

FatCity Upside Down

by

David Koepp

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CONTACT:

Gavin Polone
ICM
8899 Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90048
213/550-4288

PART ONE

Death

EXT FATCITY STEET DAWN

The sun's just coming up in a neighborhood of the fabulously well-to-do. A YOUNG MAN'S VOICE comes over.

V.O.

My uncle used to tell me I inherited two things from my father — bad eyesight and bad judgment. He was right. But then again, he's also dead. So there you are.

A BAG LADY, about forty, pushes a shopping cart with a large bundle inside. She's small, dark, obviously has little to her name besides what's in the cart. She guards that carefully, eyes darting back and forth. For reasons better understood later, she will be called the SMILING WOMAN.

Right now she isn't.

Expensive cars zip by the Woman, ignoring her. She, in turn, pays them no mind, just continues on.

V.O. (cont.)

FatCity was founded by tired people, missionaries who for three months pushed forward through the crushing mass of this continent's First Great Mountain Range in search of a warm water port. Finally, triumphantly, they emerged from the lifeless rock and beheld with awe and wonderment — the Second Great Mountain Range.

The Smiling Woman bends down and tends to the bundle in her cart, then pushes on.

V.O. (cont.)

Too tired to go any further and too ashamed to go back and admit defeat, they settled in between, in an isolated, fogbound swamp that lay cradled between the fingery foothills of the mountain ranges like so much sand. They settled in FatCity.

The Smiling Woman pushes past a sign that says "Welcome to Briar Heights — FatCity's Pride." The broad, tree lined street is rimmed with mansions.

V.O. (cont.)

There's an old saying that no one is born in or leaves FatCity — you only come here and die. I think it's true. It was for my father, anyway. And of course my uncle. FatCity is the first place to run or the last place to hide for the newly rich or chronically poor, in that order.

The Woman rolls to a stop in front of an empty lot, perhaps an acre and a half. But the lot isn't empty at all. Where there should be a gorgeous house, cardboard huts and small tents are wedged in, packed wherever there's a foot of space. Here and there a breakfast fire burns. It's a small tent city, side by side with the towering mansions.

A sloppy sign on a hunk of cardboard reads "Freedom Square — FatCity's Shame."

V.O. (cont.)

Dying is what FatCity is all about.

HOWARD BLANC, fiftyish, with a scowl that could kill kittens and a gold tooth.

He stands on the lot line between his house and Freedom Square. He stares down the empty road, as if waiting for something.

The Woman, oblivious to him, bends down to the bundle in her shopping cart and pulls back the tattered blankets. It's a CHILD, a little boy about four, his face smudged and scared.

SMILING WOMAN

Welcome home.

CUT TO:

INT . A BEDROOM IN BLANC'S HOUSE DAWN

Someone rich lives here. Glass doors lead to a balcony, shelves of books burden the walls and a huge television screen dominates the front of the room. A digital clock in the corner of it shows "7:59." It clicks over to 8:00 and the TV comes on to a car commercial for an expensive car called a "Van Okker." Snob appeal to the Nth degree.

The commercial ends and a morning news/chat show resumes. The gushy female announcer is BOBBYE AMOR.

CONTINUED

BOBBYE

Welcome back. In Briar Heights, another chapter in the saga of the abandoned estate of Sheik Adnan Hafez. As you probably remember, the house and land have stood vacant in the two years since his suicide, locked in a probate struggle that didn't look like it would ever end. Taking advantage of that, a number of street people have "colonized" the lot, infuriating their wealthy neighbors and frustrating city officials who could find no ordinance to boot them off.

In the bed, a figure stirs and looks up at the TV -- REINHARDT BLANC, about twenty-five. Reinhardt is handsome, but it's cheap-handsome -- smooth and pretty, not lined with character. His eyes are soft with what appears to be compassion but is more probably confusion.

BOBBYE (cont.)

But late last night, a coalition of Briar Heights residents led by this man...

A photograph comes on screen. Reinhardt squints at it, too hard, very nearsighted.

BOBBYE (cont.)

...Howard Blanc, gained control of the land that has come to be known as Freedom Square to hundreds of FatCity's homeless.

REINHARDT

(a mutter)

Uncle?

A distant RUMBLING comes from outside.

Another figure stirs in the bed, this one GLORIA MEEKER, also mid-twenties. Gloria is beautiful, regal even in slumber, the kind of woman who makes any house a palace simply because she's in it.

She's hung over.

GLORIA

What the hell's all the noise?

EXT HOUSE DAWN

The RUMBLING is louder out here.

Howard Blanc stares at the Smiling Woman with contempt, then shifts his gaze back down the road.

A small puff of black smoke appears over a crest in the road. The RUMBLING is now accompanied by the CLANK of heavy machinery.

All at once, a line of

BULLDOZERS

appears on the horizon, plowing down the middle of the road, heading right at them --

-- heading for Freedom Square.

Howard Blanc laughs.

The Smiling Woman looks at the bulldozers, then at him, in shock.

Reinhardt appears on the second floor balcony of Blanc's house.

REINHARDT

Uncle? Uncle, what's going on?

BLANC

Zoning.

In horror, the Smiling Woman pulls the blanket back over her child and pushes off into the middle of the little community, shaking people, urging them to wake up. They crawl out of their tents, confused. Some of them poke just their heads above the ground, their bodies submerged in primitive underground shelters.

INT BEDROOM

Reinhardt races back into the room, grabs a robe from a chair and heads for the door.

REINHARDT

(to Gloria)

They're bulldozing the square.

GLORIA

(face in pillow)

I'll cancel the barbecue.

He pauses to say something, then changes his mind and leaves.

EXT FREEDOM SQUARE DAY

The bulldozers stop at the edge of the square, hardhats in the saddle, gray-suited bureaucrats standing officiously behind. A MAN with a megaphone appears on top of the first machine, clearly not happy about what he has to do.

MAN
By order of the Briar Heights
Bureau of Control -

ON THE LOT LINE,

Reinhardt comes racing up beside his uncle. The announcement continues in the background.

REINHARDT
You can't do this.

BLANC
(snide)
Why don't you try to stop it?

Reinhardt takes a few indecisive steps forward. He stops at the lot line, listening helplessly as the man with the megaphone rouses people from their tents and houses.

Howard Blanc watches as Reinhardt backs down.

BLANC (cont.)
More like your father every day.

The residents of the Square are now massed in front of the bulldozer. The Man with the megaphone speaks.

MAN
I'm afraid this is the only warning.
You have five minutes to collect
your belongings and vacate.
(pause)
Please.

A little muttering, followed by a long silence. No one moves.

A VOICE from the back of the crowd shouts a curse.

Someone chucks a rock, which CLANGS off the hood of the bulldozer at the Man's feet. The crowd approves and presses forward a bit. The Man looks at them in alarm and glances over to Blanc.

Blanc nods, gesturing for him to move into the Square. The Man starts to raise the megaphone, torn.

He changes his mind and jumps off the bulldozer. Disgusted, he tosses the megaphone to Blanc.

MAN
Do your own dirty work.

Blanc watches him leave, looks at the megaphone in his hand.

REINHARDT
Don't. Please.

Blanc looks at his nephew with distaste. He turns to a SECOND MAN and hands the megaphone to him.

The Second Man is reluctant. Blanc scowls. The Man relents and raises the megaphone.

SECOND MAN
START 'EM UP!

With a single ROAR, all the engines spring to life. The crowd SHRIEKS. The dozers lurch forward, scattering the people.

REINHARDT
NO!

He turns to his uncle in desperation as the bulldozers churn ahead.

REINHARDT (cont.)
This is where they live!

BLANC
Uh-uh. This is where I live.

The bulldozers reach the land, chewing up great hunks of dirt before them, pushing flaps of tent canvas and chunks of cardboard under the ground.

The former residents run in desperation. A BUM digs in his collapsed tent, trying to fish something out while a bulldozer bears down on him.

He waits too long and

DIVES

out of the way of the oncoming dozer at the last second. His home is flattened.

In anger, he takes off after the bulldozer. Helped by several OTHERS, he reaches up and pulls the driver out of the seat. The dozer rolls away.

Mayhem.

The men in suits behind the bulldozers are forced into the fray. Soon the operators, the homeless, and the inspectors are all combined in a great confused mass of screaming, flying fists and a huge swirling cloud of dust.

Reinhardt watches in horror.

Howard Blanc is impassive.

On the balcony of the Blanc house, Gloria comes out of the bedroom in her nightgown and watches the riot.

She yawns.

CUT TO:

EXT FREEDOM SQUARE NIGHT

Levelled.

A smooth expanse of dirt, devoid of life.

A dog trots around inoffensively, pausing here and there to sniff at the ground. It finds something of interest and begins to paw at it, digging into the soft earth.

INT REINHARDT'S ROOM NIGHT

Reinhardt's closet is half-empty, his suitcase rapidly filling on the bed. CARLTON, a servant of about sixty, appears in the doorway and looks at the closet.

CARLTON

You'd best hurry. Dramatic exits lose their impact after a few hours.

REINHARDT

Is that what you think I'm doing? Stamping my foot and storming off like a little kid?

Carlton shrugs.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Come on, Carlton. You know how important your opinion is to me.

CARLTON

All right. To be perfectly honest, I find your moral outrage rather selective. You rebel against your uncle's wealth, but not against the shirts or wristwatches it was used to purchase. And I also believe you're quite impressed with how dashingly you wear nobility.

REINHARDT

Thanks for your honesty, Carlton. And fuck you.

CARLTON

Of course.

(pause)

Have you asked him his reasons?
Perhaps -

REINHARDT

Come off it, Carlton. Don't defend
a man you despise as much as I do.

CARLTON

He has spared me certain...indignities.

REINHARDT

And caused you others. Don't be
naive.

From outside comes the sound of dogs BARKING and GROWLING, too faint
for Reinhardt and Carlton to notice.

Carlton looks around at the walls, the book shelves.

CARLTON

Don't forget your books.

REINHARDT

I'll send for them.

CARLTON

What about Miss Meeker?

REINHARDT

Gloria? Nothing will change. We're
in love.

CARLTON

If I may, sir -- who's naive?

The BARKING outside has become a pronounced HOWLING. Reinhardt goes to
the window and squints outside.

REINHARDT

See what's going on now, will
you? I can't see a God damn thing.

CARLTON

(going to the window)

Eyeglasses help considerably. Perhaps
if you'd taken my suggestion and seen -

REINHARDT

Stop mothering, Carlton. It'll make
your tits grow.

Carlton has arrived at the window and looks outside.

CARLTON

Oh dear.

CUT TO:

EXT FREEDOM SQUARE NIGHT

"Oh dear" is right.

SEVERAL DOZEN DOGS dig frantically at the hole begun by the first dog earlier, but now it's much larger. The animals are incensed, tearing at the ground, snapping at each other, some fighting and tugging at something between them.

A PACK OF WILD DOGS

bounds across the lot, approaching with the hungry, lopsided gait of strays. They reach the hole and join in, more vicious than the first dogs.

On the street, a WEALTHY WOMAN stops as her poodle strains at the leash.

Several PASSERSBY stop to watch the commotion, most of them the newly displaced homeless, the former residents of the lot who have nowhere to go.

Carlton comes hurrying out of the house and over to the lot line. Reinhardt follows him, pausing to throw two suitcases in the back of an expensive car in the driveway.

Five or six SECURITY PATROL cars SCREECH to a stop at the edge of the lot. A SHOT is fired into the air and the dogs bolt, scurrying to the edges of the lot.

The PATROLMEN approach the hole in the center of the lot tentatively. One of them slides down the soft earthen edges. The hole is by now a pit some twenty feet across and four or five feet deep.

The crowd on the sidewalk has grown considerably. Consisting mostly of the homeless, they stand silently, monolithic.

Watching.

The Patrolman in the pit sees something protruding from the soil. He reaches down and takes hold, gently tugging it out of the dirt.

It's a human arm.

He SHRIEKS and drops the arm, horrified. He looks around him -- everywhere, whitish lumps stick out of the dirt. He scrambles to the edge and up the wall of the hole, BABBLING incoherently.

Carlton grabs onto Reinhardt's arm for support.

REINHARDT

Oh God -- I used to see them digging
but I didn't know they were living --
underground! My God, they buried
them alive!

His words are echoed by the crowd as they too piece together what's happened.

"Buried alive."

"They were BURIED ALIVE!"

The dogs have regained some of their courage and begin to close the circle around the Security Patrolmen who guard the hole. The Patrols stand stupidly around the hole, not trained for this.

The crowd moves in tighter as well, its MUMBLING escalating into SHOUTING, underscored by the dogs' GROWLING and SNAPPING.

In the middle of the mob, the Smiling Woman, clutching her child, grabs at those around her.

SMILING WOMAN

Be calm. Not yet. The time isn't
right. Be calm!

Howard Blanc appears in the window of his mansion, overlooking the whole scene. The Smiling Woman sees him and points.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

There! That's the man who deserves
our anger! Him, not them!

The crowd ignores her.

At the street, another half dozen Security Patrol cars appear. The crowd, sensing its opportunity lost, seems to back off a bit.

At the lot line, Carlton and Reinhardt look up to see Blanc in the window. Carlton bows his head and starts for the house. He turns and looks back at Reinhardt, guiltily.

One of the dogs, either braver or hungrier than the rest, makes a run for the edge of the pit. A Security Patrolman pulls his gun and

BLASTS

the dog in the chest. It crumples.

The others dogs SCREAM —

-- and attack.

The crowd follows suit.

This is the riot as it should have happened this afternoon.

Billy clubs SWING,

GUNSHOTS

are fired, the crowd

RIPS

at anything with a uniform and the dogs

TEAR

at everybody.

As Reinhardt watches, stupefied, he sees some movement from the pit, neglected by the warring mob.

A hand reaches out. A figure clammers to the top.

A NAKED MAN.

He draws himself to his full height at the edge of the pit and looks around, completely disoriented.

Reinhardt gapes.

About the time Reinhardt sees the Naked Man, someone else does -- DECKER, a small, thick man with a big face who is in the process of caving in a Security Patrolman's head with a rock. He drops what he's doing and stares in wonder at the Man who just returned from a grave.

He starts toward him.

Reinhardt collects himself and heads for the Naked Man too, fighting his way through the frenzied crowd, never taking his eyes off the spectre that stands at the edge of the pit without moving, eyes wide with shock.

For a while it's anybody's guess who'll get there first -- Reinhardt or Decker.

A Patrolman drops to his knees, wounded, in front of Decker. Decker can't resist blood, and with a last glance at the Naked Man he dives onto the Patrolman's back and starts to choke him.

Reinhardt reaches the Naked Man — who is wearing only a silver medallion around his neck. Reinhardt doffs his overcoat, draping it over the man. He looks at the medallion — it bears only an emblem, too faded and worn to be recognizable.

REINHARDT

Where did you come from?

The Man looks at Reinhardt, then down into the pit. He gestures to it.

