan reaches the phone and grabs the receiver.

DAN

Hello?

MARTEA (V.O.)

Hi, Dan, it's me.

He grins hugely.

DAN

Martha! Martha, it's you!! Yes
... What is it? It's Martha...

MARTEA (V.O.)

Nothing important, only your
calls...

He looks up at the mover, still stuck in the door. He
nods, understandingly.

DAN

Yes... yes...

Relief is written all over his smiling face.

142 OMITTED

143 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - UPPER HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

A week or so has elapsed since the move. Beth is up a
ladder, painting the ceiling with a roller brush. She
wears a scarf 'round her head to protect her from the
paint, but is covered with spots all the same.

The PHONE RINGS. He goes to answer.

BETH

Hello?

144 OMITTED

145 INT. LAW FIRM - DAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan, too, appears very relaxed. The pressure finally seems to be off.

DAN

Hi, babe. How's it going? Did the plumber ever come?

145A INTERCUT WITH BETH, ETC.

BETH

Did he ever.

DAN

I know. Don't tell me. I don't want to hear.

(suddenly brightened)

Hey, guess what I'm looking at?

145B DIFFERENT ANGLE ON DAN

showing a caged rabbit on top of his desk.

BETH

(very excited)

You got it?

DAN

I picked it up... wait a minute... I picked her up at the store today.

BETH

What's she like?

DAN

She's a rabbit... white, long floppy ears, pink eyes... No, she's beautiful!

He pets the rabbit.

BETH

Sound cute (nice)...

DAN

Are you sure Ellen doesn't know anything about it??

BETH

No! She's sure she isn't going to get one.

Dan continues AD LIBS re rabbit -- earmuffs, etc.

146 INT. LAW FIRM - RECEPTION - EVENING

Dan passes through at the end of the day, carrying the cage.

RECEPTIONIST

I like your friend.

DAN

Have you met our new partner,
Eunice? (See what happens to you
if you stay here too long?!)

He shows her the rabbit. She chirps delightedly at it.

RECEPTIONIST

Aren't we sweet!? Oh, I forgot.
This arrived for you.

She hands him a small padded envelope. He slips it
into his pocket.

147 EXT./INT. PARKING GARAGE - EVENING (DAY)

Dan walks up to the garage and the control booth. No
sign of the attendant. A small portable TV plays to an
empty chair. He leans across and takes his keys from
the rack. He starts to walk to the elevator.

DAN

Hey, Joachin!

He pushes the button, and puts the cage down as the
elevator goes up, and delivers him to his floor.

148 INT. GARAGE

We TRACK BACK in front of him as he saunters along,
humming a tune. He comes around the bend and heads for
his car.

149 ANOTHER ANGLE

Alex is watching Dan at a distance, from the balcony of
the elevator shaft. After a moment, she walks off.

150 Dan is walking along. He is momentarily startled by a
CAR ALARM GOING OFF.

151 He suddenly slows down, a look of horror on his face.

DAN

Jesus!

152 HIS POV

Ahead of him, something terrible has happened to his BMW. A poisonous, HISSING VAPOR rises in a yellowy cloud from its stricken body.

DAN'S CAR - ANOTHER ANGLE

He approaches, hardly able to believe his eyes. The paint is blistering and peeling off the metal, the metal itself dissolving and dribbling over the windows in a hideous, molten mess.

Hydrochloric acid has been poured over the entire car, giving off a sinister, HISSING STEAM as it performs its lethal work. This is the work of a sick mind, no less disturbing for being directed against an inanimate object.

153 INT. GARAGE - EVENING

The CAMERA TRACKS towards a dark corner, at some distance. Alex is hiding there. She steps forward, watching, a malignant smile on her lips.

154 DAN AND THE CAR

He stands there with the rabbit. The car is a write-off. He knows who did this. He screams with rage.

155 INT. HERTZ OFFICE - EVENING

Dan is on the phone to Beth in a nearby Avis office.

DAN

No, it had something to do with the electrical system...

BETH (O.S.)

What??

DAN

Yeah, the whole thing went up in smoke... Okay, 'bye.

156 EXT. AVIS OFFICE - CAR POUND - EVENING

Dan emerges from the pound in a rented car.

157 REVERSE ANGLE - ALEX'S RONDA

Alex is parked nearby. She starts the engine and moves off.

158 INT. RENTED CAR - TRAVELING - EVENING

The car stops for a light. Dan looks onto the seat next to him and sees the package. With a sudden intuition, he tears it open. There's a cassette with the words "PLAY ME" on it. He stares. Someone BONKS behind. The light has changed. He puts the cassette into the deck. Moving forward, he hears the hated voice:

ALEX (V.O.)

Hello, Dan. Surprised? This is what you've reduced me to... I guess you thought you'd get away with it?

159 INT. ALEX'S HONDA - TRAVELING - EVENING

Alex follows a few cars behind. Her face is set hard.

ALEX (V.O.)

Well, you were wrong.

160 INT. DAN'S RENTED CAR - TRAVELING

Dan is listening intently.

161 Dan's car takes a right turn ahead, just as the light turns to red. Alex puts on a spurt to keep up with him, almost running over a startled pedestrian.

INT. RENTED CAR - TRAVELING - EVENING

Dan listens, deep in gloomy thought. He is on the freeway going out of the city. Her voice is chilled rage.

EXT. DAN'S & ALEX'S CARS - POV SHOTS

traveling through the city.

