

FRANCES

F R A N C E S

by

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FINAL SHOOTING DRAFT
February 22, 1982

BLACK. We HEAR the soft voice of Frances Farmer.

FRANCES (v.o.)

No one ever came to me and said,
'You're a fool. There isn't such a
thing as God. Somebody's just been
stuffing you.'

FADE IN:

1 EXT. PUGET SOUND - DAY

1

On an expanse of water, calm and undisturbed. After a moment, it begins to ripple as something rises toward the surface. A girl's face breaks through.

FRANCES (v.o.)

It wasn't murder. I think God just
died of old age. And when I realized
that he wasn't any more, it didn't
shock me. It seemed natural and
right.

The girl, FRANCES, is 16, blond, very pretty: she seems like the most persuasive proof imaginable of God's existence. She swims away from us. We pick her up again swimming to a dock. She climbs out of the water and disappears up the stairs.

FRANCES (v.o.)

Maybe it was because I was never
properly impressed with religion. I
went to Sunday School and like the
stories about Christ and the Christmas
star. They were beautiful. They made you
warm and happy to think about. But
I didn't believe them.

2 EXT. PUGET SOUND - LATER

2

The banks of Puget Sound, dotted with elm trees. Frances sits comfortably in the fork of a tree writing in her diary. A dog wanders around her, waiting to be petted.

FRANCES (v.o.)

The Sunday School teacher talked too
much the way our grade school teacher
used to when she talked about George
Washington. Pleasant, pretty stories,
but not true.
Religion was too vague. God was different.
He was something real, something I could
feel. But there were only certain times
when I could feel it.

A3 INT. FRANCES' BEDROOM - DAY

A3

Frances lies on her bed writing in her diary, looking at shells and dolls and things - just thinking.

FRANCES(v.o.)

I used to lie between cool, clean sheets at night after I had had a bath, after I had scrubbed my knuckles and fingernails and teeth. Then I could lie quite still in the dark with my face to the window with the trees in it and talk to God. 'I am clean now. I've never been as clean. I'll never be cleaner.' And, somehow, it was God. I wasn't sure that it was -- just something cool and dark and clean.

3 INT. FARMER HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

3

Frances is now reading aloud from her diary, gently swaying back and forth in her chair. An older woman, LILLIAN FARMER, sits near, sewing a dress, listening and nodding from time to time. A small suitcase stands by the front door.

FRANCES

That wasn't religion, though. There was too much of the physical about it. I couldn't get the same feeling during the day, with my hands in dirty dishwater and the hard sun showing up the dirtiness on the rooftops. After a time, even at night, the feeling of God didn't last. I began to wonder what the minister meant when he said, "God the Father, sees even the smallest sparrow fall. He watches over all His children." That jumbled it all up for me. But I was sure of one thing. If God were a father, with children, that cleanness I had been feeling wasn't God. So at night, when I went to bed, I would think, 'I am clean. I am sleepy.' And then I went to sleep. It didn't keep me from enjoying the cleanness any less. I just knew that God wasn't there. He was a man on a throne in Heaven, so He was easy to forget.

ERNEST FARMER appears in the doorway and hesitates, listening to his daughter read. Then he goes to Frances.

FRANCES

Sometimes I found He was useful to remember, especially when I lost things that were important. After slamming through the house, breathless and panicky from

FRANCES (cont'd)
searching (ERNEST kisses Frances
on top of her head. She smiles)

ERNEST
Bye, Princess.

FRANCES
See you next weekend, Dad.

ERNEST
Lillian.

Ernest looks to Lillian who does not acknowledge him. He shrugs and goes to the door, picking up his briefcase. He glances once more at Lillian. She doesn't look up. He leaves.

FRANCES
After slamming through the house,
breathless and panicky from searching,
I could stop in the middle of the room
and shut my eyes. 'Please, God, let me
find my red hat with the blue trimmings!
It usually worked. God became a super-father
that couldn't spank me. But if I wanted
a thing badly enough, He arranged it.

DISSOLVE TO:

4 INT. AUDITORIUM - DAY

4

Frances stands at a podium. Other STUDENTS and TEACHERS sit to either side of her on folding chairs. Above the proscenium is engraved: West Seattle High School. Below that a banner hangs: "NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY COMPETITION, 1931".

FRANCES
That satisfied me until I began to
figure out that if God loved all His
children equally, why did He bother about
my red hat and let other people lose their
fathers and mothers for always? I began
to see that He didn't have much to do
about people's dying or hats or anything.
They happened whether He wanted them to
or not, and He stayed in Heaven and
pretended not to notice. I wondered a
little why God was such a useless thing.
It seemed a waste of time to have Him.
After that, He became less and less,
until He was... nothingness.

The AUDIENCE consists of parents, students, and local dignitaries. We SEE several shocked faces. Lillian is there also, smiling. Seated next to her is a distinguished looking woman, ALMA STYLES. Ernest sits on the other side of the auditorium, looking a little worried.

FRANCES

I felt rather proud to think that I had found the truth myself, without help from anyone. It puzzled me that others hadn't found out, too. God was gone. We were younger. We had reached past him. Why couldn't they see it? It still puzzles me.

Frances closes her notebook and looks up, waiting for some response. There is a deep shocked silence, then Lillian starts to applaud. Only a few others join her. In the back a WOMAN stands up.

WOMAN

You're going straight to hell, Frances Farmer!

A stately man sitting next to her, her husband JUDGE BENJAMIN HILLIER, puts a restraining hand on her arm. The woman continues to glare at Frances.

Frances stares back, a smile on her face.

5 EXT. SEATTLE STREETS - DAY

5

The screen erupts into violence. A large unruly mob skirmishes with police in a cobblestoned square. On a truckbed addressing the crowd - which carries placards reading: "Organize Now!", "Workers of the World Unite!" and "Elect Kaminski" stands MARTONI KAMINSKI. By his side, leading the crowd's responses, stands a younger man with sharp piercing eyes, HARRY YORK.

KAMINSKI

I'm here today to tell you this country can change, this country must change if it's gonna survive! The question is: how? What kind of change? Should the government become more repressive?!

CROWD & YORK

No!

KAMINSKI

Should it feed the rich, and clothe the rich, and pamper the rich?

CROWD & YORK

No!

KAMINSKI

who should this government be for?

CROWD & YORK

Us!

KAMINSKI

Yes, for the people! And who should
this government be of, and by, and for?

CROWD & YORK

The people!

KAMINSKI

Yes, these are the principles of Abe
Lincoln, a Republican! But when we say
it now, they call us radicals. I ask
you: do you think it's radical to have
a government which serves its people?

CROWD & YORK

No!

KAMINSKI

And do you think it's radical for a man
to have a job, and feed a family?

CROWD & YORK

No!

KAMINSKI

Is it radical for you to have a hand
in shaping your future, and the future
of your children?

CROWD & YORK

No!

KAMINSKI

Is it radical for the wealth of this
country to be turned back to the
people who built the country?

CROWD & YORK

No! No!

KAMINSKI

Good! Because, Brothers, that's you!

The crowd cheers. Harry York gives the signal and a banner
unfurls: "It's A Fine Old Conflict".