MAN

Miles.

Reinhardt looks at the pit.

REINHARDT

Oh God. Who are you?

The man shrugs, his face and mind a blank. Reinhardt puts one arm around him and leads him off through the crowd.

Decker finishes his murderous work and looks up to the edge of the pit, but the Man is gone.

The sound drains away from the scene as Reinhardt helps the Man into the back seat of his car. He sprays gravel on his uncle's house as he drives away, leaving the riot behind. Over the silent images of the riot, the VOICE OVER returns, now recognized as Reinhardt's voice.

V.O. (cont.)

The riots only lasted a few weeks before the Movement crumbled. But the rioters never had a chance, really. The Movement had no leader, no figuredhead, no emotional pivot other than seven dead John Does in a vacant lot.

In the back seat of the car, MILES shivers under the overcoat, eyes still wide, face fresh.

At the window of the house, Howard Blanc closes a drape.

In the middle of the riot, the Smiling Woman has crumpled to her knees under the billy clubs of two Patrolmen. She covers her child with her body and SOBS.

V.O. (cont.)

So when the August heat and the Revolution both withered, FatCity went back to work.

CUT TO:

EXT A BAD AREA IN THE CENTRAL CITY DAY

V.O. (cont.)

Some of us in new surroundings.

REINHARDT, GLORIA, and the NAKED MAN (now clothed) stand in front of a decrepit apartment building, carrying packing boxes. Reinhardt beams. The Man, still blank-faced, doesn't react.

Gloria overreacts, breathing through a handkerchief.

V.O. (cont.)

I called the Naked Man "Miles," as that was the only word he spoke the first few weeks I knew him.

CUT TO:

EXT USED CAR DEALER DAY

At the door of the shabby office, REINHARDT haggles with the DEALER, selling the expensive car he drove away from his uncle's house.

ACROSS THE LOT,

MILES and GLORIA sit in Reinhardt's new car -- a junk heap. Miles is in back, Gloria in front.

Miles, customarily, is silent. Gloria, customarily, is uptight.

GLORIA

Well. Isn't this a fine auto?
What fine taste Reinhardt has
developed since you two met.

She turns to Miles -- of course, she gets no answer.

GLORIA (cont.)

Don't you think?

MILES

Miles.

GLORIA

What a sparkling conversationalist
you are.

MILES

Miles.

GLORIA
(exasperated)
Yes. "Miles." We've certainly got
that one down, haven't we? Jesus,
can't you think of anything else
to say?

Miles turns to her.

OVER AT THE OFFICE,

Reinhardt looks up as a SCREAM echoes from the car Miles and Gloria sit
in.

Reinhardt runs over.

AT THE CAR,

Gloria is furious, Miles placid.

REINHARDT
What happened?

GLORIA
Miles spoke.

REINHARDT
That's tremendous! Miles, what
did you say?

MILES
I asked her what's up her ass.

Gloria scowls fiercely at him, then turns to Reinhardt, expecting him
to do something.

GLORIA
Well?

REINHARDT
It's a fair question, Gloria.

CUT TO:

EXT FATCITY STREET DAY

REINHARDT drives his new car -or rather very old one- down the street
proudly. He leans forward, squinting, his face a few inches from the
windshield. GLORIA is in the passenger seat, trying in vain to sit on
the upholstery without touching it. She and Reinhardt are arguing, but
we don't hear their words. Instead, REINHARDT'S VOICE comes over as we
watch MILES in back, staring in wonder at the street around him.

REINHARDT'S V.O.

Even when his speech returned, his memory didn't. But he was curious, Miles. Curious and afraid.

Miles sees some flashing lights off in the distance. Transfixed, he opens the car door and walks into the middle of the street, ignoring the traffic. Cars

SCREECH

as they lock their brakes to avoid hitting him.

Reinhardt looks up at the sound and sees Miles, still in the street, oblivious. He gets out and guides him back to the car.

CUT TO:

INT SOUP KITCHEN DAY

MILES and REINHARDT dish soup into the bowls and pans of a long line of HOMELESS. It's ugly, gruel-like stuff, and the clientele of the place matches it. A line stretches around the corner to the open serving window.

Reinhardt grins, enjoying his work. Miles isn't so blissful.

MILES

You know, Reinhardt, I was thinking.

REINHARDT

Yeah?

MILES

Well, I mean, this is a good time and all, but, uh...what are we going to do?

REINHARDT

What do you mean?

MILES

For jobs.

REINHARDT

This is our job.

MILES

Oh.

He goes back to dishing out the soup. Someone in line turns to the side and vomits.

Miles stares in amazement. No one else notices.

Miles turns to Reinhardt, repulsed.

MILES (cont.)

Reinhardt, I hate it here. What are we going to do for money?

REINHARDT

Go get a job if you want. I just don't think you're ready.

MILES

I'm an adult, man! I don't need to be kept locked up.

REINHARDT

I don't lock you up, I watch you. I have to. You get freaked out. Every time you go somewhere alone you get in trouble.

MILES

(firmly)

I want a job. What do you do?

REINHARDT

(shrugs)

You just go apply.

MILES

No, I mean you. Personally. What do you do?

REINHARDT

I don't know. Denouncing your family is full time work. The paperwork is incredible.

DECKER stands in Miles' line, but around the corner, out of their line of vision. Bowl in hand, he moves closer to them.

MILES

Seriously. I mean, I've got amnesia. I'm not supposed to know. But you — what about all those books you've got? You must know some things.

REINHARDT

(uncomfortable)

I've had -- a few jobs. I quit them.

MILES

So now you do this?

REINHARDT

Yeah. So?

MILES

I just find it hard to believe that
this is your true calling.

REINHARDT

Why? I'm helping.

Decker is now only two or three people from the front of the line, but
still around the corner from the serving window.

MILES

(sarcastic)

By God, Reinhardt, you're right.
Thank God you're here. There is
no one else on the face of the globe
who could dish that soup that way.
If it wasn't for you it would probably
sit there in the kettle, the ladle
beside it, and all these people would
just come in every day and look at
it, wishing, hoping -

REINHARDT

Stop it.

MILES

- dreaming of a man like you who
would -

REINHARDT

I mean it, cut it out.

Miles sees he's serious. He stops.

REINHARDT (cont.)

I'm helping.

MILES

Helping who?

His ladle CLANKS in the bottom of his kettle. Empty. He pulls it out.

MILES (cont.)

I gotta go get more.

As he turns and leaves Decker appears at his window, just missing him.

REINHARDT

(to Decker)

You'll have to wait.

CUT TO:

EXT FATCITY STREET NIGHT

REINHARDT, MILES, and GLORIA cruise in Reinhardt's car, the stereo loud, a six pack of beer on the front seat. This time Gloria is in the back, Miles in front. Reinhardt hangs his head out the window, YELLING at an expensive car as it drives by.

REINHARDT
Miserable Van Okker bastard!

He's in heaven.

Gloria would like to die.

Reinhardt slaps Miles on the back and offers him a beer. Miles takes it — and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT & MILES' APARTMENT

MILES and REINHARDT battle cockroaches the size of Buicks. Miles, for the first time, is laughing.

GLORIA, if she's not vomiting, would like to. She watches Miles and Reinhardt making good natured war on the varmints. Finally, fed up and left out, she backs out of the apartment, unseen.

A second later, Reinhardt looks up.

REINHARDT
Where's Gloria?

He sees the open door and runs out after her.

Miles stands for a second, staring at the open door. Tempted. He bites his lip.

CUT TO:

EXT SIDEWALK NIGHT

GLORIA stomps down the street. REINHARDT runs out of his building and catches up to her.

REINHARDT
Wait.

She turns.

GLORIA
Yes, Saint Reinhardt?

REINHARDT
What's wrong with you?

GLORIA
Nothing.

She turns and walks. He stops her.

GLORIA (cont.)
(snapping)
You can only live off the money
from the car for so long; you
know. You have to get a job.

REINHARDT
I have a job.

GLORIA
That's not a job. It doesn't pay.

REINHARDT
Listen, Gloria, we both know that's
not what's bugging you. What is
it, really?

GLORIA
Goodbye.

Behind them both, unseen, MILES emerges from the apartment building and drifts casually across the street. He disappears into the night.

REINHARDT
(to Gloria)
Don't go. Just tell me what's on
your mind.

GLORIA
I am. Goodbye.

A WINO stops and watches them.

REINHARDT
What?

GLORIA
Look, I gave it a chance, but after
six weeks it seems you actually
intend to continue this hysterical
crusade. Because of our families,
it's always been convenient for us.
But it's not any more. That's all.

The Wino nods, sees the logic of Gloria's argument.

REINHARDT

That's bullshit. You see me doing something you tried to do and failed at. That makes you feel guilty. You don't like to feel guilty. It makes you think, and that hurts.

GLORIA

Hah! I see you going through a childish phase I outgrew two years ago. That's what I see.

REINHARDT

Yeah? Well, back when you actually believed in something was the only time I really loved you. The last two years all I've been doing is waiting for that part of you to come back.

The Wino nods again, now siding with Reinhardt.

GLORIA

Gloves off, huh? Okay. I find your political ideas childish, simplistic and egregious, your lovemaking clumsy and brief and your eyesight atrocious.

The Wino winces. A clear winner.

REINHARDT

(meekly)

I guess that just about covers it.

GLORIA

You're arguing out of habit, Reinhardt. Don't. You've severed all other ties with your old life. Why not make the break complete?

She touches his cheek with genuine fondness, then marches away down the street. Reinhardt stares straight ahead, listening to her heels CLICK on the pavement as she walks away.

REINHARDT

(to the Wino)

What the hell's "egregious" mean?

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT'S APARTMENT NIGHT

He returns and sees Miles is gone. Furious, he kicks a chair.

CUT TO:

INT A JAIL DAY

The door slides open with a bang. MILES stands sheepishly in the cell.
A GUARD gestures for him to come out.

CUT TO:

INT POLICE STATION WAITING ROOM

REINHARDT greets Miles as he comes out of the back room.

REINHARDT
I was up all night looking for you.

MILES
It wasn't my fault.

REINHARDT
It's always your fault.

MILES
You weren't there this time, man.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT REINHARDT'S CAR DAY

Reinhardt drives, face to windshield. Miles is next to him, eating a reddish snow cone.

MILES
Well, I remember at least that I loved these things.

REINHARDT
Will you please talk to me? Why were you in jail?

MILES
I do not want to talk about it.

REINHARDT
(fed up)
Fine.
(pause)
Howard tells me that -

MILES
(shouting)
CITY BUSES ARE DEPRAVED AND DEGRADING!

REINHARDT

Oh God. I thought we'd decided
you were going to stay away from
public transportation.

Miles rocks in his seat, deranged.

MILES

I was just sitting there. I was
just sitting there, man.

REINHARDT

And?

MILES

(swallowing, gathering
strength)

I was about a mile from my stop. I
mean, I'd almost made it, Reinhardt.
Maybe that's why it hit me so hard.
Cause I thought I was safe. Damn
dwarfs.

REINHARDT

Dwarfs?

MILES

Two of 'em -- twins, I think -- sat
in front of me for five or six
stops. Probably had about thirty
cents between 'em, by the way they
were dressed. Hey, I knew something
was up. I mean, I'm not stupid. I
was ready, you know? Mentally and
physically ready for whatever this
maniacal city was about to unleash
on me.

REINHARDT

So?!

MILES

(voice hushed)

The bus stopped. I felt the shift
as someone very heavy got on. It
was an obese woman. Richer than
hell. Must have been having her
car fixed or something. She
headed for the dwarfs. I swear,
there were twenty or thirty empty
seats on that bus but she honed
right in on the empty seat between
those dwarfs like it was manifest
destiny or something.

REINHARDT
You sure you didn't dream this?

MILES
(caught up in it now)
I started screaming. I leapt to my feet, begging them to separate, pleading with them to smash whatever sick real-life poetry this twisted bitch was trying to pull off. "STOP IT!" I said!

Miles is now screaming. The car is at a stop light. People stare.
Miles collapses back in the seat, exhausted from the retelling.

REINHARDT
What happened then?

MILES
(shrugs)
The driver recognized me from the episode with the three bald men and called the cops. You came.

Reinhardt has stopped the car in front of their apartment building. He gestures to it.

REINHARDT
Look, Miles. You're home. Go inside.

MILES
(panicked)
I'll come with you! Where are you going?

REINHARDT
Briar Heights..

MILES
(terrified)
Oh God! Why?

REINHARDT
I have to. Carlton is doing something for me. It'll be okay. Sit in the kitchen. You like the fluorescents there, remember?

MILES
(a realization)
Yeah.

He gets out, stands on the curb next to the car.

REINHARDT
It's okay, Miles. I'll be back in
an hour.

Miles nods, sullen. He drops his snow cone to the already littered sidewalk and looks around the street.

Reinhardt starts to pull away from the curb.

REINHARDT (cont.)
Go inside.

Miles climbs the stairs, sullen. He reaches the top and pauses.

Reinhardt, who has started to pull away, stops and SHOUTS.

REINHARDT (cont.)
Inside!

Miles goes in.

Reinhardt drives off.

After a moment, the door to the apartment building opens a crack.

Miles looks out.

CUT TO:

EXT BRIAR HEIGHTS MALL DAY

Reinhardt's car comes to a stop across from the mall, a huge, trendy pink and black thing. He hesitates, then drives into the underground parking area.

INT PARKING GARAGE

Reinhardt searches fruitlessly for a parking spot, his battered auto a sore thumb among the beautiful vehicles in the crowded garage.

He sees a spot in the middle of a row and heads for it. From the other end of the row -the wrong end- the DRIVER of a shining black car sees the spot also and guns it, racing Reinhardt.

Reinhardt GASPS when he sees the car coming. Both drivers lock up their brakes at the same time and the SQUEALS echo through the garage.

The cars stop a few inches from each other.

Reinhardt sits for a moment, collecting his wits. A HORN BLAST rips like a fart from under the hood of the black car.

Reinhardt jumps. He gets out of his car.

REINHARDT

Hey!

The black car has a hood ornament — a gleaming silver "O" nestled obscenely in the crotch of a shining "V".

It's a Van Okker.

The car has heavily tinted windows. Reinhardt can't see in. The driver doesn't emerge, so Reinhardt walks around to his window.

REINHARDT (cont.)

God damn Van Okker. Come on, man,
I want to talk to you.

The car sits still for a moment, then quietly drops in gear and backs away, down the row.

Reinhardt looks at his own car. He brushes a little rust off the rear quarter panel.

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET DAY

Miles walks down a FatCity street, taking everything in with a mix of wonder and fear. He stops for a moment at a corner and a bus appears out of nowhere, its doors dropping open in front of him.

DRIVER

(impatiently)
Gettin' on?

MILES

(to the gods)
Why not?

He boards the bus.

CUT TO:

INT PARKING GARAGE

The black Van Okker cruises the rows of the garage -- restless, predatory -- looking for a spot.