ALEX (V.O.)

Part of you is growing inside me. That's a fact, Dan -- and you'd better start learning how to deal with it.

(then, a shift of mood, longing)

Oh, Dan, I feel you, I taste you, I think you, I touch you...! Can you understand? Can you?

162 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Dan's car zooms up and past along a tree-lined country road. A few moments later the Honda follows. She's businesslike now.

ALEX (V.O.)

I'm asking you to acknowledge your responsibilities. Is that so unreasonable...? I don't think so.

163 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan's car pulls up beside the house.

ALEX (V.O.)

And another thing...

163A INT. DAN'S RENTED CAR - NIGHT

Dan sits, listening for a moment.

Then, he reaches over and stops the tape, pulling the cassette out and putting it into his jacket pocket.

He reaches for the rabbit cage and gets out of the car.

Alex's car stops momentarily on the road, at the top of the driveway.

As Dan walks toward his house, Alex's car starts again and cruises slowly past the driveway entrance.

A shadowy figure -- Alex -- runs across the vast lawn toward the house.

164 OMITTED

165 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GROUND FLOOR WINDOW - NIGHT

The CAMERA is looking through the ground floor window into the living room. Ellen and Beth are kneeling on the floor in front of a log fire making a giant jig-saw puzzle. Ellen is in her pajamas, ready for bed. Dan enters with the rabbit. Ellen can't believe it. She is absolutely thrilled.

Dan looks on, feeling the strain but trying not to let it show.

We TRACK BACK to reveal Alex in f.g., watching from the shadows.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

CLOSE SHOT - ALEX

She watches with a look of contempt, tinged with a peculiar fascination. Her expression changes to one of alarm and she shrinks back out of sight.

166 OMITTED

167

168 ALEX

She suddenly clamps a hand over her mouth and starts to run down the garden away from the house.

She barely makes it to the bushes before she is violently sick. She comes up, gasping for air. She stands there in the stillness of the night, taking in long, deep breaths. Then she softly walks away.

169 INT. DAN'S "DEN" - NIGHT

The remodeled attic, now furnished with Dan's possessions, his desk, etc., looking beautiful.

The trap door opens quietly and Dan enters. The house is asleep. He pads over to his desk and stereo, puts on the earphones and takes Alex's cassette out of his jacket pocket.

As he listens, the CAMERA MOVES IN TIGHT:

ALEX (V.O.)

(her voice increasingly slurred)

-- you thought you could just walk into my life and turn it upside down without a thought for anyone but yourself. You know what you are? You're a cocksucking sonovabitch, Dan. I'll bet you don't even really like girls. They probably scare you. I know I do.

As she rambles, we're IN TIGHT and startled when a pair of hands descend on Dan's shoulders. He jumps a mile.

It is Beth -- in a nightgown.

CLOSEUP -- Dan's finger presses the off button on the tape deck.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

DAN

Jesus, you scared the shit out of me.

BETH

Sorry. I was just wondering what you're doing up so late...

DAN

Oh, uh, listening to a deposition. I guess I'm still upset about the car, needed to unwind...

BETH

Come on, I'll give you a back rub. A back rub and a brandy and you won't know what hit you.

The words have an ominous double meaning for Dan, but he has no choice. He lets her turn out the light.

170 EXT. BEDFORD STATION HOUSE - DAY

Dan walks into the local station house.

171 INT. BEDFORD STATION HOUSE - LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan sits in a corner of the squad room, across from the LIEUTENANT, a shrewd looking man in his forties. He stares at Dan with dark, piercing eyes.

DAN

My client wants it stopped. He wants an end to the harassment.

LIEUTENANT

And he's positive it was this woman who trashed his car?

DAN

(startled)

Yes... who else?

LIEUTENANT

Any witnesses?

DAN

No...

LIEUTENANT

Well, he's welcome to file a complaint, if it'll make him feel any better. There's not a lot we can do, without proof.

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Look, Lieutenant... The woman's completely irrational. There's no telling what she might do.

LIEUTENANT

We can't go around arresting people on account of what they might do. You know that.

DAN

I'm not asking... I'm not asking you to arrest her!

(catching himself)

He just wants her warned.

LIEUTENANT

We could talk to her. It's gonna make things more public, which he ain't gonna like. It may even aggravate the situation with the girl.

DAN

What do you mean?

LIEUTENANT

Well, whatever resentment she was feeling, she's probably got it out of her system. Any action we take may simply provoke her.

DAN

And if she hasn't "got it out of her system"? What then?

He's becoming increasingly irritated by the Lieutenant's casual approach.

LIEUTENANT

He'd better catch her in the act. Then we can bring (file) charges.

DAN

You're saying he's (the guy's) just got to sit there and take it?

The Lieutenant looks at him with a little smile. He knows exactly who this "client" really is.

172 INT. GOODMAN, HURST CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The litigation committee meeting is in session. Arthur is holding forth.

(CONTINUED)

ARTHUR

... and so, if everybody agrees, we'll take an immediate appeal from Judge Whitman's order denying our motion to halt the take-over bid. And if that fails, we'll seek an expedited trial... Now with regard to Rogers versus Winitzky, Dan has what I think is a bold stroke, it's a gamble but worth taking and that is to go for summary judgement. I've asked Dan to give us the gist of his argument and then we can discuss details. Dan?