FADE TO BLACK.

6 A TITLE COMES ON SCREEN: "GOD'S IN HIS HEAVEN AND ALL'S
RIGHT WITH THE WORLD? 'NOT SO!' SAYS YOUNG FRANCES FARMER."

6

We realize we've been watching a newsreel. We see the
SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT presenting Frances with an award.

SUPERINTENDENT

On behalf of Scholastic Magazine, which
sponsored this prize, it gives me enormous
pleasure to present this year's essay
contest award to Miss Frances Farmer, a
junior at West Seattle High School. Frances...

FRANCES

Thank you.

SUPERINTENDENT

Don't spend it all in one place, now.

ANNOUNCER(v.o.)

Seattle is in the news again as a high
school junior wins a national competition
and a hundred dollar prize with an essay
denying God.

City Hall steps. Judge Hillier and other bigwigs speaking
heatedly to reporters.

ANNOUNCER(v.o.)

This prompts civic officials to charge
that left-wing politicians are encouraging
atheism in the city's schools.

HILLIER

This is precisely the kind of thing
Seattle does not need. I have no idea
who was responsible, but the notion that
God is dead seems very sinister to me,
and far beyond the sophistication of a
mere high school girl. It wouldn't surprise
me at all if this 'essay' was actually
written by some kind of anarchist or
other agitator. Thank you.

ANNOUNCER(v.o.)

Miss Frances Farmer was unavailable for
comment, but her mother, Lillian

Lillian stands in front of her wood frame house addressing a
small crowd of reporters, photographers, and curious neighbors.

ANNOUNCER(cont'd)

Farmer, a well-known local dictician,
stepped to her daughter's defense.

LILLIAN

Well, Herb, you know Frances is not havin' a war with God, just a little disagreement. What child hasn't questioned the Lord's mysteries in order to better understand them? Like Mr. Voltaire said, I may not agree with what she says, but I'll fight to the death her right to say it. Freedom of speech, unlike in the dark countries to the east, still lives in America! And in my house.

Among the AUDIENCE in the cinema, we SEE Frances and her father watching the screen. Frances slinks down in her seat until she's hidden from sight.

6AA INT. FRANCES' BEDROOM - DAY

6AA

Frances is lying on her bed writing, listening to the record player. Lillian knocks, enters with cleaning stuff. She turns off the record player ("No wonder you can't hear me - this thing is so loud its a wonder your ears don't fall off.") and tries to move Frances so that she can clean the room. ("Where are the other pigs?") Lillian sends Frances to the grocery store with a quarter ("Tell Bob Buckles not to spend that quarter all in one place.") and sings, cajoles and tickles Frances into getting up. The phone rings ("I know who that is - it's the American Mothers Want to Know Club. There's a meeting tonight.") Frances says she'll stop at the library on the way home from the grocery store. Both leave the room.

7 EXT. SUBURBAN STREET (SEATTLE) - DAY

7

Frances carries library books and a small grocery bag. Her hair and skin gleam in the sun. People in their yards stare at her as she passes. She walks on, coming to a group of GIRLS slightly younger than herself who are playing hopscotch. One of the girls looks up.

FRANCES

Hi Emma.

Emma looks away quickly. The girls all run off.

FRANCES

Bye Emma.

Frances shakes her head as she walks on.

MAN'S VOICE

Hey!

Frances hesitates, then turns to look:

A man in his twenties whom we recognize as Harry York, Kaminski's compatriot, leaves a group of men in front of the union hall and walks toward her.

HARRY

Hey, I wanna talk to you.

Frances keeps walking. Harry hurries after her.

HARRY

Momma told ya not to speak with strangers, huh?

(he reach her, grabs her arm)

Hey!

FRANCES

Don't touch me.

HARRY

I'm not gonna hurt you. I just wanna talk.

She stares at him. He's got a newspaper wedged under one arm.

FRANCES

Okay then...

HARRY

Well...you're causin' trouble, you know that?

FRANCES

I'm causing trouble?! You're a pain in the butt! You newshounds've been after me and my folks ever since I won that dumb contest. I'm just sixteen, you know? Who the hell cares what I think?

HARRY

Not me. But other people seem to.

FRANCES

Yeah. Well if you didn't put it in the papers - (nobody'd even know about it).

HARRY

Now wait a minute. Do I look like a newshound to you?

FRANCES

No...Actually you look more like a cop.

Harry laughs.

HARRY

That's rich. Hey, if I was a cop, I'd be packing, right?

(holding coat open)

You see a gun? Go on, search me. Pat me down.

Frances hesitates.

FRANCES

I'll...take your word for it. So who are you, then?

HARRY

Harry York. I work for Matoni Kaminski, he's running for Congress here.

FRANCES

Oh, yeah! I saw you in the newsreel.

HARRY

Yeah, well -

FRANCES

You know, my Dad's done some work for Kaminski...

HARRY

Now you're catchin' on. Don't wanna get your Daddy in hot water, do you?

FRANCES

Whattaya mean?

HARRY

Well...see the papers've got us pegged as pinkos, then you come along, the friendly neighborhood atheist -

FRANCES

But I'm not.

HARRY

Right again. You're no more an atheist than my man's a Red, but what they're doin' see, they're addin' up their version of your ideas with their version of ours. Could look bad for your Daddy.

FRANCES

Yeah. Could look bad for you and Kaminski, too, I guess.

Beat.

HARRY

Pretty smart for sixteen.

FRANCES

Well aren't you the smoothie. Now you're going to ask for my number, I suppose.

HARRY

I suppose not. Gotta ask you this, though: for all our sakes, you better keep your trap shut.

FRANCES

Well...I'll give it a try, Mr. York.

HARRY

Harry.

FRANCES

Harry.

They half-smile, awkwardly, as if neither really wants this encounter to end. Then Harry doffs his hat.

HARRY

Bye.

She nods shyly and starts up the path toward the house.

HARRY

Sure don't walk like sixteen, neither.

8 EXT. COURTROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

8

Judge Hillier and Alma Styles walk to the Courthouse and up the front stairs.

HILLIER

These are perilous times. With the economic collapse comes hopelessness and desperation; and people turn to dangerous ideas -

ALMA

I know.

They continue to walk through the courthouse lobby and up the inside stairs.

HILLIER

Those of us who represent law and order must be vigilant. Who's behind this, her mother?

ALMA

Impossible. As her attorney, I've known her for years.

HILLIER

What about the father, he's a little pink. Maybe he wants to show our schools in a bad light, shift some support to Kaminski and those jackals.

ALMA

(reaching the top of the stairs)
He's no influence. He doesn't even live at home. No, I think Frances wrote that essay with no mischief intended. It was her teacher who entered it in the competition.

HILLIER

Well, the publicity must stop. It's no good for Seattle and no good for the country. Keep an eye on this, will you, Alma?

ALMA

Of course, your honor.

He nods with satisfaction. Two right-thinking people fighting for what they believe in. He enters his chambers.