CUT TO:

INT MALL

Reinhardt rides up an escalator in the lavish mall.

His VOICE comes over.

V.O.

There is no other way to relate the events that followed than all at once — so inextricably intertwined are the fates of the black Van Okker in the garage, Miles in the Central City and the eyeglasses I was about to purchase.

At the top of the escalator, Carlton stands waiting for Reinhardt. They shake hands.

CARLTON

I've had a word with the manager of the shop. He'll put the glasses on my personal tab, not your uncle's.

REINHARDT

I appreciate it.

Carlton nods. He fumbles for words.

CARLTON

I wanted to say, sir -- however inarticulate your message may be, I believe it comes from the heart.

REINHARDT

Thank you, Carlton.

Carlton gets on the "down" escalator.

CARLTON

If there's anything else I can do...

REINHARDT

Or me for you.

CARLTON

(as he is lowered
out of sight)

Unlikely. But I'll keep it in mind.

CUT TO:

INT A BUS

Miles rides. Across the aisle from him is a BLACK MAN WITH A WHITE HAT. Miles stares at him.

The bus stops and a WHITE MAN WITH A BLACK HAT gets on. He starts back. Miles looks in desperation at the Man across from him. The new passenger draws closer, Miles draws in his breath —

-- and the Man moves past, taking a seat in the back. Miles sighs and rings the bell for the next stop.

CUT TO:

INT EYEGGLASS STORE

Reinhardt looks over some frames. He notices an attractive BLONDE GIRL behind the counter, about eighteen, chomping gum. She is bent over a sheet of figures, totalling them. He approaches her, holding a pair of frames.

REINHARDT

What do you think of these?

BLONDE

(not a joke)

I don't need glasses.

REINHARDT

No, I mean for me.

BLONDE

(bored)

They make your face look puny. Try these.

CUT TO:

INT PARKING GARAGE

The Van Okker still cruises for a spot, now moving fast, too fast, and the wrong way down aisles.

CUT TO:

EXT CITY STREET DAY

Miles gets off the bus in a poor section of town. As the bus roars away, a shining white Van Okker pulls to a stop at the curb, parking right next to a sagging rust bucket. The DRIVER of the Van Okker jumps out and hurries down the street.

Miles looks at the two cars parked right next to each other.

He swallows.

CUT TO:

INT EYEGGLASS STORE

A pile of eyeglass frames has collected in front of Reinhardt. He points to a neglected pair at the top of a rack.

REINHARDT

What about those?

The Blonde, thoroughly disgusted, climbs up and gets them.

She hands them to him.

BLONDE

Go for it.

CUT TO:

EXT CITY STREET DAY

Miles, sweating, chews his lip as he stares at the Van Okker.

He reaches decisively into his shirt and pulls out the medallion that hangs around his neck. He starts to walk toward the car, dropping his hand to his side, the sharp part of the medallion sticking out.

He reaches the car and the medallion

BITES

through sixteen coats of polished paint until it reaches metal.

A SHRIEK

cuts the air.

Heads turn. One of them, from across the street, is DECKER, the weasel from the riot. He gasps as he sees Miles.

DECKER

It's him. Him!

Miles keeps walking, making a long, straight scratch all the way down the length of the car. When he reaches the driver's door, he pauses and makes a distinctive double loop.

He pulls the medallion away, satisfied, but he's quickly overcome with fear and looks around him.

At least FIFTY PASSERSBY have stopped and are gaping at him, open mouthed. At once, they burst into spontaneous applause, some moving forward to clap Miles on the back.

Miles panics and takes off, disappearing through the crowd.

Decker, who has now moved closer, loses sight of him as many among the crowd produce keys and other sharp objects and fall upon the car.

CUT TO:

INT EYEGLOSS STORE

Reinhardt puts on the glasses, an ordinary horn rimmed pair.

REINHARDT

Well?

The Blonde looks up and her jaw drops. Her chewing gum hits the counter with a PLOP.

BLONDE

Oh my God.

REINHARDT

You like 'em?

BLONDE

(numb)

They're...oh God...

Weakened by the vision, she sags against the counter. A CO-WORKER rushes up to help her and turns to Reinhardt.

CO-WORKER

What happened to -

She sees Reinhardt, sees his glasses. Her face is suffused with awe.

Reinhardt is puzzled. He takes the glasses off and hands them to A GUY who stands next to him.

REINHARDT

Put these on once.

The Guy does. The salesgirls recover.

BLONDE

(to Reinhardt)

No. You put them on. Please.

Reinhardt does. The Girls swoon again. Even the Guy seems impressed with Reinhardt.

REINHARDT

I guess I'll take 'em.

CUT TO:

INT PARKING GARAGE

A faded station wagon is parked in the middle of a row, an empty spot beside it. In the driver's seat is the Smiling Woman, applying lipstick in the rear view mirror while her FOUR YEAR OLD plays with a ball in the back seat, bouncing it off the floor and ceiling.

The black Van Okker cruises, sharklike, in the background.

The Child's ball ricochets off a headrest and out the window. The Child reaches for the door handle.

The black Van Okker sees the empty spot next to their car and hits the gas.

At the last second, the back door of the station wagon opens and the Child steps out, directly into the path of the Van Okker.

The Smiling Woman, watching the action unfold in her rearview mirror,
SCREAMS

in terror and turns her head. Her lipstick draws a curved line across her cheek, creasing her face in a grotesque smile.

The driver of the Van Okker locks up the brakes but is far too late and his car

SMASHES

into the Child, crushing both him and the door up against a cement pillar.

The Smiling Woman falls out of her car, hysterical.

CUT TO:

INT MALL

Reinhardt walks through the crowd. The reactions to his glasses are similar to in the store — everyone takes note of him, some obsessed, others just impressed.

Amazed and a little alarmed, Reinhardt takes off the glasses and ducks out a door.

INT PARKING GARAGE

Reinhardt comes through the door and into the garage. A CROWD has gathered, clustered around something.

Reinhardt approaches the crowd. Security patrols have marked off the accident scene. The child's small body is covered by a sheet in the middle of the cordoned off area. The Smiling Woman, streak across her face, rants hysterically while the DRIVER of the car is questioned, his back to Reinhardt.

The Driver looks irritated, bothered by this delay.

Reinhardt stretches for a better look.

SMILING WOMAN

(raving)

He killed him! That man killed my
child!

She falls on top of the body, ripping the sheet back, revealing a
lifeless hand. The Security Patrols pull her back. In the struggle
one of them steps on the dead child's hand.

Reinhardt winces.

The driver of the Van Okker is released by the Patrolmen and turns to
get back into his car.

It's Howard Blanc.

He sees his nephew, then looks away.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

They're letting him go! Stop him!
STOP HIM! He took my child, that
God damn Doe-Killer!

The crowd goes silent.

Security Patrols grab the woman and throw her against the hood of a
car, cuffing her hands behind her back.

One ONLOOKER turns to a SECOND ONLOOKER.

ONLOOKER

She say "Doe-Killer"?

SECOND

Yep.

ONLOOKER

Musta been in the riots.

SECOND

Bitch.

ONLOOKER

Stupid to say it here. Where
does she think she is? Central
City?

The Smiling Woman watches as Howard Blanc drives away. Her face
crushed against the hood of the car, she spits out an oath.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

I swear you out. I swear out your
name. You, till the last of your
line. I swear you out.

Reinhardt leaves, shaken.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT & MILES' APARTMENT NIGHT

MILES sits at the kitchen table, staring at a blank crossword puzzle. A chessboard is on the table in front of him, a game in progress.

REINHARDT enters.

REINHARDT
This has been a very weird day.

MILES
I hear you.

Reinhardt looks at him -- sitting casually at the table, legs crossed, idly tapping a pen.

REINHARDT
Everything okay?

MILES
Of course. Why?

REINHARDT
I don't know. You seem...calm.
Too calm. Almost happy.

MILES
Is that bad?

REINHARDT
No. I guess not.
(pause)
Want some help with that?

MILES
You kidding? I'm almost done.

Reinhardt looks at the puzzle. No answers are filled in.

Miles taps the side of his head.

MILES (cont.)
Here. I must be very bright.

REINHARDT
Yeah.

CONTINUED

MILES

It's kind of fun finding out about yourself bit by bit like this. You never know when one of your numbers will be called. Like bingo. Except in my case, I don't even know what my numbers are.

(he gestures to the chessboard)
It's your turn.

Reinhardt puts on his new glasses.

REINHARDT

What do you think of these?

MILES

(matter of fact)

I hate them. I hate everything about them.

REINHARDT

Really? Some people were very impressed by them.

MILES

Some people are impressed by Leroy Neiman.

He looks up, startled at the reference.

MILES (cont.)

Who's Leroy Neiman? I feel like I hate him.

REINHARDT

You do.

MILES

Now how can I know Leroy Neiman and not my own name?

A KNOCK at the door. Reinhardt moves for it.

MILES (cont.)

Oh, Gloria called. Said she was coming by to get her paintings. Did you two have a fight?

REINHARDT

Not really. Gloria had a fight.

She KNOCKS again. Reinhardt opens the door and she steams in without looking at him.

REINHARDT

Hello, Gl -

GLORIA

(cold as hell)

Hello Reinhardt I telephoned earlier saying I'd be coming by to get some of my things it shouldn't take me more than a minute and I'll be out of your hair how are you Miles MY GOD REINHARDT IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU?!?

Silence for a second.

Gloria walks to Reinhardt as one walks to an altar. She reaches up and runs her hand into the thick of his hair, looking deeply into his eyes.

MILES

I'm fine, thanks.

Gloria snakes her arms around Reinhardt and kisses him deeply, pressing her body into his -- it's a hard, grinding embrace.

MILES (cont.)

Maybe I was hasty about the glasses.

CUT TO:

INT A PRISON WAITING ROOM

DECKER waits in one of a row of chairs at a counter. A wall of glass separates the counter from a similar row on the other side.

TWO GUARDS bring the SMILING WOMAN in and seat her opposite Decker. She is gaunt, drawn. Her face is washed clean, but there are fresh bruises. They talk through a small speaker in the wall.

DECKER

Not badly beaten. That's good.

She nods.

DECKER (cont.)

Will you be charged?

SMILING WOMAN

No. I've lost my child. They think the debt paid, or don't care enough to come up with something new.

DECKER

Our child. We've lost our -

SMILING WOMAN

(exploding)

My child! Was it you took
him back when he were stolen from us?
You gave up! You forfeited him to
them. He's mine.

A Guard appears behind her. Decker gestures for her to be calm.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

Was mine.

Decker leans forward conspiratorially.

DECKER

I've seen him again. Him, that
were recalled to life in the
First Riot! He -

SMILING WOMAN

Stop! The Child dead and me in
security center and you start again
with your dreams? There were none
that were recalled to life, Decker.
You were drunk, drunk on the blood
of a split head.

DECKER

It's a lie! In the Central City.
Today. He took something from
around his neck and -

SMILING WOMAN

(viciously)

Shut up!

Decker lowers his head, a child chastised.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

(soothing)

No more of phantoms now, not with
so much for us to do.

DECKER

It were real, I tell you!

SMILING WOMAN

It were a phantom, no more! Listen.
While I'm new and still free of the
diseases in this place the guards
all bother me to sleep with them.
That's good. Seems maybe I can be out
soon -- in a few days, if I find the
right ones. It's a good sign, that.

DECKER

When you're out, we'll find the
murderer. By night, we'll go and -

SMILING WOMAN

No, Decker. Not yet.

DECKER

We can't wait. I can't.

SMILING WOMAN

Think of the last time. How foolish
you all were — not led by a man but
by a dog. You'll have it happen
again, that? You'll be led by a cur?

DECKER

Who then?

SMILING WOMAN

Be patient. He'll reveal himself. Maybe
you. Maybe me.

(snide)

Perhaps your phantom.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT & MILES' APARTMENT NIGHT

Miles studies the chessboard.

MILES

(shouting offscreen)

It's still your turn.

Reinhardt comes into the room, putting on an old used suitcoat.

REINHARDT

How about this?

MILES

That the ten dollar one?

REINHARDT

Yeah, but it looks like twenty at
least, don't you think?

MILES

Sure. Where you going?

Reinhardt bends over the chessboard, preparing to move.

REINHARDT

Little party. A friend of Gloria's.

MILES

Oh God. Why on earth would you go there?

REINHARDT

Sometimes I think I liked you better when you didn't speak.

MILES

I just don't see why you persist with Gloria.

REINHARDT

You don't know anything about her. She's a lawyer, you know. Public defender. And she's never said a bad word about you.

The VOICE OVER punches in.

VOICE OVER

That was a lie. Okay, not a lie, but not exactly the truth. Gloria used to be a public defender.

The next scene plays silently, sliding under the VOICE OVER:

INT A COURTROOM

GLORIA, in a smart suit, sits at the defendant's table with an UGLY FUCKER. She scribbles some notes.

V.O. (cont.)

She lived and worked in the Central City right after law school. She was very idealistic.

The Ugly Fucker stares at Gloria. She ignores him. She finishes writing and sets down her pencil.

The Ugly Fucker picks it up and licks it. Gloria is repulsed.

V.O. (cont.)

Her family didn't see it that way, though. They thought she was doing it to disgrace them. So they beat her to it. Her father legally disowned her when she moved out of Briar Heights.

Gloria picks up another pencil and uses the eraser end to flick the first off the table. She starts to write again. The Ugly Fucker stretches out a meaty paw and covers her hand. He takes the second pencil away from her and licks it.

V.O. (cont.)

After six months of defending
mother rapers and father stabbers,
her grandmother died and left
her sixteen million dollars.

Gloria patiently picks up a third pencil. The Ugly Fucker takes that
one too and sucks on it, really going wild with his tongue.

Gloria, pushed too far, picks up a fourth pencil and

STABS

it into the Ugly Fucker's shoulder. He SCREAMS (silently) and she
starts to go after him again but is restrained by the BAILIFF and other
ONLOOKERS.

V.O. (cont.)

She moved back to Briar Heights and
now only accepts clients who sue
her father or his companies. She's
never lost a case.

MILES

(voice over)

Oh, she hasn't?

INT BACK IN THE KITCHEN

REINHARDT

(lost in thought)

Huh?

MILES

Never said one bad word about me?
Sure.

Reinhardt looks at his watch.

REINHARDT

I gotta go. You going out tonight?

MILES

Maybe just a little exploring.

REINHARDT

Absolutely not. You're still
unstable.

He heads for the door.

MILES

You've got to move!

REINHARDT

No I don't. That's why I like chess.

MILES

Just make a decision!

REINHARDT

I'm deciding to wait.

He leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT A STREET CORNER NIGHT

The same corner where Miles scratched the Van Okker that afternoon.

After rush hour, traffic is dying.

A bus ROARS up and stops at the corner. DECKER gets off, carrying a backpack.