Dan is startled and nervously fishing around his briefcase. He has forgotten the brief. He keeps fishing around as the others watch, uncomfortably.

DAN

Thank you, Arthur. Just to bring you all up to speed (recap) on this Rogers case... Rogers is accusing Winitzky of plagiarizing an article (by Winitzky)... I'm sorry, Arthur, I seem to have left... I don't seem to have the papers for the appeal here with me (right in front of me)...

ARTHUR

Jesus, Dan... (Jesus, Dan) the litigation committee only meets once a month!...

DAN

Arthur... I understand. I blew it. I'm sorry. (I apologize.)

Arthur recovers his disappointment by rearranging his papers.

ARTHUR

(finally)

All right. Moving on to Forsythe versus Plimpton. Does anybody feel that we ought to be challenging the precedents set by the Federal Appeals Court ruling in Harrison versus McDonald...

As Arthur drones on, CAMERA CLOSES on Dan. Now it's starting to affect his work...

DISSOLVE TO:

173 OMITTED
 thru
 175

176 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - GARDEN - DAY

At the rear of the house. There's a little wooden hutch with the rabbit inside and Ellen is feeding it carrots.

ELLEN

Come on, Quincy... Here, Whitey, here, Whitey! You want a carrot? Here, Whitey, come closer...

176A OMITTED
 *
 177

178 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Dan, Beth, Ellen and Quincy all pile into Beth's car, in a hurry. The car moves up the driveway and turns into the road.

179 INT. ROGERSON LIVING ROOM - DAY

Howard and Dan are sitting in a cozy alcove in a large room, having a leisurely drink and chatting. They are also watching Beth and Ellen rehearsing for the Thanksgiving show at school. Joan is serving tea.

HOWARD

I see you didn't get your car back.

DAN

No... It's a write-off. The wiring's completely burnt out.

HOWARD

Amazing... Those foreign cars.

JOAN

Beth darling (dear), here you are.

She hands Beth a cup of tea. Beth is rehearsing Ellen.

BETH

Thanks. You want to try it once more (again)?

{CONTINUED}

ELLEN

(Mommy, I know my lines, you don't have to tell me.)

BETH

(Okay, let's hear it!)

ELLEN

Okay. "Dear Priscilla, Miles asked me..."

BETH

"to ask you"...

ELLEN

"to ask you to marry him."

BETH

Very good. Now do it with the hat and the bow!

Ellen puts on her Pilgrim's hat, and bows deep.

ELLEN

"Dear Priscilla, Miles asked me to ask you to marry him."

BETH

"Speak for yourself, John!"
That's what she will say. Very good, honey, you got it!

Howard and Dan are watching them, smiling. Dan calls out.

DAN

Ellen? Ellen. Come here, honey... Gimme a big hug.

Ellen comes over, and Dan picks her up and holds her tight. He is overcome with emotion.

Beth is watching. She sees the tears in his eyes. She whispers.

BETH

You okay??

DAN

(whispers too)
Yes... I'm fine (okay).

ELLEN

(Daddy, you're squeezing...)

He lets her go. Beth is touched but can't quite figure out where it came from.

180 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Beth's car draws up outside the front of the house. Ellen gets out and runs toward the back of the house with Quincy.

ELLEN

Come on, Quincy!

Dan sets off after her. Beth goes into the house.

181 OMITTED

182 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Beth comes through into the hall. She continues through to the kitchen.

183 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

As she approaches, Beth becomes aware of the SOUND OF BUBBLING WATER. Over on the cooker, a large stewpot steams away, spilling over the flame, producing an angry HISSING.

184 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Ellen comes around the back and runs up to the rabbit hutch. She pulls up in dismay.

HER POV. The hutch is empty. The rabbit is gone.

ELLEN

(wails)

Daddy! Whitey's gone!!

(DAN

What?)

185 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Beth approaches the cooker and raises the lid off the pot. She lets out a piercing scream.

186 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Dan reaches Ellen just at that moment. As he hears the SCREAM, he turns in horror towards the kitchen door.

{CONTINUED}

186 CONTINUED:

INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Beth stares at the contents of the pot. She is shaking uncontrollably.

187 HER POV. The rabbit's glassy eyes stare back at her. Sliced carrots bob in the boiling water in grotesque imitation of a stew.

188 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - NURSERY - AFTERNOON

Ellen is in bed, sobbing her heart out. Beth tries to soothe her, but the child is inconsolable. Somehow she manages to get her to calm down.

189 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Dan stands staring out of the door into the backyard. It has begun to rain. He looks at the empty rabbit hutch, listens for weeping upstairs. All is quiet. Beth comes downstairs.

DAN

{How is she?} She okay?

BETH

She's asleep... Did you call the police?

DAN

Not yet... No.

BETH

Why not?

DAN

Honey... {Beth} We gotta talk.

BETH

What about?

Beth sits down on the sofa. Dan closes the door. Outside, the encroaching dusk casts dark shadows into the room. He hesitates.

BETH

{continuing}

What is it??

He turns to face her. He takes a deep breath.

DAN

I know who did this.

(CONTINUED)

BETH

You do? Who??

DAN

Do you remember the girl who came to see the apartment? The one I (we) (met) saw at the Japanese restaurant?

BETH

The girl with blonde hair...

DAN

(nods)
(Yes.)

He can't speak. She watches, wondering.

BETH

You're scaring me. Why don't you talk? What is it --
(false levity)
-- did you have an affair with her?