Lillian and Frances prepare dinner, laughing and having a good time as Lillian tells the "Aunt Zula and the Worm" story to Frances. Meanwhile, out in the living room we hear the strains of "Smiles" being played on the piano and sung by Ernest. The women move into the dining room.

9 INT. FARMER HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

9

Lillian and Frances come in balancing several hot dishes. Ernest joins them from the living room. The women set down the dishes, Frances intentionally placing the bread between her award check for one hundred dollars and her father.

ERNEST

It always amazes me, Lil, how you can whip up a hot, hearty meal out of thin air.

LILLIAN

I have you to thank for that, Mr. Farmer. It was a hard-earned talent.

She moves the bread so Ernest again faces the check. As Lillian slices the bread, father and daughter eat grimly. Ernest lights the candles, Frances moves the flowers and bread, Lillian ladles the stew.

FRANCES

Bread?

ERNEST

Sure.

LILLIAN

Ern, when's the last time you saw a hundred dollars?

FRANCES

Mama...

LILLIAN

You're not gonna believe it but I'm not hungry. I've lost my appetite. I think I'll just get at it.

She gets up and goes into the study where she sits and works on the scrap book. There's a long silence. Frances takes the check and folds it and puts it under her plate.

ERNEST

How about a toast?

FRANCES

To what?

ERNEST
To Frances Farmer. First prize.

He indicates framed award placed conspicuously at the end of the table.

FRANCES
I didn't have much to do with it.

ERNEST
You wrote it, didn't you?

FRANCES
I suppose.....Dad, who's Harry York?

ERNEST
Well, Harry York is a guy who...well, he does a lot of things. Why do you ask?

FRANCES
He talked to me today. Told me to keep my mouth shut or I'd get everybody in trouble..

ERNEST
Yeah...well...it's possible. You see Harry York and I both work for Mr. Kaminski right now, and...well... There are lots of folks in this country who never got a square break. That's the way of things but Mr. Kaminski wants to change it, and when it comes to new ideas, the people in power get nervous.

FRANCES
Is Kaminski a Communist?

ERNEST
No, no, no. All he wants to do is see the common man get a little representation.

FRANCES
He's a socialist, then?

10 INT. STUDY - NIGHT

10

Lillian is sitting at a rolltop desk. She's looking through a large scrapbook. We SEE articles about nutrition and diet, some featuring Lillian's picture, others with her name in the heading. She listens to the conversation in the other room.

ERNEST(v.o.)

The label's not important, Francie.
What's important is: this country's
got nine million unemployed and something
has got to be done about it. Besides:
left-wing, right-wing, ...they don't mean
much. All a label is usually is a way
to call somebody a dirty name.

Lillian's face becomes set. She looks down at the book. An
article titled "Girl Denies God" is there, freshly pasted.
She lays a hand on the blank page opposite.

FRANCES(v.o.)

It's already started, Dad...with me

ERNEST(v.o.)

I know.

11 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

11

FRANCES

And I can't understand. I was just
being honest. But the more I tried
to explain

Lillian appears at Frances' side.

LILLIAN

Don't listen to him, little sister.
When you're proud of what you are,
you don't refuse the label. (She
pulls a record album from behind her
back) Surprise!

Frances opens it.

FRANCES

Oh, Ma!.....Rigoletto.

LILLIAN

I gotta see what the rain did to my
tomatoes.

She leaves. Frances and Ernest sit and look at each other.

ERNEST

Wouldn't it be nice if this family
could pull together?

CUT TO

12 EXT. BACK GARDEN - NIGHT

12

Lillian is on her knees, checking and staking tomatoe plants in the dark - talking to them - or herself - quietly. ("You were right, Mama. The child carries its own seed of destruction") As Ernest approaches, she senses him and grows silent. She speaks without turning around.

LILLIAN

You're poisoning that child's mind.

ERNEST

I have a right to talk to her. She's my daughter and - would you stop with the tomatoes?! - and she's beginning to understand why i've sacrificed so much in order to achieve...

LILLIAN

You've sacrificed?! If you'd practice law for decent folk instead of Communists and indigents -

ERNEST

They need help, Lil. They pay me back in other ways.

LILLIAN

How? What do they do for you, Kaminski and his friends? They're all traitors!

ERNEST

No, Lil. It's just you refuse to understand their brand of patriotism.

LILLIAN

That's right. I can't understand a man who puts strangers ahead of his family, a man who gives up a good career to become a short-eyed inkhorn wipe-out.

ERNEST

(after a pause) Wanna go back to the hotel with me?

LILLIAN

What did you say?

ERNEST

I said...I'm going back to the hotel.

LILLIAN

Good.

ERNEST
See you next weekend?

LILLIAN
As usual. Everything as usual,
Mr. Farmer.

From in the house we hear piano music by Chopin. Frances is practicing.

ERNEST
Lillian...I'm more than willing
to meet you halfway.

LILLIAN
Don't make me sick. I'd sooner
drown myself in Puget Sound.

ERNEST (chuckling)
That's a thought, Lil. That sure
is a thought.

He trudges back toward the house. Lillian continues to dig in the garden with her knife. A woman's voice comes from behind the fence.

NEIGHBOR'S VOICE
Are you all right, dear?

LILLIAN
I'm fine, just fine.

Lillian, in a burst of rage, flings her knife at the fence. It sticks in the wooden slat.

13A INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

13A

Frances is playing the piano. Ernest comes in, kisses her.

ERNEST
Bye, Princess.

FRANCES
Dad, please don't leave early.
Just because of Mama -

ERNEST
Francie, you'll learn that some-
times it's best to laugh and just
walk away.

He goes to the door. Frances follows him. She watches him walk out and down the steps.

14 OMITTED

14

15A INT. THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

15A

Opening night. Harry is reading a playbill displayed in a theatre lobby: "1934 Spring Production...University of Washington Players Present: 'Uncle Vanya' by Anton Chekhov." Frances is playing Sonia. Harry turns, looks through a peephole opening to the stage, then walks into the theatre.

16 OMITTED

16

17 INT. UNIVERSITY THEATRE STAGE - NIGHT

17

Frances is on stage - seen from a distance.

VANYA

Oh, Sonyeka, if only you knew
how unhappy I am.

SONIA (FRANCES)

What's to be done? Life must go on.
We shall go on living, Uncle Vanya.
We shall live through a long succession
of days, endless evenings. We shall
bear patiently the trials fate has in
store for us. We shall work for others -
now and in our old age - without knowing
any rest. And when our time comes we'll
die submissively and there beyond the
grave, we shall say that we have suffered
that we have wept, our life has been
bitter and God shall take pity on us. And
you and I, my dear Uncle Vanya, shall see
a life which is bright, beautiful, grace-
ful. We shall rejoice and look back on our
present misfortunes with feelings of
tenderness, with a smile - and we shall
rest. I believe with all my heart and soul.
We shall rest. We shall rest. We shall see
the whole sky shining like diamonds, we
shall hear the angels, we shall see how all
the evils of this earth, all our sufferings
drown in a mercy that will fill the whole
world and our life will become quiet, gently,
sweet as a caress. I believe, I do believe.
Poor, poor Uncle Vanya, you're crying...
You've known no happiness in your life but
wait, Uncle Vanya, wait. We shall rest...
we shall rest...we shall rest.