He looks around surreptitiously, making sure he's in the right place, then takes a seat on a bench. He reaches into his backpack and pulls out a thermos. He pours himself a cup of something hot. Again into the backpack and he produces a bag of chips.

He settles back. He waits.

CUT TO:

EXT MANSION IN BRIAR HEIGHTS NIGHT

A beautiful place; a couple dozen beautiful cars out front; lots of beautiful people inside. Gloria's car pulls to a stop and she and Reinhardt get out.

Reinhardt looks at the house and recoils.

REINHARDT

Gloria — a "little party?"

GLORIA

(still enormously
infatuated with him)
What's wrong, darling?

He gestures to his clothes.

REINHARDT

Look at me. This wouldn't be hip
in the Central City, much less here.

GLORIA
I know, I didn't have a chance to get ready either. Come on, I think she's got a hose in back.

She takes off for the back of the house.

Reinhardt looks at her, confused. He follows.

CUT TO:

EXT FRONT DOOR

The door of the house swings open to reveal BOBBYE AMOR, the woman seen in the television show at the beginning. Pushing forty but not looking a day over forty one, Bobbye is the height of chic. Everything about her is perfect — hair, skin, clothes, nails.

And she is soaking wet from head to toe.

She SCREAMS.

BOBBYE
Gloria, SWEETHEART, get in here right this second!

Gloria and Reinhardt smile. They too are drenched.

They slog into the house. Everyone in the TRENDY CROWD is wet — some sopping, others just a little drippy. The furniture and carpet are covered with plastic. People ignore their moisture and converse normally.

Bobbye leads them through the living room, whispering back over her shoulder.

BOBBYE (cont.)
Ridgely just got here and you should see him. He's barely even damp!

She and Gloria giggle.

Gloria nudges Reinhardt.

GLORIA
Stop gaping so. You haven't been out in a while, have you?

A FUNKY GUY flounces up to them.

FUNKY GUY
Pleasure dot?

GLORIA
Not for me, thanks.

REINHARDT
(gamely)
Sure.

The Funky Guy pulls a small blue tab off a sheet of wax paper and puts it behind Reinhardt's ear.

FUNKY GUY
Blast off!

He giggles and skips away.

CUT TO:

INT MILES' APARTMENT

He paces, bored out of his skull.

He grabs his jacket off a chair and dashes out the front door.

CUT TO:

INT PARTY

Now in full swing. Gloria and Bobbye Amor are chatting in low tones.

BOBBYE
...something so charismatic about
him, so commanding.

GLORIA
(snapping)
He's mine, bitch.

She throws her hand over her mouth, surprised at her own ferocity.

GLORIA (cont.)
I'm sorry!

Reinhardt approaches. He can't keep a smile off his face.

REINHARDT
Oh. Hi.

Bobbye oozes up to him and turns to Gloria, holding out her glass.

BOBBYE
Sweetheart, would you mind finding
me another drink? I refuse to
go near the bar -- Ridgely's there
and hasn't stopped staring at me
all night.

GLORIA
(not happy about this)
All right.

She leaves with the glass.

BOBBYE
I was just asking Gloria what it
is you do.

REINHARDT
Popular question.

BOBBYE
It's just that you look so familiar.
(pause)
What do you do?

REINHARDT
I'm in different...areas.

BOBBYE
I'm sure you are. Can you be more
specific?

REINHARDT
(enjoying this)
Not really.

BOBBYE
(laughing knowingly)
Of course not.
(suddenly, an accusation)
Are you in television?

OVER AT THE BAR,

Gloria waits for a drink. RIDGELY, natty suit barely hiding his essential nerdiness, leans against the bar. There are a few tasteful drops of water on his forehead and shoulders, no more.

RIDGELY
He's shrewd.

GLORIA
Pardon me?

RIDGELY
The man you're with. Very shrewd.

He gestures across the room, where Bobbye and Reinhardt share a giggle.

GLORIA

I guess.

RIDGELY

What's his name?

Gloria's getting irritated but makes an effort to be polite.

GLORIA

Blanc. Reinhardt Blanc.

RIDGELY

(chuckling)

Of course.

GLORIA

You've heard of him?

RIDGELY

I read.

GLORIA

(thoroughly confused)

Oh.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM,

Bobbye is still holding forth to Reinhardt.

BOBBYE

So your appearances have mostly
been limited to talk show type
situations, then?

REINHARDT

For the most part. Listen, can
you excuse me for a second?

He backs away, edging through the crowd. Heads turn in his wake.

FIRST GUEST

Who is that?

SECOND GUEST

I've never seen him before.

FIRST GUEST

(smug)

Figures you wouldn't.

AT THE BAR,

Gloria, with two drinks, turns and heads back into the crowd. She
can't see Reinhardt. She turns down a hallway and opens a door.

INT BATHROOM

Occupied. One MAN stands in the shower, fully dressed, soaking himself under the spray. A WOMAN is at the sink, splashing water onto her dress. She smiles.

WOMAN

Come on in!

Gloria turns and shuts the door.

INT KITCHEN

The Funky Guy and a FUNKY GAL are standing around the sink, dousing each other with the spray hose. Reinhardt has his arm around the Funky Guy. He's buzzed, very up.

REINHARDT

...but seriously, you're a funky guy. Do you know that? That you're a funky guy?

FUNKY GUY

Good dots, huh?

REINHARDT

Where are you from, you Funky Guy?

FUNKY GUY

Here and there. Any old vacant lot I can find.

The Funky Guy and Funky Gal giggle.

Reinhardt's smile fades.

FUNKY GUY (cont.)

(to Reinhardt)

Hey! You're looking a little dry.

He turns the hose on him and douses his face.

Reinhardt, with the look of one sobering up, looks around the kitchen. Polished copper pots hang from the ceiling. He catches his reflection in one of them -- it's dripping wet and distorted, ballooning out at him clownishly.

He rips the pleasure dot out from behind his ear, wipes the water off his face and stalks out.

The Funky Guy watches him leave, concerned.

FUNKY GUY
(to Funky Gal)
Wet's still in, right?

IN THE CROWD,

Everyone is now talking about Reinhardt. If he were listening, he'd hear their comments:

"...used to be the head of CVM. Or was it CVI?"

"...God damn right I do. He ruined my second husband."

"...just loved him in 'Empty Promises,' didn't you?"

OVER AT THE BAR,

Bobbye watches Reinhardt as he moves through the room. She is turned to Ridgely. He strains to see also, feigning boredom.

RIDGELY
Who? You mean Reinhardt Blanc?

BOBBYE
Yes. How did you know his name?

RIDGELY
Don't be naive. He's one of the most ruthless men in FatCity.

BOBBYE
Really?
(intrigued)
Tell me more.

IN THE CROWD,

Gloria is wandering, two drinks in her hand. She sees Reinhardt heading for the door.

OVER AT THE BAR,

Bobbye is now talking to a small group of DIGNIFIED MEN and WOMEN.

BOBBYE
I think he was offended that I didn't recognize him right away. He and Ridgely have been bitter enemies for years, you know.

She looks him in the face and regains herself. She looks around, sees that she's kneeling in front of him. She gets to her feet, still in shock. She smoothes herself and walks away, wordlessly.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY NIGHT

DECKER is asleep on the bench, his overcoat draped over him like a blanket. A bus arrives, all orange and diesel all of a sudden. Decker doesn't wake up.

Miles gets off the bus.

The wind blows Decker's coat off a little. Miles goes up to him and pulls it up under his chin. Decker stirs a little, drawing the coat up close, MUMBLING in his sleep.

A CAR races by, a white Van Okker doing about seventy, running a red light. As it passes, the PASSENGER chucks a can out the window. It CLATTERS into the gutter.

Miles looks at it, an emotion crossing his face, the first emotion we've seen on him other than confusion.

Rage.

He reaches into his shirt and pulls out his medallion. He stares at it.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT & MILES' APARTMENT MORNING

Reinhardt eats breakfast in front of a small black and white TV. A news show is on, not Bobbye Amor's. An announcer reports.

ANNOUNCER

...all over the city between eleven
last night and six this morning.

A series of photographs of expensive cars flashes behind him, each one with a long scratch down one side.

ANNOUNCER (cont.)

The culprit, whom the local press has already crowned "The Key King," left a single scratch down the driver's side and a distinctive double loop -apparently his royal seal- on the door.

Miles comes in the front door, carrying milk.

REINHARDT
(furious)
Where? Just tell me where.

MILES
(innocently)
To the store. I got milk.

REINHARDT
Don't give me that shit, Miles. You weren't here when I got in last night and you weren't here when I got up this morning. Where the hell have you been?

MILES
Look, the fact that I don't know who I am and you do doesn't make you the parent here. Back off.

REINHARDT
Parent, hell. I'm your friend and I was worried about you. Where were you?

MILES
I had some things to do.

REINHARDT
All night?

Reinhardt's attention is again directed to the TV.

ANNOUNCER
(on screen)
...final total was sixty one cars,
all the expensive Van Okker make.
Estimated damage is in the hundreds
of thousands of dollars.

Reinhardt looks back at Miles.

MILES
(defensively)
What?

A KNOCK at the door.

Miles, relieved, goes into the back room.

Reinhardt answers the door. It's Bobbye. Her manner is different than last night — colder, more composed.

BOBBYE
Found you!

She looks around him, at the television set.

BOBBYE (cont.)

So you do watch TV. Ever seen my show?

REINHARDT

Once or twice. What do you want?

BOBBYE

(ignoring the question)
Good. Then you'll know what to expect when you're on tomorrow.

REINHARDT

What?

BOBBYE

You'll do it, won't you?

REINHARDT

Look, we had a bit of a misunderstanding last night.

BOBBYE

You're Reinhardt Blanc, you've held a series of middle management jobs, all of which you've quit for various vague philosophical reasons, and you're now living in squalor to spite your uncle. Who, by the way, couldn't care less.

He stares.

BOBBYE (cont.)

I'm not stupid. Let's go for a walk. We need to have a chat.

Reinhardt hesitates.

BOBBYE (cont.)

What, you've got too much to do today?

REINHARDT

(pauses, thinking)
Hold on.

He goes into the other room. Bobbye comes further into the kitchen, sizing up the place. She looks at the game in progress on the chessboard.

Reinhardt comes back in with a jacket.

BOBBYE

Which are you?

REINHARDT

White. It's my turn.

Bobbye picks up a piece and moves it. Reinhardt doesn't object.

BOBBYE

Black is good. Who is he?

REINHARDT

We're not sure yet.

CUT TO:

EXT BRIAR HEIGHTS STREET DAY

Reinhardt and Bobbye walk along the street. Exclusive boutiques, rich people, fabulous cars. Bobbye gestures to it all.

BOBBYE

Look at them. Look them in the eyes.

REINHARDT

Clueless straights with a lot of money.

BOBBYE

Exactly. Ignorance seems to be a direct result of wealth.

They have reached a movie theatre. A line of about a hundred people has formed outside.

REINHARDT

Listen, I can bullshit like this with anyone in my part of town. You had me checked out. You know I'm not what I seemed to be. Why are you -

BOBBYE

Don't be an idiot. Everyone is what they seem to be. Look at me. Last night you thought I was an ingratiating fool. Today, a manipulative bitch. And you're right, both times.

REINHARDT

What do you want?

Bobbye stops.

BOBBYE

Stand right here.

She moves him a little. They're standing about thirty yards from the movie line, at the opposite side of the theatre.

BOBBYE (cont.)

You have a gift. I've seen it before. After you left last night, no one spoke of anything but you.

A COUPLE has just purchased tickets at the window. They head for the already formed line, then the GIRL stops and points over to where Reinhardt and Gloria stand. They head over and stand behind Reinhardt.

BOBBYE (cont.)

I didn't care at first. Media darlings come and go. But when I found out you were nobody — that fascinated me.

REINHARDT

Maybe I like being nobody. Maybe that's my whole point.

FIVE or SIX PEOPLE from the back of the other line have noticed Reinhardt. They edge away from their own line uncertainly and head over to the new one.

BOBBYE

No it's not. You're groping for self-respect, but you can't find it by denying what you are. What you are, what you will be, is a famous and rich man.

REINHARDT

I don't want money.

BOBBYE

But you'll have it. There's nothing you can do about it.

More of the other line is heading over toward Reinhardt. He sees what's starting to happen. He's on edge, scared.

REINHARDT

I can walk away. I did it before.

BOBBYE

They'll find you. We'll find you.

The entire rear half of the line has defected to Reinhardt. They walk over slowly at first, then pick it up to a trot as the idea gets more popular.

REINHARDT
I'll hate myself!

BOBBYE
You do now! Is a soup kitchen
your birthright? For a man
like you to remain poor does too
much honor to the rich. Look
them in the eyes. Who should have
the money? Them? Or you? Who
could be a better custodian? Who
could do more good with it?

The entire line is now running to Reinhardt, some SHOUTING. Footsteps
POUND on the sidewalk as the queue behind him stretches to the corner
of the block.

REINHARDT
For the money, then?

BOBBYE
Yes. Because it belongs in better
hands. You have a gift. Bring it
on my show.

CUT TO:

EXT PRISON/SECURITY CENTER DAY

Decker waits in an old car in front of an imposing gate. The gate
swings open and the Smiling Woman walks out with a parcel of clothes.

She goes to the car and gets in.

INT CAR

Decker, barely able to contain a smile, picks a newspaper up off the
seat and holds it out to her. She glances at the front page, where the
headlines tout the Key King.

SMILING WOMAN
So?

DECKER
My "phantom."

SMILING WOMAN
How do you know?

DECKER
The mark. The mark on the door.
I saw him do it for the first
time the other day in the Central
City.

She folds up the newspaper and looks out the window, thinking.

SMILING WOMAN
(after a moment)
Pass the word. Find us our Key
King.

Decker WHOOPS and puts the car in gear.

CUT TO:

INT A TELEVISION STUDIO

The set of "That's Amore!" A show is about to begin. REINHARDT, wearing a makeup collar, chewing a donut, and trailed by a MAKEUP GUY, follows BOBBYE onto the set.

REINHARDT
Bobbye, I wonder, just a word
before —

BOBBYE
Sorry sweetheart, we're on in
ten seconds.

REINHARDT
It's just that someone told me you've
been running commercials all week
saying I'd be on and I've got some
sort of message or something. I'm
just afraid —

The theme music has started and Bobbye is settling in her chair, clipping on a microphone.

BOBBYE
Don't be afraid. Remember the movie
line? You'll be great.

An ASSISTANT DIRECTOR counts down on his fingers. Reinhardt jumps out of the way as the red camera light goes on and the LIVE STUDIO AUDIENCE bursts into applause.

BOBBYE
Good morning, FatCity. I'm Bobbye
Amor and this is "That's Amore!,"
putting people on the pulse of pop
culture. Oooh, a GREAT BIGGIE today,
and I'm afraid it's bad news for all
you Van Okker owners who didn't take
the Key King's hint and left your cars
unattended yesterday.