DAN

(with difficulty)
Yes.

Beth buries her head in her hands.

Dan sits down opposite her.

DAN

Honey, the last thing I ever wanted to do is hurt you. More than anything, I didn't mean to hurt you...

Beth is stunned, keeps swallowing; confused.

BETH

(overlapping)
Are you in love with her?

DAN

Of course not. It was one night. It meant nothing, believe me...

BETH

(angrily confused)
I don't get it; what does this have to do with what happened...

(CONTINUED)

189 CONTINUED: {2}

DAN

(short)

She's pregnant.

BETH

(stunned)

She's pregnant... And it's yours?

DAN

(coming towards her)

That's what she says... honey,
she's crazy -- I don't know!

BETH

Don't come near me!

DAN

Please... I love you.

He reaches out hopelessly.

BETH

Get out! Just leave me alone!

She keeps backing away from him, and finally starts
flailing at him.

BETH

(continuing; screams)

Get the fuck out! How could you...

DAN

Beth, please, listen to me!

She rushes at him again, punching and scratching his
face. He tries to protect himself without fighting
back.

BETH

I hate you! I want you out of
here, understand? I want you out
of here! Just get the fuck out of
here!Dan is about to respond when they both realize; they
turn and look, horrified.

189A THEIR POV

Ellen is standing there, watching them. She's never
seen them like this.

All three are frozen statues, blasted by circumstances.

(CONTINUED)

189A CONTINUED:

BETH

(sobbing)

Oh God...

190 OMITTED

6

191

192 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

Dan packs a small suitcase. Woodenly, he closes it and, carrying it, walks out of the room and down the hall, CAMERA FOLLOWING TO:

192A INT. ELLEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are out and Ellen is asleep. Dan stands in the doorway, helplessly, his eyes streaming tears.

After a moment, he closes the door and walks down the hall.

193 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Beth sits in semi-darkness on the sofa. Dan dials.

DAN

Hello? Alex?

His voice is like ice. He hates her so much it hurts.

194 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Alex answers warily, not quite sure how to play it. She adopts a heavily ironical tone.

ALEX

Dan. This is a pleasant surprise.

BACK TO DAN - INTERCUT

DAN

Yeah, well, you did it, didn't you... Are you happy now?

ALEX

Am I happy? Now let me see -- I'll have to think about that one.

(CONTINUED)

194 CONTINUED:

DAN

(Well, you think about it.) (It's all over, Alex, it's finished.) (I've told Beth.) (Beth knows about it.) Beth knows... I've told her.

ALEX

Oh, sure.. You haven't got the balls.

DAN

Why don't you speak to her.

ALEX

(less certain)

Why should I want to talk to her?

Beth gets up and comes to the phone. She is very cool, very calm, but there is a lethal undercurrent to her measured tone.

BETH

This is Beth Gallagher.

Alex freezes. She is immobilized. She can't deal with this at all.

BETH

(continuing)

If you ever come near my family again, I'll kill you. Is that understood?

Alex slams down the phone. She is shaking all over, staring wildly.

Dan is looking at Beth. She hangs up, turns and walks away.

195 OMITTED

196 INT. HOLIDAY INN - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dan is wearily walking down the corridor to his room.

196A INT. DAN'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

He enters, sees the maid cleaning in the bathroom, goes to sit on the bed.

(CONTINUED)

196A CONTINUED:

DAN

This is 408. Any messages?...
Thank you.

He hangs up, looks at the maid, who is just leaving,
then dials again.

197 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DINING ROOM - PIANO - NIGHT

Beth is playing a sad piece by Chopin. Ellen is sitting next to her. The PHONE RINGS. After two rings, Ellen runs to the kitchen to answer it.

ELLEN

I'll get it... Hello?... Daddy!

INTERCUT with Dan:

DAN

Hi, honey...

ELLEN

Daddy...

(she's a bit
confused)

-- when are you coming back?

DAN

I don't know, sweetie. How're you
doing?

ELLEN

(like most kids, she'll
let the grownups dictate the flow of the
conversation)

Fine.

DAN

Yeah?

ELLEN

Grandpa taught me another card
trick.

DAN

The one with the jacks?

ELLEN

No, the one with the kings.

DAN

Oh, I see. Bow's Mom?

(CONTINUED)

197 CONTINUED:

ELLEN

Fine.

DAN

Will you tell her I said "Hello"?

ELLEN

Yeah.

DAN

Don't forget.

ELLEN

I won't.

DAN

I send you lots of love. Both of you, okay? What are you eating?

ELLEN

A fruit roll-up. Daddy... Will you call me tomorrow?

DAN

I promise. Don't forget to tell Mom.

ELLEN

(I won't.) Okay.

DAN

'Bye, sweetheart.

ELLEN

'Bye.

She hangs up.

197A INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - AT PIANO - NIGHT

Beth sits there, listening, teary-eyed, biting her lip. After a moment, she starts playing again.

198 INT. HOLIDAY INN - DAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Dan sits on the bed, working, staring at an inane sitcom on TV.

198A INT. ALEX'S LOFT - NIGHT

Alex is seen alone and forlorn. She switches a lamp on and off.

199 INT. BETH'S STATION WAGON - TRAVELLING - DAY

Beth is driving along, deep in thought.