Lights fade. The AUDIENCE bursts into applause.

As the lights come up and the players take their bows, we SEE in the audience: Lillian and Ernest. And in the back sits Harry York. He sends his flowers up to Frances with an usher. He looks at her - she sees him - he rises and leaves.

18 INT. UNIVERSITY READING ROOM - NIGHT

18

A celebration in progress. Masks of Comedy and Tragedy hang on the walls. DRAMA STUDENTS lounge about: eating, drinking, talking noisily. Bing Crosby is on the record player, singing "I've Got The World on a String". The DRAMA TEACHER is holding court to a group of attentive students.

DRAMA TEACHER

In life you don't know what's going to happen next. But the actor does because he's read the play and rehearsed it and gone over and over it. It takes courage to go out there each night and create it fresh, live with the moment. It takes a sense of truth, a sense of honesty. It is an art. There wasn't but one person out there tonight who even began to approach what I'm talking about...

The front door opens. Frances and Chet (Uncle Vanya) enter.

DRAMA TEACHER

And there she is - on cue.

The young men rush over to congratulate her. Frances smiles and asks for the Drama Teacher ("Where's Sophie?") Everyone applauds. TWO GIRLS observe her from the side.

GIRL #1

I could really learn to hate her.

GIRL #2

Stand in line.

19 INT. UNIVERSITY READING ROOM - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

19

Things have quieted down. The Drama Teacher and Frances are seated at the piano. Both have been drinking. Frances pays close attention to her mentor.

DRAMA TEACHER

Frances, you're a great talent and you should be working professionally now. There's this newspaper, "Voice of Action". They're having a subscription drive now and first prize is a trip to Moscow! You could visit the art theatre, maybe even meet Stanislavski! But the best part is the trip returns you to New York.

FRANCES

Sophie, I could never win that contest.

10.
DRAMA TEACHER
Yes, yes, you can. There isn't a person here who wouldn't collect subscriptions in your name. They know you deserve it.

YOUNG MAN
(interrupting) Mr. Green is here to see you. Better not keep him waiting.

The Drama Teacher leaves as - Harry York slips in. He smiles at Frances who comes over to see him.

FRANCES
Hello, York. Where've you been?

HARRY
Drumming up votes. Whistle stop.

FRANCES
Thanks for the flowers.

HARRY
Sure. That's okay.

FRANCES
Well? What'd you think?

HARRY
I just wanted to see how you looked.

FRANCES
How'd I look?

HARRY
Enh.

FRANCES
Don't be a rat, Harry.

HARRY
You looked okay. You looked great.
Joint's pretty dead (glancing around)
How about I take you home?

She hesitates, looks around and sees Chet talking, the Drama Teacher talking to Mr. Green. She takes Harry's arm.

FRANCES
Yeah. I guess. Why not?

CUT TO

20 EXT. WEST POINT BEACH - NIGHT

20

The beach is very dark, but the sweep of the lighthouse picks up an old Chevrolet parked near the shore.

FRANCES (v.o.)

You really think so?

21 INT. CHEVROLET - NIGHT

21

Frances and Harry are sitting in the back seat.

HARRY

Honest. When you were up there, you were really...there, know what I mean? Everyone else looked stupid.

FRANCES

I don't know...I did...feel different.
...Alive.

HARRY

Yeah, it's a gift. You gotta do something with it.

FRANCES

Yeah, but if I win this trip, Mama'll kill me. She hates Russians. I do want to go, though...to New York especially...but I wanted to do it quietly.

HARRY

You're not the quiet type, are ya?

They are silent for a while.

HARRY

You know, my old man was an inventor. Spent his whole life down in the basement trying to design transcontinental underground railroads, stuff like that. Well, I was supposed to be his partner. That was his dream. One day I told him I couldn't stand the smell of his workshop. I thought he was going to croak right there.

FRANCES

What happened to him?

HARRY

He retired to Florida...made a killing in vending machines.

He grins ironically and Frances laughs.

FRANCES
So you think I should go.

HARRY
Sure. I would. Try this acting thing. You can make good money at it.

FRANCES
I don't know, Harry, I...

HARRY
Hey - I got somethin' for those cold Russian nights.

Harry pulls out a pair of black silk stockings and gives them to Frances.

FRANCES
Harry York, where did you get silk stockings?

HARRY
I got a friend.

FRANCES
I'll bet you do.

She starts to put them on.

HARRY
Frances...what are you doing?

FRANCES
I'm trying them on. It isn't every day I get silk stockings.

HARRY
Well...the seam goes up the back like this... (he shows her, taking the opportunity to slide his hand up her leg)

FRANCES
I know where it goes.

She starts kissing him. He responds.

22 INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

22

Lillian is on the phone as Frances comes into the kitchen in the background.

LILLIAN

Well, Herb, I think you're misinformed. That is not possible. She would not do that to me. Tell your editor not to bet his suitcase on that one. Herb, I'll get back to you.

Lillian hangs up after seeing Frances come in. She goes into the kitchen.

LILLIAN

Well, did you decide to come by for a visit? Herb Nelson just told me you won some journey to Communist Russia! No daughter of mine is going to Communist Russia!

FRANCES

Mama, it's just a trip.

LILLIAN

And the mother the last to know. Now listen to me. Can't you get it through your head those Reds (at that magazine) are just using you?

FRANCES

Oh, Ma, they're not using me. It's my ticket out of Seattle. It's my chance to travel, see things. My God, Ma, the Moscow Art Theatre! Why won't you understand! Besides, it's a way to New York.

LILLIAN

I'll get you to New York! I'll get a job at Lorenzo's Bakery! I'll sell vegetables to the truck farmers, I'll -

FRANCES

Stop it! Oh, Mama, I don't want your money. I've saved enough of my own. Good God, I'm working three jobs! I have to do this my own way. You see, I learned your lesson very well. To do what I think is right and everyone else be damned.

LILLIAN

I never taught you that! Frances - you better wise up or it's going to be out of my hands!

FRANCES

It isn't in your hands, Mama. It's my life. (She leaves)

LILLIAN
(following her) Yes, but important
people are concerned about this.
Judge Hillier spoke to Alma Styles -

FRANCES
I don't care.

LILLIAN
...You will.

Lillian goes back into the kitchen and sneaks a drink. Frances
goes out onto the front porch where her father is fixing the
light.

FRANCES
What do I do, Dad?

ERNEST
You really want to go?

FRANCES
Of course.

ERNEST
And you think it's worth all this?

FRANCES
If I didn't, I wouldn't put you
through it.

ERNEST
Then I think you should go.

23 EXT. SEATTLE BUS STATION - DAY

23

Lillian has cornered a few passengers.

LILLIAN
The authorities tell me there's no legal
way I can stop her, but the way I see it
it's bigger than me or my family...
You see, they're sending my daughter to
the heartland of darkness...the dark
forces that would overthrow our country.
Your country. My country.

A reporter, overhearing some of this, comes over to Lillian

HERB
Hello, Lil, how about a statement?