Reinhardt turns and listens.

BOBBYE (cont.)

Forty six of the luxury liners were
hit last night and police say
frankly that they are stumped.

She turns to RIDGELY, who stands in a little booth to her right with a
sign over his head advertising his segment of the show — "The Worst
and the Stupidest."

BOBBYE (cont.)

What do you think, Ridgely? Ready to
bow to the Key King like everyone else?

Ridgely feigns yawning.

RIDGELY

Who cares? I keep my Van Okkers
locked up.

The audience LAUGHS and BOOS good naturedly.

BOBBYE

I'm sure you do. Ridgely's
segment of "The Worst and the
Stupidest" today is devoted to
the Key King. But let's not wait
any longer, let's bring on the man
we've waited for all week.

Reinhardt takes his seat in a chair off camera.

BOBBYE (cont.)

A man some will adore, some will
despise, but you'll all certainly
recognize...international personality
Reinhardt Blanc.

The audience APPLAUDS enthusiastically.

Reinhardt smiles and nods.

BOBBYE (cont.)

Okay, Reinhardt, we've been waiting
all week. Some of us have been waiting
all our lives. You say you've got a
message. This is your forum. What
have you got to tell us, Reinhardt?

Silence. Plenty of it.

Reinhardt stares.

Swallows.

REINHARDT
(a whisper)
I told you. Nothing.

BOBBYE
What's that?

REINHARDT
(a little louder)
I've got nothing to say.

BOBBYE
Nothing to say?

REINHARDT
Right.

A pause.

BOBBYE
I don't get it.

The audience grows restless, unsure how to react.

BOBBYE (cont.)
Not one word?

Reinhardt thinks. He fingers his glasses. He looks at the donut he was eating, half eaten on a table next to him.

REINHARDT
Um...thanks for the donuts?

Bobbye stares. A smile grows on her face. She starts to nod, then to laugh. She looks at the audience and winks. They start to nod and laugh and elbow each other.

BOBBYE
Nothing to say but thanks for
the donuts! I think I know where
you're coming from!
(to the audience)
What do you say? Who's ever felt
that way?! Huh?

An APPLAUSE sign lights up and the audience erupts with CLAPPING,
CHEERS and general LAUGHTER.

Reinhardt, nonplussed, nods to them. The cheering continues.

BOBBYE (cont.)
So you frankly admit you have
nothing to say?

REINHARDT

Exactly.

BOBBYE

You aren't going to mystify us with religious abstractions, you aren't going to impose your own personal philosophy on us?

REINHARDT

(enjoying this now)

Nope.

BOBBY

Just...

REINHARDT

(finishing it for her)

...thanks for the donuts.

The APPLAUSE light goes on again and the crowd responds enthusiastically.

Bobbye makes a gesture to Reinhardt, inclining her head toward the wings.

Reinhardt stands up.

REINHARDT (cont.)

In fact, I have to go.

The audience ROARS its approval of his sudden departure.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Thanks again.

BOBBYE

(over the crowd)

For the donuts, eh? Eh?!

The crowd goes nuts. As Reinhardt walks to the wings, they jump to their feet, applauding even more. Reinhardt doesn't acknowledge them, just ducks behind the curtains.

Bobbye — satisfied.

CUT TO:

EXT FATCITY STREET NIGHT

The tip of a MEDALLION is journeying through the lacquered finish of a car, SCREAMING as it goes.

It's MILES.

ON A STREET CORNER

not too far away, DECKER hears the sound and spills his coffee on himself. He jumps to his feet, scanning the deserted streets of the Central City. He takes off in one direction, then stops and heads back in the other.

The SCREECH is getting closer and louder. As Decker rounds a corner it stops. He sees a FIGURE disappear behind a building.

Miles.

Decker looks from the figure to the defiled Van Okker parked at the curb. The scratch is there, and a double loop on the driver's door.

Decker throws his head back and SCREAMS.

DECKER
THE KEY KING!!

People appear, look out windows, stop their cars.

ON THE STREET AHEAD,

Miles stops and looks back, terrified. Decker has turned a corner and is about a hundred yards behind him. Miles runs.

BEHIND HIM,

Decker has started to run too, YELLING as he goes.

DECKER (cont.)
I've seen him! He's up ahead!
THE KEY KIIIIING!!

Bums on benches, bag ladies in the street, men in pajamas -- all fall in behind Decker, yelling questions to one another.

MILES,

scared out of his fucking wits, runs as fast as he can. He runs through a mazelike series of alleys and comes out onto a broad street -- his. He runs across the street and stops, chest heaving, leaning against a building.

DECKER

appears at the mouth of the alley across the street. He looks around frantically.

DECKER

Where IS HE?!

A torrent of people flood out of the alley and around Decker, spilling to all sides of the alley mouth. Dozens have come out of the alley and there are still more appearing every second.

MILES

I'm a dead man.

Decker spots him across the street and points.

DECKER

THERE!!

Miles takes off. The crowd ROARS and pursues him.

Miles is running down the middle of the street now, the crowd behind him and gaining. He sees his apartment building in the distance. He reaches the steps and

FLIES

up to the door. He fumbles with the key in the lock, lets himself in and SLAMS the door behind him. It locks as the crowd reaches it. They press up against it, POUNDING to be let in.

Miles turns and runs up the stairs, leaving the crowd behind.

INT MILES' APARTMENT

He stumbles in, a wreck.

MILES

Reinhardt? Reinhardt!

No answer. Miles drops into a chair and holds his face in his hands.

He sits, breathing hard, trying to calm down. He looks up at a window across the room and is possessed by an Awful Thought.

The heavy floor to ceiling curtains are drawn, admitting no light. Miles stares at them, terrified. He gets to his feet — unwilling, but drawn to the window. He crosses the room and puts one hand on the drape.

He jerks the curtain aside.

THERE ARE ONE MILLION PEOPLE UNDER MILES' WINDOW.

They chant.

CROWD
KEY KING...KEY KING...KEY KING..!

Miles is in shock. He waves to them to go away, but a great CHEER rises up instead and they wave back.

Miles opens the window — glass doors, actually, leading to a small, rotted wood balcony.

MILES
(shouting)
Go away! Leave me alone!

His words are lost in the general UPROAR. He steps out on the balcony to make himself heard.

MILES (cont.)
I said LEAVE ME ALONE!

The crowd still doesn't hear him. Frustrated, he leans forward against the rail to shout again. The rail

SPLINTERS

and breaks in half. Miles tumbles forward and off the balcony. One hand involuntarily clamps onto a broken fragment of the rail.

The crowd GASPS.

Miles hangs in midair, three stories above them, twisting around, held up only by one hand's tenuous grasp on a breaking board.

The crowd pushes forward, massing underneath him instead of clearing away.

Miles is panicking. He tries to climb back up, but every movement makes the board break a little more. He hangs still, terrified, motionless.

The crowd is now thick beneath him and two words rise up softly from one mouth.

VOICE
Let go.

At first the quiet suggestion is shouted down with derision, but then it starts to make sense and others echo it:

VOICES
Let go. Let go!

After a moment the entire crowd has taken up the chant and all are SHOUTING for Miles to let go of the board.

He looks up at the wood, only a few splinters away from breaking completely. He looks at the crowd below him, arms outstretched.

Miles lets go.

He drops like a stone, straight and silent, into the center of the crowd. He disappears into the middle of them, dropping right through the outstretched arms and out of sight. For a second it's completely quiet, not a sound in the air, and then --

-- MILES FLIES INTO THE AIR ABOVE THE CROWD,

flung up from within it. They go wild in a frenzy of CHEERING that breaks the silence. He lands lightly on their shoulders and is carried away, borne aloft like a king.

CUT TO:

INT A SMOKY TAVERN NIGHT

MILES is seated on a platform at the front, DECKER and several other ROUGH TYPES around him. The AUDIENCE is angry, dark. The SMILING WOMAN speaks to them animatedly.

SMILING WOMAN

...among us. He that was recalled to life, he who survived his own death, the Most Sensible of Lunatics, the Key King!

Miles stands sheepishly and the audience goes berserk.

CUT TO:

INT "THAT'S AMORE!" SET

REINHARDT is in a booth similar to Ridgely's, but with a sign over it that says "Thanks For the Donuts!" in cheery pink letters.

He speaks with a peaceful, reassuring tone. The audience watches him, rapt.

REINHARDT

...certainly don't know how we can be expected to care about a lot of high-falutin' ideas that don't make a whit of difference in our lives anyway. Why can't we all just take a good look around and say "Geè! I've got it pretty darn good! Thanks!" So whaddya say, FatCity -- why not turn to the person next to you and thank them -- thank them for the donuts!

The audience, as one, turns and thanks their neighbor for the donuts.

CUT TO:

EXT A CENTRAL CITY STREET DAY

A KID of about ten scratches a long gray streak into the side of a beautiful car.

CUT TO:

INT ANOTHER TAVERN

But a larger one. The SMILING WOMAN is speaking to a bigger crowd, and this time she has a lipstick streak drawn across her face in the bizarre smile she wore after her child was struck down.

MILES is seated on the platform.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET DAY

In rapid succession, we see Van Okkers keyed by an OLD MAN, a FAT HOUSEWIFE and others.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY PARKING LOT DAY

A small beat up car is heading for a parking spot when a Van Okker races in front of it and takes the spot. The DRIVER of the small car shouts in protest but the VAN OKKER DRIVER ignores him and walks away.

Without hesitation, the Driver of the small car drops it in gear and

RAMS

into the Van Okker, crumpling the left side. The Van Okker Driver watches in horror while he backs up and does it again and again, reducing the car to a hunk of scrap iron. Pedestrians watch and laugh.

CUT TO:

INT THAT'S AMORE! SET

BOBBYE reads a news item. Photographs of a demolished building flash behind her.

CONTINUED

BOBBYE

(mystified)

The SpectraBank building, third largest in FatCity, collapsed late last night. Sabotage is not suspected, foul play has not been mentioned -- the building just plain caved in. Inspectors are, to say the least, puzzled.

(to the camera)

What the hell is going on in FatCity?

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY INTERSECTION DAY

A Van Okker stops at a light in the middle of the Central City. A battered car pulls up next to it and the DRIVER looks daggers at the VAN OKKER DRIVER. Another old car pulls up on the other side.

The Van Okker Driver shifts in his seat and looks up.

The light's still red.

A third car pulls up behind him. He's surrounded. All the drivers are staring at him, looks that could kill.

Suddenly his car is JOLTED from behind. The car in back is ramming him, forcing him out into the intersection. He YELLS, brakes, puts it in park, but still his car is edging into the busy intersection.

At the last second he jumps out of the car. It is CRUSHED by an oncoming truck. The Driver staggers down the sidewalk, hysterical, running away.

Over these images, REINHARDT'S VOICE OVER returns.

V.O.

FatCity continued to ignore the warning signs; the denizens of Briar Heights were too busy listening to a simpering fool who told them to forget their worries and thank each other, God knows what for. The rest of the Continent ignored us completely. They didn't give a shit what happened in an arrogant city like ours. But there was a revolution underway in FatCity, as sure as the heat of summer was returning in November.

CUT TO:

EXT HOWARD BLANC'S MANSION NIGHT

A FIGURE creeps across the lawn.

CUT TO:

INT BLANC'S BEDROOM NIGHT

HOWARD BLANC enters in his dressing gown. The curtained glass doors across the room are open.

BLANC
Idiot, Carlton.

He closes one door and locks it. He starts to pull the other door shut, then jumps when he sees

DECKER

standing behind it, a mad grin on his face. He grabs Blanc and throws him on the bed.

Blanc reaches for his bedside table, fumbling in the drawer. It's empty.

Decker holds up a revolver -- Blanc's. He smiles wider.

Blanc's eyes dart to the other table. There's a small red button in the middle.

DECKER
Your head will ride on a pole
in the Central City tonight.

Blanc's eyes dart to the button and back again. He runs his tongue over his gold tooth, thinking. It glints.

BLANC
And I shall spit on you from it.

With that he

DIVES

across the bed toward the button on the other side. Decker's arm

FLASHES

and a knife THUDS into Blanc's back. He drops, his hand falling onto the button.

A BUZZER is heard elsewhere in the house.

CUT TO:

INT CARLTON'S ROOM

The BUZZER sounds. He looks up from a book and goes to his door. He opens it.

TWO THUGS wait outside.

CARLTON

Oh dear.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT'S BATHROOM

REINHARDT drops his trousers and sits on the toilet. He picks up a magazine.

From the other room, the front door of the apartment OPENS and CLOSES.

FOOTSTEPS walk softly across the kitchen floor.

REINHARDT

(calling out)

It's your turn again. What's with you lately? You're as slow as I used to be.

The FOOTSTEPS stop. No answer.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Miles?

The bathroom door knob turns slowly, then stops. Locked.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Be cool. I'll be out in a second.

AN AXE

crunches through the door in answer.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Jesus! That's not funny, man!

The axe head wiggles out and then SMASHES through again. A splintered piece of wood flies into the bathroom.

Reinhardt pulls up his pants, panicked.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Whoever you are, you'd better get the fuck out of here! I've got a -

He rifles the medicine cabinet.

REINHARDT (cont.)
I've got a -

The most lethal thing he can come up with is a bottle of seconal.

REINHARDT (cont.)
- a problem.

CRASH!

The axe again, making progress.

Reinhardt looks around frantically. He seizes the toilet seat and tears it off. He whips open the shower curtain and uses the plastic seat to SMASH a small window above the tub. He clears away the glass fragments with the shower curtain.

OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM DOOR,

DECKER works on the door with the axe. One final blow and it falls open. He stands in the frame, axe at the ready.

The bathroom is empty. A breeze blows in the window.

DECKER
Shit.

Reinhardt's glasses sit on the bathroom vanity. In frustration, Decker SMASHES them into a thousand pieces.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET NIGHT

REINHARDT shivers in a phone booth. MILES drives up in Reinhardt's car and stops at the curb.

He gets out, carrying a backpack.

REINHARDT
Well?

MILES
It's bad.

REINHARDT
Well?!

MILES
The Smiling Woman. She wants
you dead.

REINHARDT

What?

MILES

She swore out your family. All of you. Something your uncle did. I'm afraid he's -- they killed him tonight.

Reinhardt sinks to the curb in shock.

REINHARDT

Jesus. Did you tell her? Did you tell her I'm not one of them? That I moved here, that I -

MILES

It doesn't make any difference. She won't listen, even to me. She threatened me. In the new Republic, to defend someone who is condemned is to ask to be condemned yourself.

REINHARDT

That's insane!

MILES

There's nothing that can be done.
(pause)
You gotta leave, man. I brought a few things. You'll have to go tonight.

He holds out the backpack.

Reinhardt stares, stupefied.

MILES (cont.)

We have to hurry. They're looking for you all over the Central City.