200 EXT. PLAY SCHOOL - BEDFORD - DAY

Parents are collecting their children from the local infant school. Beth drives up and parks. She goes up to the entrance. One of the TEACHERS seems surprised to see her.

TEACHER

Hi, Mrs. Gallagher. Did you forget something?

BETH

I've come to get Ellen.

TEACHER

I thought you picked her up already... I'm sure she's left!

Immediate panic registers on Beth's face. The Teacher also senses trouble. They enter the building together.

They meet another TEACHER in the hall.

TEACHER

(continuing)

Betty, is Ellen in here with you?

BETTY

She's gone home already.

TEACHER

Are you sure?

BETTY

Positive. She's not inside and she's not in the playground...

(to Beth)

I thought you'd picked her up!

TEACHER

Well, who did pick her up?!

BETH

Oh, God!

TEACHER

Don't worry. She can't have got far.

BETH

You don't understand. Oh, God!

(CONTINUED)

200 CONTINUED:

TEACHER

I'll check her locker.

Beth runs down the corridor to Ellen's classroom. A LITTLE GIRL is tying her laces.

BETH

(continuing)

Honey, where's Ellen? (Have you seen Ellen?)

LITTLE GIRL

She's left. (She's gone) (No...)

Beth is running back to the front door. She passes the Teacher.

BETH

Call the police!

201 INT. STATION WAGON - TRAVELLING - DAY

Beth is driving along the route home, checking for any sign of Ellen. She is completely distraught.

BETH

Oh, God...! Oh, God!

202 HER POV - THE SIDEWALK

On the sidewalk, a group of children playing. No Ellen.

203 CLOSE SHOT - BETH

As she turns back to face ahead, a sudden look of alarm:

204 AHEAD - THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

A car flashes across her bow, HORN BLARING.

205 EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - DAY

Beth's car SCREECHES to a halt.

206 INT. BETH'S CAR - DAY

Shaken, she sets off again.

(CONTINUED)

206 CONTINUED:

BETH

Please, God...

207 EXT. PLAYLAND - DAY

Ellen holds hands with someone taller than she as they walk into Playland.

It is Alex, who smiles down at her.

208 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

The front door bursts open and Beth runs in.

BETH

Ellen... Ellen!...

209 EXT. PLAYLAND - DAY

Ellen and Alex leave the ice cream stand, each clutching a cone.

They walk along the midway. Some of the rides are closed. Alex points.

The Playland "Musical Revue." Alex and Ellen sit among the few spectators.

210 INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

HANDHELD as Beth tears in and out of rooms, screaming Ellen's name. Constricting, strangulating panic.

211 EXT. PLAYLAND ROWBOAT LAKE - DAY

We see a man helping them into a boat.

Utterly serene. Alex rows gently as Ellen, in the stern, trails her hand in the water. Alex smiles enigmatically. Ellen, absorbed by the water, doesn't notice.

Suddenly, Alex gets up and advances menacingly on Ellen.

Ellen doesn't understand.

ELLEN

Don't hurt me!!

Just as suddenly, Alex sits back down again.

211A INT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

Beth runs up the stairs, calling for Ellen at the nursery door.

Desperate, she runs back down and tears out of the house, slamming the door.

211B OMITTED

4

212

213 EXT. PLAYLAND - DRAGON COASTER ENTRANCE - DAY

Alex and Ellen are wandering across an open square.

WIDER ANGLE. They are approaching the covered terminal shed for the full-size roller coaster.

214 OMITTED

215 EXT. PLAYLAND - DRAGON COASTER - DAY

We are LOOKING DOWN the steeply sloping track from one of the pinnacles of the roller coaster. The carriages climb slowly TOWARDS US with an ominous CLANKING OF CHAINS.

216 CLOSE ON ELLEN AND ALEX

Alex and Ellen are laughing and yelling, having a fine time.

216A ANGLE ON

enthralled -- something's about to happen!

216B ANOTHER ANGLE

The leading carriage reaches the top of the slope, hovers there.

217 INT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Beth is driving at speed, looking frantically from side to side. The START OF A SCREAM...

218 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - DAY

which turns out to be Ellen's joyful cry as the roller coaster plunges down!

(CONTINUED)

218 CONTINUED:

Alex and Ellen are flung back against their seats by the centrifugal force. The CAMERA is mounted on the front of their car, LOOKING BACK at them, making them the only fixed points IN THE FRAME. The background behind them seems to travel at almost unbelievable speed.

218A EXT. ROAD JUNCTION - DAY

Beth's car arrives at a junction and SCREECHES to a halt.

219 INT. BETH'S CAR - DAY

On impulse, Beth decides to take a left turn, spinning the wheel and taking off with a violent swerve.

220 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - LOW ANGLE - TRAVELING - DAY

A seemingly endless cantilevered curve hurtles TOWARDS US.

221 EXT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

The car races; reflections from overhead trees flashing on the windshield. She drives into a tunnel.

222 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - ANGLE ON ALEX - DAY

Her hand on the safety-bar. They come out of a tunnel!

223 INT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Beth -- something attracts her attention; she turns to see.

224 OMITTED

225 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - ANGLE ON ELLEN - TRAVELING - DAY

Smiling, her eyes widen as...

226 INT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY

Beth cranes her neck as she overtakes a woman and a little girl, walking on the sidewalk.