LILLIAN
Oh, Herb, I can't talk to you today.
(she sees Alma Styles in the crowd)
Alma!

Alma hurries over to Lillian and draws her aside.

ALMA

I tried to get a restraining order - it didn't work. But we'll talk to her again. She's not on the bus yet. We'll talk to her. I have one more person to call.

24 INT. BUS STATION - FRANCES, ERNEST, REPORTERS

24

Ernest stands with Frances as the Drama Teacher gives her a necklace.

DRAMA TEACHER

You know what this means to me. More than anything. But I want you to have it because you know what its done for me.

Frances hugs the Drama Teacher as a group of Reporters storms up.

REPORTER #1

Has your earlier denial of God led you to Communism?

FRANCES

I'm not a Communist.

REPORTER #2

But Frances, you said -

FRANCES

I said all countries are of cultural interest. Besides, Russia has the greatest theatre company in the world.

REPORTER #2

Better than any American company?

REPORTER #1

What do you think of Stalin?

FRANCES

Not much. Ask me about Stanislavski.

REPORTER #2

Who?

25 EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Frances has left the reporters behind and is outside now. She is flanked by Ernest and the Drama Teacher; but is suddenly accosted by a Tall, Spectral Man who carries a potted plant, a Bible, and a flashlight.

TALL SPECTRAL MAN

Bless you, sister, bless you. Here is a Bible for solace...and this plant to remind you of the eternal seed in all of us...and finally, a flashlight to illuminate your path through darkest Russia.

Frances accepts the gifts, bewildered and hands them to the Drama Teacher. The Tall Spectral Man stares at her through hollow eyes. He begins to sing a hymn - "We Shall Gather At the River". They walk on toward the bus. Ernest stops Frances and hands her some money.

ERNEST

I've been saving this for my little fried bean.

Frances gives him a kiss. Lillian walks up. Frances and Lillian look sadly at each other.

LILLIAN

No, Frances, No....no, no.

FRANCES

(tears in her eyes) I love you, Mom.

As Frances climbs on board.

LILLIAN

Frances, I'm warning you. I'm gonna throw myself beneath the wheels. I'll do it, Frances. Frances!

Inside the bus, Frances stares out the window and shakes her head sadly.

The engine starts. Lillian runs to the front of the bus and tries to throw herself in front of it. Ernest pulls her away. They watch the bus pull away and disappear. Frances gazing sadly out the window at her parents. As reporters shout questions at Lillian, Ernest puts his arm around her and leads her away.

FADE TO BLACK.

26 INT. FARMER STUDY - NIGHT

26

Lillian is happily thumbing through her scrapbook. Her hand runs down the page, and we SEE a series of headlines, with photos:

MOTHER UNABLE TO HALT GIRL'S TRIP TO RUSSIA

Then:

MOTHER WARNS AGAINST REDS IN SCHOOLS

Next is a SNAPSHOT of Frances on board an ocean liner

Then TWO SNABSHOTS of her in what is clearly Moscow. She wears a Russian hat. The Kremlin (?) stands behind her.

Then SNAPSHOTS of her in New York, with a small clipping from the "New York Times":

Visits Moscow Art Theatre...
YOUNG ACTRESS RETURNS FROM RUSSIA,
ASPIRES TO THE BROADWAY STAGE

Below this is a magazine advertisement whowing Frances in a glossy Chesterfield ad. Her hair is swept off her head, and she looks glamorous, artificial, very different from how we've seen her.

Lillian takes up the paste brush and swabs the opposite blank page of her scrapbook. A letter from Frances lies beside her. She removes a clipping from the envelope and spreads it out. The clipping says: "STARS OF TOMORROW" and shows a semi-circle of girls' faces inside garish stars. One is of Frances. Lillian pastes it in.

She circles Frances' photo and sits back to admire it.

26A EXT. HOLLYWOOD - DAY

26A

We SEE the Hollywood sign in the distance...then CHANGE FOCUS to see people walking around the studio lot.

27 INT. PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

27

Frances' hair is tightly curled. She is dressed in a grotesquely ruffled white gown and seated on a small stool. Behind her TWO ASSISTANTS fuss with bunches of white carnations hanging on a grid. A seasoned PUBLICIST kneels nearby and a woman with a coffee cup, CLAIRE, surveys the scene.

PUBLICIST
Favorite designers?

FRANCES

Well, I never really gave clothes a thought before...there are so many more important things to think about. I want to be covered and comfortable, that's all.

PUBLICIST

But now that you've attained your life's ambition, how do you plan to...

FRANCES

I haven't.

PUBLICIST

Huh?

FRANCES

I see this as a stepping stone. My real ambition is Broadway.

PUBLICIST

Let's try hobbies.

FRANCES

Oh, I swim some...play the piano badly...and I read like a fiend. I like history.

PUBLICIST

No, no, people don't want that. Now listen: you spend lots of time at the beach. You're crazy about dancing. And you're the kind of girl who's just a little in love with love. Get it? Now try again? Hobbies?

FRANCES

Look, I

PUBLICIST (writing in notebook)

Beach...dancing...in love with love.

FRANCES

That's me. All the important things in life.

PUBLICIST

Okay, get her ready for the leg art stuff.

He exits.

As this interview is taking place the woman with the coffee cup, CLAIRE, is watching. After a moment MR. BEBE, a tall, brooding, well-dressed man - enters.

CLAIRE
Good morning, Mr. Bebe!

BEBE
Who's this?

CLAIRE
Frances Farmer, contract player,
six-month option.

BEBE (an assessment)
Okay. Good tits. Can't we show them
off a little more?

CLAIRE
I guess so, sir.

BEBE
Very fine bone structure.

He leaves. Claire stares after him with profound contempt then looks back to Frances.

FRANCES
Leg art?

PHOTOGRAPHER
Bathing suits, miss.

FRANCES
But I don't even look good in a
bathing suit. I'm not a glamour
girl. What's all this got to do
with acting?

The Publicist joins Claire.

PUBLICIST
Not much to work with. How's this:
'The most interesting thing about
Frances Farmer is that her road from
Seattle to Hollywood was 12,000 miles
long. After winning a beauty contest,
the first prize of which was a trip
to Europe...' She made some deal with
the Commies and went to Moscow, but
I'm not going to say that, am I?

CLAIRE
Heavens no. Go on.

PUBLICIST
Um... 'Miss Farmer returned to New York City and had a brief fling with the Broadway stage before coming west to seek stardom.'

CLAIRE
'Brief fling?'

PUBLICIST
Well, actually she couldn't get hired, but lucky for her, some guy in our New York office saw her. She says soon as she gets a stake, she's going back.

Claire rolls her eyes. She's heard this before.

The Camera clicks once more. Frances is frozen in time.

28 INT. STUDIO ACTING CLASS - DAY

28

TWO STUDENTS are doing a scene from "Design For Living". Others sit around watching, whispering, flirting, sleeping... but Frances is paying very close attention, making note. The MAN next to her rubs her arm and whispers something. She grimaces and pays no attention. (He tries to ask her out - she tells him to "Fuck off") Then she notices, two rows in front, a young handsome student, DICK, who's also making notes. She stares at him for a second, then back at the stage.