CUT TO:

EXT THE EDGE OF THE CENTRAL CITY NIGHT

A dirty street marks the border between the Central City and Briar Heights. Security cars line the length of the road, PATROLMEN are erecting a wire mesh fence to close off the suburb.

Reinhardt's car pulls to a stop next to the fence.

MILES and REINHARDT are inside, Miles driving.

INT CAR

REINHARDT
I won't see you again, will I?

MILES
(it kills him to say it)
It wouldn't be wise. For me.

Reinhardt looks at him.

REINHARDT
You're him, aren't you?

MILES
Who?

REINHARDT
Come on.

Miles drops the act. He nods.

MILES
You knew, right? That first
morning, when I came back and it
was on the news.

REINHARDT
Yeah. It just figured. Like
everything else you do. Wild,
erratic -- but somehow it all
figures.

MILES
Reinhardt, if there's anything.
I mean it. You gave me a life,
a chance. If there's anything...

Reinhardt nods. He gets out of the car.

Struck by a thought, he leans in the window.

REINHARDT
(concerned)
My glasses. Did you -

MILES
Broken. Smashed all over.

REINHARDT
No big deal.

He walks away.

AT THE FENCE,

there's just a small hole left. The WORKERS stop, waiting for Reinhardt, holding it open.

Reinhardt's VOICE.

VOICE OVER

The ultimatum was simple: the rich can remain so, but only in the places of the rich.

IN THE CAR,

Miles clamps one foot down on the brake, the other on the accelerator. The car WHINES and SHAKES.

V.O.

The battle lines were drawn and not crossed.

AT THE FENCE,

Reinhardt passes through to the other side. They close it off behind him. He watches Miles through the mesh.

V.O.

For those with friends on the other side...

THE CAR

is STRAINING now, really protesting. Miles raises one hand in farewell and

POPS

the brake.

The tires SCREAM as the car disappears into the fog.

V.O.

...choices were made.

PART TWO

Birth

INT BLANC MANSION FOYER DAY

A vast marble room with furniture scattered around the edges.

The front door opens and REINHARDT steps in, bag in hand, eyeglasses gone for good. He goes to the center of the space and looks around.

A VOICE comes from the open door behind him. Turning as he hears it, he drops his bag on a table. The bag obscures an envelope which rests on the table, the name "REINHARDT BLANC" plainly printed on it.

At the door is GLORIA.

GLORIA

Welcome home.

Reinhardt turns.

GLORIA (cont.)

I understand congratulations
are in order.

REINHARDT

Why? Because my uncle was
arrogant enough to die without a
will?

Gloria walks in, looks around.

GLORIA

What's the first thing you'll
do with the new place? Plant
begonias on the front lawn in the
shape of a peace sign?

REINHARDT

(too tired to argue
or defend)

I had something less symbolic in
mind.

He draws close to her, looking her in the eyes.

GLORIA

I see. So you've either accepted
what you are or decided to just
not care.

(confidentially)

Take my advice -- don't care. It's
much easier.

Reinhardt reaches out calmly and unfastens the top button of her blouse.

GLORIA (cont.)
Something's -- different about you.

REINHARDT
Yes.

GLORIA
Yes.

REINHARDT
Something missing, right?

GLORIA
(shakes her head)
Something added.

He unbuttons another. She doesn't object, so he continues, undoing them all. Matter-of-factly, he continues to undress her. She accepts it, neither cooperating or resisting.

He has removed her blouse.

REINHARDT
No one ever got it away from you,
did they?

GLORIA
What?

She is braless.

REINHARDT
Your self-respect.

GLORIA
Of course not.

REINHARDT
No matter what you did or who you
became?

GLORIA
No.

Reinhardt unzips her skirt and slips it off. She speaks plainly, unaffected, as if she expected to be disrobed -- here, now.

GLORIA (cont.)
They can't take what I haven't
asked them to give. My self-respect
comes from myself, or it's a
contradiction.

She stands naked in front of him.

REINHARDT
(softly)
Even now?

GLORIA
(softer still)
Especially now.

They stare at each other -- he fully clothed; she naked.

GLORIA (cont.)
Lie down on your back.

He does.

She gets on top of him.

GLORIA (cont.)
I do believe Saint Reinhardt
has just figured that out.

CUT TO:

INT "THAT'S AMORE!" SET

REINHARDT, in his booth, finishes his segment listlessly.

REINHARDT
(bored as hell)
...go ahead, turn to him. Right
now. Turn and say thanks. Thanks
for the donuts.

The AUDIENCE is equally disinterested. A few of them turn and MUMBLE their thanks to the person next to them.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR signals for a cut to commercial.

Reinhardt SHUFFLES his papers and gets up to leave. RIDGELY walks past.

RIDGELY
Stellar.

BOBBYE approaches Reinhardt as he leaves the set.

BOBBYE
It's over.

REINHARDT
I'll get it back.

BOBBYE

No you won't. We dropped six share points last week. Friday's your last day.

REINHARDT

What are you talking about? You mean I'm cancelled?

BOBBYE

Hey, come on. No big deal. It was fun but the magic's gone. That's the way it goes. You made it almost a whole month.

REINHARDT

Yeah.

BOBBYE

Don't take it personally. There's just something...real about you lately. My show's not about reality.

CUT TO:

EXT MILES' APARTMENT BUILDING DAY

MILES walks down the front steps.

A caravan of THREE WHITE VANS wheels around the corner in front of him. One of them pulls up on the sidewalk, cutting him off. Rather than fear; his face shows tedium, as if he's dealt with this before.

TWO GOONS WITH BIG GUNS jump out of the van, their faces creased with the lipstick streak that has become the symbol of the Movement. They hustle him into the back of the second van.

INT VAN

The door is SLAMMED shut behind him. The SMILING WOMAN sits at the front of the van regally, posed behind a polished oak desk that takes up the entire front half.

She KNOCKS on the glass, signalling the driver, and the mobile office takes off.

MILES

Is this really the way to treat your king?

SMILING WOMAN

Few things are more pathetic than a man who believes his own publicity.

She runs one hand over the smooth veneer of the desk.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)
Do you like it? It were in
Gorson Avenue post office just
three days ago.

MILES
(he detests her)
Nice of the Postmaster to think
of you.

SMILING WOMAN
Sure that he did. Up until the
moment he died.

MILES
(not wanting to banter)
What do you want?

SMILING WOMAN
I couldn't find you at -
(picking the right word)
- ceremonies today.

MILES
I find them revolting.

SMILING WOMAN
Interesting word choice.

Miles doesn't laugh.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)
To the point, I suppose. Tell me -
(mocking him)
- my Lord...are you read Dickens?

MILES
I don't know. How's it start?

She smiles.

SMILING WOMAN
Of course. Your memory. "It was
the best of times, it was the worst
of times...?"

MILES
Yes. I've read that one.

SMILING WOMAN
Read it again. It will remind you
how quickly turn the fancies of the
crowd.

MILES
Am I being threatened?

SMILING WOMAN
Advised. I'll see you at ceremonies.

She KNOCKS again on the glass. The van SCREECHES to a stop and the back doors fly open. The Goons grab Miles and pull him out.

She calls after him.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)
Or I'll see you in ceremonies.

The doors SLAM shut.

CUT TO:

EXT THE BORDER FENCE DAY

REINHARDT stands at the border, surrounded by a phalanx of security vehicles, heavily armed PATROLMEN, and MR. BAILEY, a gray-suited lawyer about a hundred and fifty years old.

They all wait, watching the Central City side of the fence warily.

REINHARDT
(to Bailey)
I should thank you for arranging protection. I realize how much you oppose this action.

Bailey nods.

REINHARDT (cont.)
Your firm may, of course, continue to draw its retainer even after the transfer of the estate. Forty years is a long time.

Bailey nods.

Reinhardt looks down the road.

REINHARDT (cont.)
She's late.

Bailey nods.

REINHARDT (cont.)
Little chatty today, aren't you Bailey?

Tires SCREECH. Reinhardt looks up.

The three white vans approach, fast.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Here we go.

The Security Patrolmen behind Reinhardt draw their guns and move forward to the fence.

The vans halt at the edge of the fence. The GOONS spill out. The two groups of ARMED MEN face off at the fence, where a small section in the middle has been opened.

The SMILING WOMAN climbs out of the van and approaches. Reinhardt moves through the men and meets her at the fence.

SMILING WOMAN

Coward.

REINHARDT

Pardon me?

SMILING WOMAN

To meet me here and not come for him yourself.

REINHARDT

(this woman is obviously insane)

I'll be brief. My uncle is dead. As his only surviving relative, his estate is mine. I am giving it to you. The companies, the investments, even the actual estate in Briar Heights. All of it. For the people of the Movement.

SMILING WOMAN

You can't buy his innocence.

REINHARDT

That's my business. I ask only one thing in return. Immunity. That I be allowed to live my life where I choose, without fear of harm from you or the Movement.

(gestures to the lawyer)

This is Mr. Bailey. He has power of attorney over my affairs. He will meet with your attorney and settle the specifics.

She still doesn't answer.

Reinhardt extends his hand.

REINHARDT (cont.)
Do we have a deal?

She looks at DECKER, behind her. Back at Reinhardt. She smiles.

She reaches out for his hand, slowly at first, but then she

GRABS

it hard with both hands. Her fingernails dig in. She pulls him close to her and WHISPERS viciously in his ear.

SMILING WOMAN

The devil damn thee black, thou
cream faced loon! It is not yours
to give. If we want it, we will
take it from you. We will
burn your city from under you and
then decide what it pleases us to
plunder.

Her nails BITE further into his flesh.

He struggles, but she holds fast. Blood trickles down his hand.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

A pox. A pox on your throat, you
bawling, blasphemous, uncharitable
dog!

He breaks away from her, reeling back. The Security Patrols mass forward to the fence, but the Smiling Woman signals the Goons back into the vans and they ROAR away.

Reinhardt watches them go as the opening in the fence is sealed.

He opens his bloodied hand. She has pressed something into his palm.

A gold tooth.

CUT TO:

INT "THAT'S AMORE!" SET

BOBBYE hands REINHARDT a typed sheet of paper as he settles in his booth.

BOBBYE

Here. There's a goodbye at the
end, saying how grateful you are
for a chance to share your humble
views and so on.

She notices his face -- drawn, tired.

BOBBYE (cont.)

Lighten up. It was a fun ride,
while it lasted.

She hurries back to her chair as the ASSISTANT DIRECTOR signals and the camera light goes on.

Reinhardt's introduction is given in the background. He looks over the typed page in front of him.

Bobbye's VOICE stops.

Reinhardt looks up. The camera is on him.

He holds up the sheet of paper.

REINHARDT

I'm supposed to read...this is a piece offering you tips on how to dress up the border fence with flowers and shrubbery. I'd read it, but I don't know if I'd be able to stop throwing up.

The ASSISTANT DIRECTOR signals to cut away from him but Bobbye, intrigued, waves the camera back to Reinhardt.

He sets the paper aside.

REINHARDT (cont.)

(distraught, rambling)

I read a news item this morning that said -- it said in the last six months fourteen people in FatCity have just burst into flames. And burned. And died. Did you know that? And do you know how many cases of that there have been over the rest of the entire Continent? None! Ever!

He runs his hand through his hair, not knowing exactly what he's trying to say.

He looks up, desperate.

REINHARDT (cont.)

Look, somebody said everyone would get twenty minutes of fame, and I guess I must be in about my nineteenth. I just -- I just want to tell you -- there is something very bad happening here. There are buildings collapsing,

CONTINUED

REINHARDT (cont.)

people starting on fire and a city dividing right down the middle -- and it's not for no reason, it's for very good reasons. It's wrong, God damn it, it's all wrong that there exists a place where white turns into black without grey; where night swallows day without sunset; where you are either hideously poor or -- or --

(searching for the word)

-- egregiously rich; for the Movement or an enemy of it. There is no right here, only wrong and hate. FatCity isn't dead or even dying. It was stillborn. The miserable failures who fell into it three hundred years ago should have drowned then rather than leave all of us to drown now.

A thought hits him. He looks at the camera, possessed.

REINHARDT (cont.)

(very Howard Beale)

We have to get out. All of us. At once. We have to go, now, over the mountains like we should have three hundred years ago.

He gets up and leaves.

The studio audience is silent.

CUT TO:

INT GLORIA'S APARTMENT

White on white.

GLORIA watches the show on television as the camera pans wildly to follow Reinhardt off the set.

CUT TO:

INT "THAT'S AMORE!" SET

Reinhardt is in the wings. BOBBYE catches up to him.

BOBBYE

Wait!

REINHARDT

Where'd you cut it? After "throwing up?"

BOBBYE

(terribly excited)

I underestimated you. You'll be back Monday. And a long time after. How about calling it "Keep Your God Damn Donuts"? The Chamber of Commerce will hate you, of course, but that's good, we'll -

Reinhardt walks away in the middle of her sentence.

BOBBYE (cont.)

Hey!

CUT TO:

INT GLORIA'S APARTMENT

GLORIA goes to the door and opens it a few inches, the chain lock stopping it. REINHARDT'S FACE is in the crack.

GLORIA

Go away!

She starts to close the door but he steps in and shoulders it, breaking the chain off the door.

GLORIA (cont.)

It's too late. It was too late when I took the sixteen million, it was too late when I was born. I am what I am.

REINHARDT

This place made you what you are! You changed. Before, when we were good together, when you worked in the Central City -

GLORIA

I was ugly! I didn't make it beautiful, it made me ugly. I changed nothing.

REINHARDT

You're shaking. You want to go.

GLORIA

I belong here. For all the reasons you have to leave, this is the only place for me.

Long pause.

He leaves.

GLORIA (cont.)
(to convince herself)
It's just the way things are.

CUT TO:

EXT BLANC MANSION DAY

REINHARDT drives up to the house and goes inside.

CUT TO:

INT FOYER

Reinhardt goes to the stairs, stopping to pick up his bag off the table he set it on earlier.

An envelope flops to the floor. Reinhardt's name is stencilled on the front. He picks it up.

He opens it and reads. After a few seconds his face turns pale. He turns and races up the stairs.

His VOICE comes over.

REINHARDT'S VOICE

It was from Carlton. I'd been making inquiries about him since his disappearance the night of my uncle's murder, so far with no result.

CARLTON'S VOICE

"My dearest friend Reinhardt - "

REINHARDT'S VOICE

- the letter began -

CARLTON'S VOICE

" - I find myself now in a most undesirable situation, one from which I fear there is only one person who can free me. You. Hear me."

Carlton's VOICE has carried over the following:

INT REINHARDT'S ROOM

REINHARDT dresses in the clothes he wore in the Central City.

CONTINUED

INT/EXT REINHARDT'S CAR NIGHT

-- as he races through the streets of Briar Heights, approaching the Border Fence.

EXT BORDER FENCE NIGHT

A deserted section. The fence is torn away here; perhaps it's the only place people pass back and forth freely from Briar Heights to the Central City.