- 227 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - TRAVELING - DAY
SUBJECTIVE, FRONT OF THE CAR POV, another plunge...
- 228 INT. CAR - BETH'S POV - TRAVELING - DAY
The little girl is nothing like Ellen.
- 229 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - TRAVELING - DAY
The coaster POV, hits bottom, and the cars rear up!
- 230 INT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY
Beth reacts to the little girl, turns and her eyes widen...
- 231 INT. BETH'S CAR - TRAVELING - DAY
Her POV ahead: Immediately in front of her a station wagon slowed down to turn off the road. Its taillights race forward to meet the hood of Beth's car.
- 232 EXT. ROLLER COASTER - TRAVELING - DAY
Ellen, staring right at the CAMERA. The SOUND OF TEARING METAL.
- 233 INT. BETH'S CAR - BETH'S POV - TRAVELING - DAY
The car's hood smashes into the back of the station wagon with a violent impact.
- 234 EXT. BETH'S CAR - DAY
The station wagon is driven along by Beth's car for twenty yards or more before the two vehicles come to a rest with a SCREECH OF TWISTING METAL. Then all is silence.
- 235 OMITTED
- 236 EXT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY
Driving through the countryside.

237 INT. ALEX'S CAR - DAY

Alex driving, serene; for a moment we don't know where she is or what's happened to Ellen. She's looking pleased with herself. We PAN OVER to find Ellen on the seat next to her.

238 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

Alex stops the car at the top of the driveway. Alex reaches over towards Ellen -- but past her. She's opening the passenger door. Outside, we can see that Ellen has been brought home.

ALEX

Ellen... (Gimme) Can I have a kiss?

Ellen comes back in the car and gives Alex a kiss on the cheek. Then she turns and runs down the driveway.

ELLEN

'Bye...

ALTERNATE: Ellen climbs back in and Alex leans down to kiss her. Suddenly Alex grabs her by the hair and cuts off a handful of hair with scissors taken from between the front seats. Ellen reacts horrified. She starts crying hysterically, running towards the house as Alex, satisfied with the escapade, drives on.

239 OMITTED

240 INT. WESTCHESTER HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - EVENING

Dan is running along the corridor, looking at the names on the doors. He comes round a corner, catching up with a nurse.

DAN

I'm looking for Beth Gallagher.
I'm her husband.

NURSE

She's in Twenty-two at the end of the hall.

At the end of the hall, Joan is sitting in a chair with Ellen on her lap. Ellen looks up and spots her father.

ELLEN

Daddy!...

{CONTINUED}

240 CONTINUED:

She gets off Joan's lap and starts running towards him.

DAN

(waves at Ellen)

Is she all right? Is she going to be all right?

NURSE

Yes. (she'll be all right.) But she was very lucky... it could have been a lot worse. A lot worse.

Ellen arrives at a dead run. Dan bends down to sweep her up in his arms. She's crying now, the tension flooding out of her.

DAN

Oh, baby...! Oh my baby! It's okay, Daddy's here.

241 OMITTED

242 INT. WESTCHESTER HOSPITAL - BETH'S ROOM - EVENING

Beth is lying in the bed, sedated. There is heavy bruising around her eyes, but she's all in one piece. Howard is sitting by the bed.

The door opens slowly. Dan enters. He approaches the bed cautiously. Howard gives him a cold, hard look.

{DAN

Howard...)

DAN

It's Dan... Everything's gonna be all right... (I love you...)

He takes her hand. Briefly, her eyes open and she registers his presence. Her hand gives his a little, almost imperceptible squeeze, before her eyelids flutter shut again.

He looks down at her. A vulnerable, injured figure. He closes his eyes.

243 INT. DAN'S RENTED CAR - TRAVELING - NIGHT

It's raining heavily. We see Dan through the car windshield, the wipers crossing back and forth across his face with insistent urgency. There is a look of steel in his eyes.

244 HIS POV - AHEAD

The Henry Hudson Bridge comes TOWARDS US. He is entering Manhattan.

245 EXT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Dan lurks in the shadows outside the entrance, as a YOUNG COUPLE comes out of the building. He slips inside before the door can close.

246 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Dan stands at the door to Alex's apartment. He rings the bell. After a moment, Alex opens the door a crack, to the extent of a short chain. Seeing it's him, she quickly tries to close it. He slams his shoulder against the door with all his force, with the strength of all his pent-up rage. In b.g. she's listening to "Madame Butterfly."

246A INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

Alex comes flying back into the hall, the chain ripping off its bracket with a SOUND OF TEARING WOOD. Dan comes crashing into the apartment. The music continues throughout.

Alex is on the floor, thrown there by the impact of the door. She tries to crawl away, startled by the savagery of his appearance. He throws himself after her, trying to grab her. He follows her towards the main room.

247 MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Alex gets to her feet and races into the main room, trying to set up roadblocks to slow Dan down.

She throws a floor lamp down behind her, then the bike which is leaning against the wall.

It doesn't slow Dan down very much. He simply jumps over the up-ended lamp and the bike sprawled across his path.

Alex is running through the bedroom, with Dan close behind her.

She manages to get into the bathroom, and turns to pull the door shut, just as Dan is reaching for her.

(CONTINUED)

247 CONTINUED:

As she pulls at the door, Alex pins his arm against the door jamb.

He yells out in pain, and grabs her head, pushing it violently against the glass door.

As she struggles to free herself, he pushes the door open, and Alex lands on the bathroom floor.

He throws himself on her and starts to choke her.