OTTO (STUDENT)
I salute your spirit of defiance, my dearest.

GILDA (STUDENT)
Yours, too.

OTTO
A bad business; a very bad business.

GILDA
Love among the artists.

OTTO
Love among anybody.

GILDA

Perhaps not love, exactly. Something a little below it or a little above it, but something terribly strong.

They have completed the scene. The Acting Teacher steps up.

ACTING TEACHER

Very good. Now first, let's drop the English accents and tell me what you want in this scene. Stacy? Richard?

STACY

To make love to him.

RICHARD

To make love to her.

ACTING TEACHER

Very good. But now listen to each other very carefully and take it again. And play that. They're very witty people but that's what they want. Any questions?

DICK

Yup - I'm having some trouble at home working on Otto. I want the sophistication but I want to make him my own, too.

ACTING TEACHER

Very good. (etc.)

CUT TO

29 EXT. LAUREL CANYON COTTAGE - DAY

29

A tiny rustic cottage, dogs everywhere. Two identical old Fords are parked out front.

30 INT. COTTAGE - DAY

30

Dick and Frances are fixing supper in the kitchen and going over the dialogue from the acting class scene when the phone rings. Frances goes to answer it. Dick follows her in.

FRANCES

Hello? Oh, Hi Mama, did you get my check? I was just trying out your stew recipe Oh, no it opened? Well, I hope I get bigger parts; they don't come much smaller.

Meanwhile, Dick has come into the room and is giving his lines non-stop.

DICK

The Methodists wouldn't approve of us and the Catholics wouldn't either; and the Evangelists and the Episcopalians and the Anglicans and the Christian Scientists and I don't suppose even the Polynesian Islanders would think very highly of us....

FRANCES (on phone)

No, Mama, its just the radio. No, Mama, I'm not changing my name. They can't actually make you. Most people don't realize that.

DICK

...but they wouldn't mind so much, ~~but~~ being so far away. They could all club together the whole lot of them and say, with perfect truth, that we were loose-living, irreligious, unmoral degenerates, couldn't they?

FRANCES (on phone)

No, Mama, really, it's just the radio. Listen, Mama, I have to run. Thanks for sending the preserves and the cookies. Give my love to Dad, okay? Uh-huh. Okay, bye. (she hangs up and turns to Dick).

DICK

But the whole point is, it's none of their business. We're not doing any harm to anyone. Therefore the only thing left is to enjoy every thrilling second -

FRANCES

What are you, nuts?

DICK

(staying in role) I want to make love to you very badly indeed, please.

FRANCES

Okay.

DICK

That's not your line.

She smiles, kisses and he carries her off into the other room.

31 INT. HOLLYWOOD SCREENING ROOM - DAY

On the movie screen we SEE Frances in the arms of a MAN IN A FIRE CHIEF'S HAT.

FRANCES

Kurt!

FIRE CHIEF

Oh, Angela! Go with these trappers!
They'll lead you safely down the
mountain...

FRANCES

But, Kurt, I...

FIRE CHIEF

No, no arguments. Be my good girl
and go. There's a forest, a burning
forest, and you know what I have to
do!

FRANCES

Oh, Kurt!

FIRE CHIEF

Oh Angela, my own...Angela!

ON SCREEN the corners of Frances' mouth begin to tremble, but her eyes remain wide and innocent. The Fire Chief slowly inclines his head toward hers. The brim of his hat hits her forehead. Frances covers her face with her hands and bursts out laughing. The Fire Chief looks stunned. She tries to control herself.

FRANCES

I'm sorry... (looking into camera)
I'm sorry, let's go back, please.

Laughter inside the screening room. A small light flicks on, and from behind we dimly SEE TWO MEN.

MAN #1

How many more of these?

MAN #2

Fourteen.

MAN #1

Excluding Robert Lantz?

MAN #2

I'm afraid so. (Pause) What a clown.

MAN #1

Who's the girl?

MAN #2

Frances Farmer, contract player -
six month option. She was the girl
in "Too Many Parents".

MAN #1

I'm not too crazy about the name.
But she's got a good voice.
Now that's what I mean - natural.

MAN #2

Run that again, Jimmy.

Frances stands in the back by the door, smiling. She turns and goes out.

32 EXT. CATWALK - DAY

32

Frances stands outside the screening room with a cigarette in her mouth fishing for a mtch.

A man's hand appears, holding a lighter. She looks up: it's Harry, wearing a garish Hawaiian shirt and a Panama hat.

FRANCES

Harry! Harry-God-Damn-York! A real person!

Frances hugs him.

HARRY

How ya doin', Farmer?

FRANCES

Me? Look at you! What're you doing in Hollywood?

HARRY

Cam to get a tan. Play the ponies.

They compare tans.

FRANCES

Not bad, York.

(Pause)

You know, I read about Kaminski.

HARRY

You can't believe everything you read.

FRANCES

What do you mean?

HARRY

They threw him out that window.

FRANCES
Jesus, Harry.

HARRY
Eight stories.

She stares down two stories to the ground, imagining;

FRANCES
Jesus. But why, Harry?

HARRY
He wouldn't play ball.
Anyway, I didn't want to be next,
so I skipped town; came down here
to work for some big-wig. Tail and
nail job. I'm sort of a non-gentleman's
non-gentleman. How d'ya like the
camouflouge?

FRANCES
Swell.

33 EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

33

Harry and Frances are walking along together.

FRANCES
If you survive here, you're lucky. If you
get the right role you're doubly lucky.
Your whole future in Hollywood depends
on one thing - luck. First and last. But
I shouldn't complain, I guess. They
seem to like me. I'm doing bits now.

HARRY
I always told ya, Frances. You got
real ability.

FRANCES (smiling)
I know what ability you're interested
in.

HARRY
Whattaya say we have dinner, then
maybe head out to the beach, rub
some of this tan off each other.
For old time's sake.

FRANCES
Harry...I met someone.

HARRY
Yeah? What is he - muscleman?
Lifeguard?

Frances shakes her head.

HARRY

Actor?

She nods.

HARRY

Good. Then it's temporary.
All actors are phonies.

He's joking, but she doesn't respond.

HARRY

Serious, huh?

FRANCES

Yeah.

HARRY

Hey, that's great, Farmer, just
great...just dandy.

FRANCES

Come on - let's go get a drink.

She squeezes his arm and they continue walking.

34 INT. SOUND STAGE - SET ("RHYTHM ON THE RANGE") - DAY

34

Lights being adjusted, cameras set, actors walking through
their blocking. In the midst of this we SEE Frances, dressed
in a nice suit, making a point to the WARDROBE MISTRESS, who
is listening without enthusiasm.

FRANCES

I should look more rumpled...I look
like I just came from the laundry!
I'm supposed to be hiding out in boxcars,
sleeping on floors. I'm too neat.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

This is the suit we fitted on you,
Miss Farmer.

FRANCES

I know, but you do get my point, don't
you? I could look more realistic.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

It'll do. No one will notice.

FRANCES

Ill notice.

We HEAR a man conspicuously clearing his throat. Both women turn as Mr. Bebe steps forward.