REINHARDT'S CAR pulls to a stop on the Briar Heights side. He looks around surreptitiously and kills his headlights.

He drops the car in gear and rolls slowly across the border into the Central City.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET NIGHT

Deeper into the City. Reinhardt turns down a broad street lined with palm trees. Strange shadows swing across the road from above. He opens a window and looks up at the trees to find the source of the shadows.

BODIES.

Dozens 'of them, one hung by the neck from each palm tree. They swing idly in the night breeze.

REINHARDT

Oh no.

LIGHTS

flick on all around him.

ENGINES

roar to life somewhere behind the lights. Before Reinhardt knows what's going on, FIVE OR SIX MOTORCYCLES swarm around his car, cutting in front of him, heading him off.

He is forced to pull over.

The motorcycles circle him like flies. One bike stops.

A MAN,

crazy streak up the side of his face, approaches the driver's window.

Reinhardt rolls it down.

MAN

Papers?

CUT TO:

INT A JAIL

REINHARDT is locked up in a back room by himself. The door opens. MILES is admitted by a guard. Reinhardt stands. They look at each other.

MILES

This is a switch.

Reinhardt doesn't answer.

MILES (cont.)

You did a very stupid thing.

REINHARDT

I had no choice. I got a letter from Carlton. He's been arrested, but they won't tell him what for. He goes to trial tomorrow and they still haven't formally accused him.

MILES

They won't. They don't need charges. Not any more. An accusation is enough.

REINHARDT

Miles, the trees --

MILES

I know. Part of our daily "ceremonies" now.

REINHARDT

God. Is no one sane here?

MILES

No. Just like your part of town.

Reinhardt doesn't answer for a moment.

REINHARDT

If anything happens to me, you've got to get Carlton out of here. Do you think I'll be allowed to speak at his trial?

MILES

Maybe. But Carlton is the least of your worries at the moment.

REINHARDT

You don't -- think they'll let me go, do you?

MILES

It all depends. You haven't actually been sworn out yet. If you are, I can testify on your behalf. I still carry a lot of clout over here among the rank and file.

REINHARDT

(firmer)

But you don't think they'll let me go.

(pause)

Do you?

MILES

No.

CUT TO:

INT MEETING HALL DAY

More like the bleacher section of a Cubs game than a courtroom.

HUNDREDS OF RIFF-RAFF pack the place to the rafters, all of them rabid. Something has apparently been said to arouse their ire and they SHOUT:

"Hang the son of a bitch!"

"The trees! The trees for him!"

THE JURORS are a dozen or so men and women in a box near the front of the room -- if possible, seedier looking than the audience. Liquor bottles are passed in the jury box and among the spectators.

The judge is the SMILING WOMAN. She BANGS a gavel incessantly, trying to quiet the noisy bunch.

DECKER, seated to her right, lets off a SHRIEK from an AIR HORN. The crowd quiets.

The Smiling Woman turns to REINHARDT, who is seated in the witness box.

SMILING WOMAN

It appears the citizens already know you, Blanc. What now are you so foolishly come to the Central City? What will you tell us of the Accused?

She points to CARLTON, who stands in a cage in the center of the room.

REINHARDT

(trying to move the crowd)

I can tell you this -- this man was
a servant, an employee in my uncle's
house --

Not a good start. The Crowd SHOUTS taunts at Reinhardt. He raises his
voice over them.

REINHARDT (cont.)

-- and he was as filled with loathing
for Howard Blanc as any of you here
today. If he had the courage of the
man who put the knife in my uncle's
back --

Decker beams with pride.

A VOICE in the crowd shouts out.

VOICE

BUT HE DIDN'T!

The Crowd echoes its support of that:

"Not him!"

"Coward!"

The Jury members lean out of the box to harrass Carlton, swinging
nooses made out of bits of old rope at him.

Reinhardt tries to go on but is drowned out by the crowd.

One particularly loud VOICE comes from the back.

VOICE

I CAN TELL YOU SOME THINGS!

Heads turn.

ANOTHER VOICE

The Key King!

Sure enough, MILES stands at the back of the courtroom. A hush falls
over the place.

Miles speaks.

CONTINUED

MILES

This man is a worker! One of us!
Here is the very soul for whom the
Movement was born. One who suffered
every day at the hands of the rich.
I say he should be a hero of the
Movement, not a victim of it!

The Crowd, which doesn't often get to hear good speechmaking, goes berserk, suddenly pouring waves of support and love over Carlton.

"A hero!"

"Let him go!"

"One of us!"

"A vote! Take a vote!"

The Smiling Woman BANGS the gavel again, to no avail. She SHOUTS over the crowd.

SMILING WOMAN

Jury! How do you vote?!

The Jury shows its approval of Carlton, turning their thumbs up, discarding the nooses.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

Free the Accused! Free a Son of
the Movement!

With a great CHEER from the crowd, several GUARDS step forward and unlock the cage. Carlton is taken out and hoisted up onto the shoulders of the crowd.

A PROLONGED SCREAM comes from the air horn. The crowd's passion drains away, their attention returning to the Smiling Woman at the front of the room.

She turns to Reinhardt.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

(low voice)
And jail the nephew of Blanc.

The Crowd erupts again, equal parts love for Carlton and contempt for Reinhardt.

ROUGH HANDS

seize Reinhardt and drag him out of the box.

Miles, in back, can do nothing to help as he too is lifted up by the crowd and carried away with Carlton.

Miles and Reinhardt make eye contact above the crowd as they are dragged off in opposite directions.

Reinhardt calls to Miles, gesturing frantically to Carlton.

REINHARDT

Get him out! Get him away!

And they are separated.

The Smiling Woman —

-- finally --

-- is.

CUT TO:

EXT MILES' APARTMENT BUILDING DAY

The street is empty, but only briefly — a THrong rounds the corner, MILES and CARLTON at the front of it, carried aloft. The Crowd deposits them neatly on Miles' doorstep.

Miles gets hold of Carlton as soon as he is let off and pulls him inside, closing the door behind them.

Outside the locked door, the Crowd continues to CHEER and SHOUT.

Miles and Carlton lean against the wall, breathing hard.

CARLTON

You are, I assume, Reinhardt's friend Miles?

Miles nods.

CARLTON (cont.)

I'm pleased to see you are as noble as I was told. Thank you.

MILES

Don't thank me. It was Reinhardt who came. He got your letter.

CARLTON

Letter?

Miles looks at Carlton, not understanding.

CARLTON (cont.)

What letter?

Suddenly Miles' face registers panic.

MILES

Oh God. She did it. She did it
to get him here!

He looks out the door. The Crowd is moving away down the street.

MILES (cont.)

Come on. I've got to get you
back. They love you today, but
make no promises for tomorrow.

They go out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT BORDER FENCE TWILIGHT

The same section of the fence Reinhardt passed through earlier. MILES
and CARLTON approach in the car. No guards are in sight.

They go through the gap in the fence and into Briar Heights. About
fifty yards in, two SECURITY PATROL CARS are parked across the middle
of the road, blocking access. A checkpoint.

Miles stops as A PATROLMAN gets out of one of the cars and approaches.

CARLTON

It's all right. They'll know me.

The PATROLMAN is at the window.

Miles rolls it down.

The Patrolman looks at them. He smiles.

PATROLMAN

How are you, Councilman?

Miles looks over at Carlton, puzzled.

PATROLMAN (cont.)

Sir?

Carlton shrugs.

The Patrolman is speaking to Miles.

MILES

You — you know me?

PATROLMAN (cont.)

Of course.

(to Carlton)

He all right?

Miles is in shock.

CARLTON

Yes -- he -- yes, of course.
He's just shaken. We were in the
Central City.

PATROLMAN

Not a good idea. I hear they've
taken to beating people up over
there. I -- hey!

Miles, in a stupor, has opened the car door into the Patrolman and is getting out, staring at the Patrol Car in front of him.

He walks toward it, eyes fixed on the round emblem on the door.

He stands next to the car.

He reaches into his shirt and pulls out the medallion from around his neck. He holds it up to the emblem on the car.

They match.

PATROLMAN (cont.)

Councilman?

CUT TO:

EXT BRIAR HEIGHTS CITY HALL NIGHT

MILES' car stops in front of the impressive building. He jumps out and runs up the steps. CARLTON follows, calling to him.

CARLTON

Sir! Wait! There are other
explanations!

Miles gestures wildly to the building as he runs up the stairs.

MILES

(crazed)
I recognize it! I know it!

He goes inside. Carlton follows.

CUT TO:

INT CITY HALL

Miles storms in. The GUARD nods to him.

GUARD

Councilman.

Miles goes straight to an elevator. SEVERAL OTHERS nod to him as he goes. Carlton comes in the front doors of the building. He sees Miles in the elevator. Miles calls to him.

MILES

See that? They all know me. See?

Carlton runs, but the elevator doors close before he reaches them. He punches the button.

CUT TO:

INT A HALLWAY

The elevator door opens. Miles steps out. A MAN, fiftyish, breaks into a surprised grin when he sees him.

MAN

Jack! By God, Jack, how are you?
We thought -- Jesus Christ, we
thought you were dead!

MILES

I should be.

Miles ignores the man and continues down the hall.

MAN

Jack?

Miles comes to an office door. There's a name plate on the front:

JACK BAGUTTA
Councilman, Third Ward

There's a small electronic plate next to the door knob with a key pad.

Miles, in a trance, reaches out to the key pad and punches in a four digit code.

The door lock

BUZZES

and Miles watches in horror as the door pops open.

INT STAIRS

Carlton races up flights of stairs, trying to hurry but old, tired. He reaches a door and opens it.

INT OUTER OFFICE

Carlton sees the open door and bursts into the outer area of Miles' office. The door to the back office is open. A window is in back, wide open, curtains fluttering in the breeze. It's quiet.

CARLTON

Oh dear.

He runs into the back office.

INT BACK OFFICE

Carlton goes to the window and looks down to the pavement below.

Nothing.

Miles' VOICE comes from behind the door. He's crumpled in the corner, knees hugged up to his chest.

MILES

I knew the code.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT'S CELL NIGHT

REINHARDT paces. Caged.

The outer door opens and CALLOW, a small, weak guard slithers in carrying a pen and a few scraps of paper. He goes to Reinhardt and slips them through the bars to him. Reinhardt reaches out for them but Callow pulls back.

CALLOW

Where is it?

Reinhardt digs in his pocket and comes up with a few coins. Callow lunges and grabs them.

CALLOW (cont.)

Keep your mouth shut about this.

He drops the pen and paper into the cell and scurries away. Reinhardt picks them up and starts to write. His VOICE comes over.

REINHARDT'S VOICE

I had a confession. One last lie I wanted on paper. The books. The ones stacked on my shelves and sitting open on my desk — I hadn't read them. Not a single one. I just liked the way they looked. I liked the way they made me look.

Reinhardt finishes writing and folds the page into a paper airplane.
He throws the paper out the window.

EXT STREET NIGHT

The paper airplane floats out the window. It lands in the street and is crushed by a car.

V.O. (cont.)
We meet ourselves so late in life.
Christ, what a waste.

CUT TO:

INT MILES' OFFICE IN CITY HALL NIGHT

MILES, strangely calm, browses in his own museum. He stands beside a wall covered with framed clippings and awards.

He stares at a newspaper article. The headline:

"BAGUTTA FORMS PRIVATE SECURITY PATROL
Purity of Briar Heights Primary Concern"

He moves on.

Another headline:

"DECISION CLOSE ON FREEDOM SQUARE
Victory for Bagutta?"

Miles is crying.

He goes to a wall of ornately bound hardcover books. He studies the titles. One catches his eye -- "A Tale of Two Cities."

He pulls it off the shelf. He flips through it. He settles at his desk and opens it to the first page.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET DAY

The street is jammed with THOUSANDS OF CITIZENS -- many drunk, all giddy. A carnival atmosphere prevails.

BODIES OF THE DEAD hang from the palm trees all along one side of the street. The ropes are long, maybe thirty or forty feet, so the corpses get to swinging pretty far back and forth if the wind is up. Today it is, and some collide with their neighbor on the next tree.

AT THE END OF THE STREET,

a crane truck is parked by the first tree on the other side, the side with no victims yet. Most of the crowd is massed here. The crane rises slowly, a platform attached to the end of it.

A YOUNG WOMAN,

handsomely dressed, is on the platform, her hands tied behind her. She's escorted by a hooded EXECUTIONER.

They reach the top and the Crowd begins to CHEER for her demise.

The Executioner fits a hood over her head, then a noose over the hood. He ties the length of rope to the top of the tree.

The Crowd's blood lust is up.

A gate is opened on the platform. The Woman sways, her feet at the edge, the wind stiffer up here.

The SMILING WOMAN, sitting atop one of her white vans in the middle of the street, signals the Executioner.

He gives the Young Woman a shove -ever so slight- and she plummets off into midair, falling free, dropping straight for about thirty feet and then

BOUNCING

as the rope reaches its end and she TWANGS back up about fifteen feet.

The Crowd

OOOHS

as if on a roller coaster and she swings and dances above them.

The Smiling Woman turns to DECKER, next to her.

SMILING WOMAN

Where is he? The Key King. Is he again missed ceremonies?

Decker shrugs.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

(sighs)

He's not long to be with us, that one.

Decker laughs.

DECKER

You'd never do it.

SMILING WOMAN
Not yet. The timing must be
just — so.

Decker GRUNTS in disbelief.

CUT TO:

INT JAIL DAY

REINHARDT sits in his cell.

From outside the outer door comes the sound of FOOTSTEPS, then a chair SCRAPING, then VOICES. Reinhardt gets up.

The Voices quickly become heated, arguing. One is clearly that of MILES, the other -whining, pleading- is CALLOW, the guard.

One final SHOUT from Miles and the door opens. He walks in, Callow following.

CALLOW
But you can't! My orders are
clear!

MILES
I'm giving you an order. Do
you know who I am?

Callow doesn't answer. He turns and runs off, tail between his legs.

Miles turns to Reinhardt.

REINHARDT
Jesus, I thought they listened to
you here.

MILES
They do. I'm -

DECKER appears in the doorway, flanked by a cowering Callow.

DECKER
What's going on?

Miles turns to him.

MILES
Ah. Decker. A sensible man.
I'm taking this prisoner to
court. The trials have already
begun and he wasn't summoned. I'm
testifying in his case myself and -

DECKER
(sheepish, terrified of
upsetting the Key King)
Sir, I can't -- I beg your pardon,
I do, but I -- can't let you.

MILES
What?

DECKER
There's to be no trial.

MILES
Trials are cancelled today?

DECKER
No sir. Not all trials. Just
his.

MILES
What are you talking about?

DECKER
It can't be helped. It's the laws,
sir. She changed the laws this
morning. For a Briar Heights
resident to travel in Central City
is automatic -- death sentence.
No trial needed.

MILES
That's absurd! That wasn't the
law when he was arrested.