She manages to free a leg, and gives him a kick in the groin, which makes him turn away in pain.

Alex is up and out of the bathroom.

Alex comes running out of the bathroom, but Dan is close behind her.

As she reaches the other end of the bedroom, he reaches for her.

For a moment, he is not looking where he is headed. He crashes into the glass partition, just as she wrenches away. Glass is flying in all directions.

Alex loses her balance and falls into the glass. Dan sees her fall and pounces on her.

On her hands and knees, she tries to escape into the kitchen area, but Dan is right behind her.

248 KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dan grabs Alex and pulls her up.

In a mad rage, he slams her into a kitchen cabinet.

She tries to get away, but he slams her into the stove, sending the light above it swinging madly.

He forces her to the floor, and pins her down.

Completely out of control, he starts to choke the life out of her. She can't get any air, and is gasping and choking.

Suddenly, he seems to realize that he is about to kill her. He lets go, and gets up, panting.

Dan pulls himself to his feet at the stove, and staggers away.

(CONTINUED)

248 CONTINUED:

Alex crawls to the sink and slowly comes up coughing and retching. She puts her face in the sink, tries to splash some water on it.

She notices a large kitchen knife, lying on the edge of the sink.

Slowly she grabs it. She turns to where Dan is standing at the counter, catching his breath.

With a terrible scream, she attacks, the knife raised high over her head.

Dan turns in horror to see her coming at him.

He makes a grab for the knife, but she won't let go. He pushes her back against the far wall in an effort to wrestle the knife from her.

He holds her hand with the knife high and bangs it against a water pipe. The pain makes her release her grip, and he grabs the knife from her.

Suddenly, it is over. He backs away from her slowly, leaving her standing, holding on for support.

She watches him with a strange, sad smile as he backs away, puts the knife on the counter by the stove, and wordlessly turns and walks out of the room.

249 OMITTED
thru
252

253 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alex is sitting on the bathroom floor, holding the kitchen knife, almost ritualistically, in front of her. Then, slowly and deliberately, she puts it to her throat and draws it across.

As the blood starts flowing, she slowly falls to the floor.

254 OMITTED

255 INT. BEDFORD STATION HOUSE - LIEUTENANT'S OFFICE - MORNING

The usual activity of the Squad Room is interrupted by Dan's raised voice, coming out of the Lieutenant's office. He closes the door.

(CONTINUED)

255 CONTINUED:

DAN

I told you before, but you don't want to listen to me! Now she took my child right out of school! It was kidnapping, pure and simple. My wife's lying in the hospital, lucky to be alive. If you don't do something about this woman, I... I...

LIEUTENANT

Take it easy, okay? You don't have to shout.

DAN

(subsiding)

All right, what are you going to do?

LIEUTENANT

We'll get New York to pick her up and bring her in for questioning. Okay?

DAN

(mollified)

Okay... I'm going to pick up my wife from the hospital tomorrow. And hopefully I'll be at home for the weekend... If you need to talk to me. Thank you, Lieutenant.

Dan walks out. The Lieutenant looks after him, thoughtfully.

LIEUTENANT

You're welcome.

256 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Dan is raking and burning leaves. Ellen, playing with Quincy, helps raking. Beth is standing nearby, even helping a little. There is an air of serenity about her; she seems reconciled to Dan, now that the nightmare is finally over.

In the distant b.g., a police cruiser turns into the driveway and slowly makes its way up to the front of the house.

257 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

The cruiser pulls up. Three men get out.

(CONTINUED)

257 CONTINUED:

One of them is the Lieutenant from the local station house. The other two look like plainclothes DETECTIVES.

258 OMITTED

259 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

The three men are walking over. Dan approaches confidently.

DAN

Afternoon, Lieutenant. Did you get her?

LIEUTENANT

(nods)

Mr. Gallagher, this is Lieutenant O'Rourke, Detective Fuselli. New York homicide. They'd like to ask you a few questions.

DAN

Sure.

He suddenly registers what the Lieutenant just said.

DAN

(continuing)

Excuse me... Did you say homicide?

O'ROURKE

That's right.

DAN

Why? What's that got to do with -- ? What about Alex Forrest? Did you get her or not?

O'ROURKE

No, we haven't, as a matter of fact. You saw her last night?

DAN

Yes... I already told the Lieutenant here. Why -- what's she saying?

O'ROURKE

(drily)

She's not saying very much, Mr. Gallagher.

(CONTINUED)

259 CONTINUED:

Fuselli snickers unpleasantly.

O'ROURKE
(continuing; flatly)
She's dead.

Dan is completely stunned. They all stop.

DAN
She what? She's dead???

FUSELLI
That's right.

O'Rourke stares back at him, saying nothing.

DAN
How?? How did she...
(suddenly, awed)
You think I did it...? Oh,
Jesus... (You think I killed her)
... Oh, Jesus... Look, guys, I
admit I was pretty angry... The
woman kidnapped my daughter. My
wife ended up in the hospital!
But I didn't kill her, for
Chrissakes. I wanted to, sure.
But I didn't...

He feels the ground slipping away from under him.

DAN
(continuing;
desperately)
That woman was crazy!... (She was
crazy.) You know... She already
tried to kill herself (once
before).

O'ROURKE
In my experience a woman who wants
to kill herself doesn't cut her
throat with a nine-inch kitchen
knife.

DAN
(horrified)
No...!