WARDROBE MISTRESS

Oh, Mr. Bebe, good morning.

He nods imperceptibly.

BEBE

Come along with me, Fanny.

She hesitates, then goes.

FRANCES

That's Frances. I'm not the cookbook.

BEBE (leading her off)

You see: we've got to change that name.

35 EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

35

Frances and Bebe come through the sound stage door into the light. He gestures to indicate what direction they're going, but remains silent, watching her. She's uncomfortable, blinking like a bird.

BEBE

I like your looks. You have the classical bone structure of the very great beauties...Garbo, Dietrich -

FRANCES

Thank you -

BEBE

I intend to make a great deal of money off you.

Frances is taken aback. This is all rather blunt.

BEBE

Since we have you on a seven year contract, I'm planning long-range. I'm going to loan you out to Sam Goldwyn to make a picture called "Come and Get It".

FRANCES

Really? That's a very good book. It'd make a terrific -

BEBE

Never mind that. I'm concerned about you. Your attitude.

They hear a ruckus in the distance and turn and look: PICKETERS are fighting with POLICE. It is raucous, brutal. Bebe turns back to her with a stern look:

BEBE

Society is falling apart, Miss Farmer, and people have to buckle down, do their jobs. You see, I view myself as the Henry Ford of the motion picture industry, and I can't have the fellow who puts on the wheels arguing with the man who installs headlights, now can I?

FRANCES

But I'm concerned with everything, Mr. Bebe.

BEBE

No, I'm concerned with everything.

FRANCES

But I'm the one up there on the screen.

BEBE

That's right. You're an actress, Miss Farmer and your job is to act. Tootsie.

He takes her hand and raises it to his lips. He kisses it very formally, like a suitor. Then he pinches her cheek and walks into a sumptuous executive office building.

She watches him go.

FADE OUT.

36 OMITTED

36

37 EXT. THEATRE MARQUEE - NIGHT

37

Brightly colored bulbs flashing, causing the wisps of fog (?) around them to glow. The bulbs spell:

"COME AND GET IT" WITH SEATTLE'S OWN
FRANCES FARMER

A noisy CROWD is gathered outside the theatre, straining against velvet cordons. Big black limos disgorge couples in formal evening wear, to the applause of the crowd. All slightly small-town, off-key.

Harry, now sporting a moustache, hat pulled down over his face, stands across the street.

HARRY

Not bad, Farmer.

38

38 EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Two limousines streaking through the night.

39

39 INT. SECOND LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Frances sits next to a faceless STUDIO EXECUTIVE. She's all dolled up. She looks uncomfortable. Silence. She glances up at the limo ahead of them.

40

40 INT. FIRST LIMOUSINE - NIGHT

Dick sits between Lillian and Ernest. A REPORTER and PHOTOGRAPHER crouch in front of them.

LILLIAN

I guess it's no secret that I'm proud. I like to think she gets some of her talent from me. You know, when I was young I had theatrical ambitions.

DICK

You did?

He winks at the reporter.

LILLIAN

Yes, I did. And not only has Frances come home a star, she's also brought me this big handsome lug of a son-in-law!

REPORTER

Mr. Farmer, what was your reaction when Frances told you she had married...

DICK

Dwayne. Dwayne Steele.

ERNEST

What...? Oh. Well, I was pleased, of course. Richard...uh, Dwayne, is a real gentleman.

Dick smiles and hugs them both.

DICK
Well, all I can say is: I feel like
I've known these two for years!

LILLIAN
Oh, Dwayne! This is just like a
fairy tale! Where are we?

They're stopped at a light. Outside their window we SEE
DERELICTS, casualties of the Depression, huddled in the night.

41 INT. FRANCES' LIMO - NIGHT

She's staring at the derelicts. We feel her sympathy for them.
Almost like she'd rather be out there. A MAN WITH HOLLOW EYES
shouts something at them.

FRANCES
What'd he say?

She rolls down her window. The man runs up and yells in:

MAN
Hey, the party's over here! C'mon the
fire'll keep you warm. Hey - you're
beautiful - wait a minute - what
are you doing to us? We aren't beautiful
just hungry and cold!

The Studio Executive beside her looks at her like she's crazy.

EXECUTIVE
Let's go.

The limousine lurches forward. Frances settles back in her
seat, letting the night air sweep over her face.

42 EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

The two limos pull up, the second emptying first. As Frances
gets out, the CROWD cheers wildly. She walks past them, eyes
glazed. She doesn't see Harry, who is held back by cordons.
Lillian is posing and signing autographs. In her tight, formal
dress, Frances looks radiant but constricted. As she walks,
voices assault her.

ANNOUNCER
There she is! (Ad Libs)

REPORTER #1
How does it feel to be back in
Seattle, Frances?

FRANCES
A little strange.

WOMEN'S VOICES
Isn't she gorgeous?

REPORTER #2
How's the movie, Frances?

FRANCES
It's okay.

Frances sees her mother smiling nervously: They have entered the lobby.

43 INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Again there is a cordoned area in the center where Seattle luminaries are sipping champagne. Reporter #1 lurches forward.

REPORTER #1
Can you make some statement about Seattle,
how the city helped you, or the schools -

FRANCES
Well, the truth is the city had nothing
to do with it. I was lucky. And what
wasn't luck was hard work.

REPORTER #1
Oh.

Judge Hillier's wife, whom we recognize as the woman who shouted at Frances in the auditorium, steps forward in a garish gown. She's holding a large key.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE
Miss Farmer, I can't tell you how proud I am
to meet you.

She embraces and kisses Frances, who's more than a little put-off. After the kiss, she takes firm hold of Frances' hand and won't let go. Judge Hillier steps to his wife's side. Lillian also approaches.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE
On behalf of the Seattle Ladies Club,
as a token of our vast admiration -

FRANCES

Excuse me.

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

Yes...?

FRANCES

Haven't we met before?

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

I don't believe so.

FRANCES

Sure. Aren't you the one who damned me straight to hell?

JUDGE HILLIER'S WIFE

No, my dear. You must be mistaken.

FRANCES

Oh bullshit.

JUDGE HILLIER

I beg your pardon?

FRANCES

Listen, I'm still the same girl that wrote that essay, the same girl who went to Russia, and you people aren't proud to meet me at all.

A hideous silence. Judge Hillier is fuming. His wife is aghast, the key to the city extended awkwardly in front of her. She shoves it into Frances' arms.

Frances moves to leave, but her arm is taken by the Studio Executive, who escorts her into the theatre. The crowd follows. Lillian watches, interested.

44 EXT. THEATRE - NIGHT

44

Frances exits, first the theatre screening room, then the theatre itself. As she exits she sees an OLD INDIAN BEGGAR. She stops and looks at him. He holds out his hand to her. She opens her purse, gives him all her money and starts away. Then she steps back and hands him the key to the city. He just stares at it.

She strides away toward her limousine, which is now parked with several others. Her Chauffeur, seeing her, hurries to his limo. He opens the door for her, then gets in himself and starts to drive off.

As the limo pulls away Harry steps out of the theatre looking for her.