DECKER
(squirming)
But it is now, sir. And he's here,
as you can plainly see. It's really
quite clear.

Miles fumes.

MILES
I'm telling you to release this
man. Will you or won't you?

DECKER
(this kills him)
I -- won't. Sir.

MILES
(to Reinhardt)
Wait here.

He stalks out.

Reinhardt looks around. He ain't goin' nowhere.

CUT TO:

INT COURTROOM

Trials are in full swing. An ARISTOCRATIC MAN (if we look closely, we recognize him from Bobbye Amor's party) is in the cage in the center of the room. The JURY's thumbs are held down and he's descended upon by the incensed crowd.

The back doors of the courtroom burst open and MILES storms in. The crowd quiets some as his entrance is announced by a few of the faithful.

He marches up to the SMILING WOMAN, seated as usual at the front.

He leans in close. The spectators watch them, trying to catch a few words.

MILES

You can't have him. I'll fight you.

SMILING WOMAN

(she's waited for this)
Really? Try it. Fight me now.

She gestures around the court.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

Only look around first. Do your eyes see they don't fall no more to their knees when you come in? Can your ears tell they don't scream your name so loud in the street? Think hard on these things and ask yourself -- "How many can I spare from the rope? How long before I dance myself?"

Miles stares her down. She's right.

He turns on his heel and leaves. The crowd goes back to business as usual.

The Smiling Woman turns to Decker.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

Move Blanc up. Tomorrow's ceremonies. If the Key King isn't there, arrest him.

CUT TO:

EXT THE MOUNTAIN ABOVE FATCITY DAWN

The sun is just creeping over the mountain. FatCity lies below, bathed as always in fog.

It's bright here, but FatCity is invisible below. Impenetrable.

CUT TO:

EXT BRIAR HEIGHTS COURTHOUSE DAWN

Fogbound.

Up on one of the ledges, a MAN can be dimly seen.

MILES.

EXT LEDGE

Miles walks around the ledge carelessly, with the calm of a man on a sidewalk. He holds a book in his hand, the edition of "A Tale of Two Cities." It was once a heavy book, but the pages have all been torn out. Only four remain.

Miles, like when we first saw him, is naked.

There are people below. No one notices.

Miles looks up at the low clouds. A tiny bright spot shows where the sun might be if it shined here.

Miles rips a page from the book and lets it go. It wafts down.

He rips another and frees it.

And another.

He watches them drop, at the mercy of the breeze.

Miles grabs hold of the last page.

Something makes him look up. The spot of sun above him is growing brighter. Suddenly it

DRILLS

a hole in the clouds, a single beam burning down hard and bright on Miles' face. He winces from it. He tears the last page out of the book and holds it out. He lets go and the page sails away, not down but

UP,

into the beam of light, rising on some improbable current of air.

Just as abruptly as it came, the beam of sun is gone.

So is the page.

Miles smiles.

CUT TO:

INT GLORIA'S APARTMENT MORNING

GLORIA, with her own view of the city through huge windows. She sits in a white gown on a white couch, white carpet at her feet, red wine in her hand.

Gloria is drunk.

A KNOCK.

Gloria stumbles to the door. She undoes about six new locks, then opens it a few inches, the chain lock stopping it. MILES' FACE is in the crack.

Gloria closes the door so she can undo the chain.

Misunderstanding, Miles SHOULDERS the door hard, ripping the lock off again.

Gloria falls back, her balance gone.

GLORIA
I was OPENING IT!!

MILES
He needs you.

Gloria picks up a hunk of wood from the broken door.

GLORIA
You guys think you're so dramatic.

MILES
Listen to -

GLORIA
(screaming)
I HEARD YOU!
(hysterical)
I can't. There's nothing I can -

MILES
Do you know what's happening?

GLORIA
Carlton told me. But it's out of our hands, we don't -

MILES

Then don't say you can't. Say you won't. That's what it is.

GLORIA

I would, I swear, two years ago -

Miles grabs her face.

MILES

You will do this. Get into the Central City somehow, and wait in a car outside the jail. Wait until I'm brought to the car -- I'll be unconscious, but not dead. Reinhardt will already be free, he'll be taken out the back by a guard who still obeys me.

GLORIA

No, don't -

MILES

Listen to me! You will have friends waiting at the border fence to let us past. We will get out of there and we will leave, all of us, forever. Do you understand?

GLORIA

I won't be there.

Miles stands.

MILES

You will. I know you. We're not so different, you and I. I mean, we all get sick of hating ourselves eventually, right?

He leaves.

Gloria goes back to the couch, straightening herself. She looks out at the city.

She reaches over to her glass of wine but stops her hand just short of it.

Instead of picking it up, she FLICKS it gently with one finger, tipping it over.

Red wine puddles on white carpet.

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET DAY

The CROWD is gathering for ceremonies. The crane and platform are tested and loaded with piles of rope, nooses neatly coiled at the ends. The SMILING WOMAN takes her position on top of a van.

MILES walks through the streets, head down, unnoticed.

CUT TO:

INT JAIL

The front area. MILES enters. He spies DECKER talking among several other GUARDS. He signals to him and draws him aside.

MILES
I'm here to see Blanc.

Decker winces, but is firmer than he's ever been with Miles.

DECKER
It can't be. He's to hang today. None are to see those that hang.

He starts to turn away. Miles grabs his arm.

MILES
(stern)
Take me to see him.

DECKER
(fierce, but a whisper)
I'll not. You're to be sworn out soon. You'll get out while you can, and give no orders!

MILES
So I'm helpless, you think? You think I can't take one person down with me? If I am an enemy of the Movement, what does that make you? You discovered me, you were the first. You'll hang with me, I swear it.

Decker bites his lip until it bleeds.

DECKER
Come on, then.

He turns and goes into the back. Miles follows.

INT HALLWAY

In a dark corner, Decker grabs Miles and pulls him aside.

DECKER

Listen. I need a count of thirty two bodies for the ceremonies. If you're planning an escape and I turn up short one, I'll find you and kill you myself.

MILES

You'll have thirty two.

They continue on and reach a door.

Decker opens it and lets Miles in.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT'S CELL

REINHARDT stands, surprised to see Miles.

REINHARDT

How — ?

MILES

Quiet. We've got a shitload to do.

He starts to undress.

REINHARDT

Are you crazy? You can't get me out of here. Believe me, I've thought it out.

MILES

Shut up and take off your clothes.

REINHARDT

I'm telling you -

Miles takes the chain off from around his neck.

MILES

Have a son. Call him Miles. At least he can start fresh.

REINHARDT

What the fuck are you - ?

Miles extends the chain to Reinhardt.

MILES

Take this.

REINHARDT

Why? I -

As Reinhardt reaches for it, Miles lets it slither out of his hand.

Reinhardt bends down to pick it up and Miles brings his knee up into his face, hard.

Reinhardt crumples, unconscious.

MILES (cont.)

Sucker.

CUT TO:

INT FRONT OF THE JAIL

A loud BANGING is coming from the back, from Reinhardt's cell. Several of the GUARDS move to check it out, but DECKER stops them.

DECKER

I'll go.

He opens the door and goes in back.

CUT TO:

INT REINHARDT'S CELL

DECKER opens the door. REINHARDT lies on the floor, now dressed in Miles' distinctive clothes. Miles stands in the middle of the room, wearing Reinhardt's. The resemblance between them is strong, but a close look would reveal the truth.

DECKER

(shocked)

Are you crazy? What can -

MILES

Take him out front. A car will be waiting. They all saw a visitor come in, they'll let one go out.

DECKER

But ceremonies!

MILES

You'll have your thirty-two.

Decker doesn't move.

MILES (cont.)
Take him, or you'll come with me
today. I mean it.

Decker lifts Reinhardt. He tucks the cloak around his face. He leaves.

Miles stands in the center of the cell as the door CLANGS shut and the key turns. He takes a big look around.

MILES (cont.)
Oh wow.

CUT TO:

INT OUTER JAIL

DECKER carries REINHARDT's unconscious body out.

The other GUARDS move to check it out.

GUARD 1
What happened?

DECKER
Went crazy -- hit his own friend
in the face. Get there that
door for me.

ANOTHER GUARD opens the front door. Decker leaves with Reinhardt.

CUT TO:

EXT JAIL DAY

DECKER emerges with REINHARDT and sets him against the building. In the street, the preparations for the ceremonies continue. The CROWD has swelled.

Decker looks up and down the street.

No car.

DECKER
(angry, imitating Miles)
"It'll be waiting, a car will be
waiting..."

CUT TO:

EXT CENTRAL CITY STREET DAY

The SMILING WOMAN sits on top of her van. All is in readiness. She turns to an AIDE next to her.

SMILING WOMAN
It's time. Bring them.

She looks around her.

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)
Where the hell's Decker?

CUT TO:

EXT JAIL DAY

DECKER stands next to the slumped body of REINHARDT, trying to appear casual, looking around desperately.

DECKER
(a mutter)
Where the hell's the car?

CUT TO:

EXT THE STREET DAY

From the middle of the throng a VOICE rises up in supreme frustration:

VOICE
Get the fuck out of my way! I'M
TRYING TO REDEEM MYSELF!!

The voice is GLORIA's, stuck in a beat up old car in the middle of the crowd. She can't move.

GLORIA (cont.)
Oh, what the hell.

She RACES the engine.

GLORIA (cont.)
They'll move.

The engine REVS even higher and suddenly heads are turning all around her and people are diving out of the way, clearing a path as the car shakes and CRIES.

Gloria releases the brake and

TAKES OFF

down the narrow path.

ON TOP OF THE VAN,

the Smiling Woman turns and looks as the car zips through the crowd behind her.

She frowns, but pays no real attention.

EXT JAIL

Gloria's car stops in front of the jail. Decker is vastly relieved. He throws Reinhardt's body in back and is gone, disappearing back inside the jail.

A CROWD starts to gather, but Gloria is in no mood to answer questions.

She drives away.

CUT TO:

INT JAIL

MILES and the OTHER PRISONERS are let out of their cells and led down the corridor by the GUARDS.

Miles goes to great pains to keep his face turned away.

He walks past Decker, who is counting the prisoners carefully. He avoids making eye contact with Miles.

CUT TO:

EXT BORDER FENCE DAY

The gap in the fence. GLORIA drives like a crazy woman. The bouncing awakens REINHARDT. He stirs in back.

GLORIA

Hang on, Miles. Almost there.

The gap is up ahead, but this time it's guarded on the Central City side. A wooden barricade is manned by THREE RAGGED GUARDS.

Gloria throws her head back and laughs.

GLORIA (cont.)

Eat bumper, fellas.

She punches it. The Guards dive out of the way as she

SMASHES

through the barricade.

AIR TIME!

before she lands safely on the Briar Heights side.

SECURITY PATROLMEN rush around her, ready for her arrival.

She jumps out of the car and gives them high-5's, WHOOPING with joy.

A VOICE comes from behind her. REINHARDT.

REINHARDT

What's -- ?

Gloria turns and looks at him, uncomprehending.

REINHARDT

You saved me? You? Gloria?

Gloria approaches him, fearing and knowing the worst.

GLORIA

Oh God.

(pause)

He went out the back. He must
have gone out the back.

Reinhardt rubs his jaw, remembering the blow.

CUT TO:

INT PRISON TRUCK

MILES is packed in with about THIRTY OTHER PRISONERS. One of them
turns to face him. It's RIDGELY, from Bobbye Amor's show.

RIDGELY

(closer to lunacy than
last time we saw him)

It was ice cream.

MILES

What?

RIDGELY

Special kind. They only sell it
in the Central City. I had to
have it. So, like, now I have
to die for ice cream?

Miles doesn't answer.

RIDGELY (cont.)

What about you? What are you
dying for?

MILES

Something I did in a past life.

RIDGELY

What, you believe in that
reincarnation shit?

MILES

(shrugs)
Why not? Happened to me once
before.

CUT TO:

EXT BLANC MANSION DAY

REINHARDT and GLORIA pull up in front. A CROWD OF PEOPLE, maybe three hundred strong, are massed on the front lawn.

Puzzled, Reinhardt and Gloria make their way to the front of the house.

CARLTON comes out of the house and goes across the lawn to Reinhardt. He embraces him. He pulls back and looks to Gloria, back at Reinhardt.

CARLTON

(soft)
Miles?

REINHARDT

(softer)
No.
(pause)
Who are these people?

CARLTON

"Pilgrims" would be the proper
word, I believe.

REINHARDT

What?

CARLTON

They saw you on television. Your
last show. They've been gathering
here for two days. They want to
leave the City. They say you'll
lead them.

Reinhardt turns and looks at them. The group cuts across every social class imaginable.

REINHARDT

They're right.

He turns to Carlton and throws his arm into the air dramatically.

REINHARDT (cont.)

START MAKING SANDWICHES!!

A CHEER goes up from the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT THE EXECUTIONER'S PLATFORM DAY

MILES rides up the platform with the EXECUTIONER. FatCity spreads out beneath them.

They reach the top.

The Executioner picks up a hood.

MILES

No. I want to see the City. I
want to watch it die with me.

The Executioner drops the hood and puts a noose around Miles' neck.

FROM BELOW,

the SMILING WOMAN looks up at Miles in alarm. She stands.

SMILING WOMAN

(to Decker, next to
her)

Who is that?

DECKER

(edgy)

Blanc.

SMILING WOMAN

It isn't! Stop it!

She waves to the Executioner to stop but he misinterprets it as the order to shove and he does,

KNOCKING

Miles forward, off the platform and forward, out into space.

The Smiling Woman recognizes him and SCREAMS --

SMILING WOMAN (cont.)

THE KEY KING!!

The CROWD looks up in alarm and terror and it's just there, just as every person there sees who they're killing that he

FREEZES

in mid-air, the rope loose and uncoiling behind him.

The Crowd is stopped too, their mouths slack and frozen.

The Smiling Woman is stilled as well, her hand shooting out like an arrow pointing at Miles.

But most of all Miles is stopped --

-- suspended --

-- because there is simply no way we could bear to watch him die.

REINHARDT'S VOICE comes over the image.

V.O.

And he did watch it die, for it was at that point, that second when he floated free on the uncoiling rope that the Revolution bit off its own head -- cannibalized itself. And when the Smiling Woman called "STOP!", it was a cry of true fear, fear and the knowledge that if this was done to the Key King, now, before he was sworn out, it could -- and would -- be done to her.

CUT TO:

EXT THE MOUNTAINS AROUND FATCITY DAY

A road winds up out of FatCity and into the mountains. The City lies below, a little pool of fog from up here.

A CARAVAN of cars and trucks make their way up the road. CARLTON, in an open car, leads the way.

REINHARDT and GLORIA stand at the top of the mountain pass, looking down on the city and the procession of refugees.

Reinhardt turns and looks up at the sun, shining brightly up here.

His final VOICE OVER:

REINHARDT'S VOICE
God, it's bright.

FADE OUT.