260 CLOSE ON DAN

He's in Alex's kitchen. The CAMERA RUSHES TOWARDS HIM
IN DREAM-LIKE SLOW MOTION as:

261 HIS POV

In SLOW MOTION, Alex comes at him with the knife.

262 BACK TO SCENE

O'Rourke is staring at Dan, who shakes his head slowly from side to side.

DAN

I didn't do it.

O'ROURKE

In that case, all we have to do is check your fingerprints against the murder weapon.

He smiles benignly. Dan closes his eyes.

263 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

In SLOW MOTION, Dan crosses the room, leaving the knife on the kitchen table. Alex appears in b.g. in the kitchen doorway.

264 INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Alex is slowly slumping to the floor. Once or twice, her hand twitches slightly.

Finally, she lies completely still as the pool of blood is widening.

265 EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Beth and Dan are walking out to the driveway. She doesn't understand what's going on. Dan puts on a reassuring act for her benefit. The three men are standing near the cars.

DAN

I gotta go with these guys... a few more questions...

BETH

I don't understand. What's going on?

DAN

It's some crazy -- misunderstanding.

FUSELLI

Mr. Gallagher...

(CONTINUED)

DAN

Look, I want you to call Arthur right away. The number's in my book, upstairs. Tell him what's happened and that I'm gonna need him --

BETH

What has happened?

DAN

Alex Forrest is dead.

BETH

What?

FUSELLI

Mr. Gallagher...

Fuselli takes Dan by the arm and starts leading him away.

BETH

And -- they think you did it?

DAN

I know it's crazy, but...

FUSELLI

Sorry, but we gotta go, lady...

He ambles forward and takes out a pair of cuffs.

BETH

Now wait a goddam minute...

FUSELLI

(putting the cuffs
on Dan)

No, ma'am. No minutes. Your husband is under arrest.

Ellen, attracted by the conversation, starts to come.

ELLEN

Mom...

BETH

Ellen, go back! Go back in the house!

Confused, the child obeys.

(CONTINUED)

265 CONTINUED: (2)

DAN

(rising panic)

Beth, don't worry, just get ahold
of Arthur as fast as you can...

BETH

I'll come with you --

Fuselli is putting Dan into the car.

DAN

No! Call Arthur, honey!

He's choking with emotion as Fuselli and the others get
into the car. It starts moving slowly, Beth running
alongside.

BETH

Dan! I'm coming with you...

She doesn't know what to do, and keeps up with the car.

DAN

I love you! It'll be all right...

And finally the car really starts to drive off. Beth
gives up as the car pulls away, leaving her standing in
the driveway where Ellen finally joins her.

266 OMITTED

267 CLOSE ON DAN

He looks back through the rear window...

268 HIS POV - BETH

She stands next to Ellen in a motionless family
tableau, with Dan the only missing element. As she
begins to recede from view, the CAMERA ZOOMS longingly
towards her, counteracting the movement of the car, as
if in some vain attempt to bring her back to him.

Gradually, imperceptibly, she slips away, further and
further... we should worry: is this the end???

269 OMITTED

270 INT. DAN'S "DEN" - DAY

Beth pushes open the trap door and enters. She goes over to Dan's desk, looking for his address book. Can't find it.

She searches the small drawers on top of his desk.

She pushes his papers around, moves the tape player and the typewriter...

Desperately, Beth slumps into the desk chair. She pulls the large desk drawer open -- and finds the address book lying on top.

She starts looking up Arthur's number. Finally finds it. She ignores the tape cassette which is tucked in the front of the book.

She pulls the phone over, dials, and waits. Her hand absentmindedly plays with the tape cassette which was in the book.

BETH

Come on, Arthur... Come on,
Arthur... Oh God... Pick up the
goddam phone!

She look at the cassette in her hand, and sees that it reads "PLAY ME." She reacts and slips it into the tape deck, pushing PLAY.

For a moment, nothing is heard. Beth realizes the problem and yanks out the earphone extension cord.

Instantly Alex's voice, very slurred, comes out of the speakers as we CLOSE IN TIGHTER on Beth, realizing.

Alex, more or less where we left off; Alex's mercurial mood on the tape has shifted again; possibly we hear a fragment of the last previously heard sentence.

ALEX (V.O.)

You're my last chance, Dan... If
you don't come through for me, I
don't know what I'll do, but it
will be something terrible. I
can't live without you, Dan. When
you push me away you give me no
other choice. I'll cut deeper
next time. I'll kill myself!...

Beth reacts, rewinds the tape.

(CONTINUED)

270 CONTINUED:

ALEX (V.O.)

(continuing)

... I'll kill myself. There's
nothing else left for me, Dan,
nothing... nothing... nothing...

Beth is sobbing with relief.

BETH

(flabbergasted)

O, thank God... Thank God!

She grabs the tape out of the deck and runs with it
down the trap door.

CAMERA HOLDS on the empty room.

Very faintly, at first, we hear the MUSIC.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

271 ADDED SCENE: EXT. COUNTRY HOUSE - DAY

The CAMERA SLOWLY PANS across the wide lawn as snow is
beginning to fall. Beth and Ellen come running out of
the house.

270A THE FINALE ON STAGE

of Butterfly, with Pinkerton's frantic cries,
"Butterfly...! Butterfly...! Butterfly...!"

ROLL CREDITS AS THE MUSIC SOARS.

FINIS