45 OMITTED

45

46 EXT. WEST POINT BEACH - NIGHT

46

Frances walks along the beach toward an old pier, away from the lighthouse....Harry approaches.

Up on the beach, the Chauffeur sits in his limo watching. Harry's car is parked next to the limo.

HARRY

(catching up) Not a bad night.

FRANCES

I thought you weren't welcome in Seattle, York. (they embrace)

HARRY

I wouldn't miss your big opening. You sure got people worked up back there.

FRANCES

Fucking hypocrites. And did you see my mother? You'd think all this fuss was for her...And Dick...

HARRY

Oh yeah. (That twirp) It's one thing to sleep with the guy, but did you have to marry him?

FRANCES

The studio told me not to.

HARRY

Is that why you did it?

FRANCES

Who ever thought they'd be right for once?...Jesus, Harry, it's a zoo back there.

HARRY

You're telling me.

FRANCES

And the thing is, it's not even a good movie. I'm not proud of it. I did what I was told. That's all they'd let me do. And all my friends will smile and say they loved it.

HARRY

Maybe they'll mean it. Not everybody lies, you know.

FRANCES

No, not everybody.

HARRY

Frances, you're a movie star now.
If you give them what they want
you can have anything.

FRANCES

I don't have what they want, Harry.
...How can I keep making movies
when people are starving?

HARRY

What are you gonna do, join the
Salvation Army? Why not use what
you've got to make something worthwhile?
You can do that, you know.

FRANCES

Yeah, if I don't make too big an ass
of myself.

HARRY

Tell you what. Let's ditch that limo.
Let me drive you back to that red carpet
in my old Chevy.

FRANCES

Uh uh. (HARRY: Come on) Uh uh.
Come on York (she rises). I've got
a better idea.

Frances gets up and starts walking away down the beach, casting
off her gloves, coat and dress top. Harry follows. When he
reaches her she starts to run. He chases and catches her and
they tumble down onto the sand.

CUT TO

47 EXT. STUDIO - HOLLYWOOD - DAY

47

The street outside the Studio Main Gate. Actors, directors, etc.
arrive in their shiny expensive autos. Among them is Frances
in her old battered Ford. She waves to the Guard and drives
through.

48 EXT. STUDIO LOT - DAY

48

As Frances pulls into her parking space, Claire, the woman
from the photo session, strolls up.

CLAIRE

Hi Frances, got a minute?

FRANCES

Sure, come on in.

They walk into the dressing room where George, the make-up man is waiting for Frances.

FRANCES

Morning, George.

CLAIRE

Well, I suppose I should just say it. It's your clothes.

FRANCES

My clothes?

CLAIRE

Yeah, I mean slacks...and work clothes
...and that awful car -

FRANCES

It runs perfectly.

CLAIRE

Yes, but...Really I hate to sound...
it's just that the public expects
glamour from its stars. People won't
take you seriously.

FRANCES

I don't care if my clothes are taken
seriously. Or my car.

CLAIRE

You know what I mean.

FRANCES

Uh-huh. You mean what if the public
finds out I sweat? And wear slacks.
And drive an old jalopy? My God, Claire,
what if they find out I'm a real person?
Oh no, say it isn't so! - Tootsie.

Claire is laughing.

49 STILL INT. FRANCES! DRESSING ROOM - DAY

49

As Frances sits at the table and George goes to work:

CLAIRE

That's not a-l, Frances. Mr. Bebe is
very concerned about your politics. He
hears you've been donating money, speaking
at rallies.

FRANCES
Claire...tell that little putz that
that if he worried half as much
about his scripts as he does about
my private life, we'd make a lot
better movies.

CLAIRE
I'm sorry, Frances. It's my job, you
know?

FRANCES
I know.
(imitating Bebe)
'This is a factory and we each have
our jobs. The writer writes, the
director directs, and the actress...

CLAIRE
...acts.' Okay, I'll deliver your
message.

50 INT. FRANCES AND DICK'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Dick is talking on the phone in the living room.

DICK
Yes, of course she'll make a statement
tomorrow on women's rights. Call back
tomorrow, okay?

He hangs up. Immediately the phone rings again. He stares at
it wearily, then answers:

DICK (pointedly)
Dwayne Steele's residence.

Meanwhile, in the bedroom we SEE Frances sleeping on the bed.

DICK
Lil?...Is that you? How are ya'doin'?
We're fine. How's the weather up there?
Really? Amazing. Are you coming down?
When? Next week is great. Yeah, she knows.
You bringing Ern? Yeah? Put him on. (Oh,
well, I don't want to talk to him, either)
Okay. Friday is good. Oh, Lil?....
(He hangs up.)

Frances stirs uneasily then gets up and drags herself into the
living room.

FRANCES
You didn't.

DICK
Sure I did. There's plenty of room
here. And she's bringing your pop,
too.

Frances stares blankly at Dick.

FRANCES
One big happy family.

DICK
Yup. Also that woman from the talent
department called, what's her name?

FRANCES
Claire?

DICK
Yeah, Claire. She said she was fired.
Too bad, huh?

FRANCES
Fired?

DICK
Yeah. She said she delivered your
message and that you'd understand.

Frances looks stricken. She goes back into the bedroom and
slams the door. Dick stares at the door, perplexed.

51 INT. SNAZZY L.A. NIGHTCLUB - NIGHT

51

Packed. Couples whirl, a trio plays energetically. Dick, Frances,
and her parents sit at a table. Lillian and Dick are beaming
with excitement, Frances and Ernest are more subdued.

LILLIAN
I can't believe I actually met
Jack Oakie! He's even handsomer
in person! And what a devil! You
know what he said to me?

ERNEST
For God's sake Lil.

LILLIAN
You can't take a joke. (to Dick)
You know, I've never heard this man
tell a joke. Frances, have you heard
your father tell a joke? I don't
believe I have.

FRANCES
Mama...

LILLIAN

And those lights, they're so hot.
However do you stand it, little
sister? You should be black as a
hottentot by now.

Frances yawns. (new music comes on - "Jeepers Creepers")

DICK

They sure make you sweat...and speaking
of which, how's about you and me working
up a little, eh honey?

FRANCES

No, dick. I'm so tired. I have an
early call tomorrow.

DICK

Come on...just one.

There is a short silence.

DICK

...Okay...How about you, Lil?
Let's go.

LILLIAN

Why not! But I'm warning you, I'm
murder on the dance floor.

They go off laughing. Ernest and Frances seem uncomfortable
left alone together.

ERNEST

I...I can't help thinking we've
come at a bad time.

FRANCES

It's okay. (It wouldn't have mattered
when you came, Dad.)

Ernest nods quietly and they are silent for awhile. He looks
out to the dance floor.

Dick and Lillian are tripping the light fantastic.

ERNEST

Well, Dick...er, Dwayne...

FRANCES

Dick.

ERNEST

Dick seems to have a lot of time to show us around. How's his career going?

FRANCES

It's not what he expected, Dad.

ERNEST

Well, things will pick up.

FRANCES

Dad...don't you ever get angry?

ERNEST

How do you mean?

FRANCES

I mean mad. Like at Mama. Don't you ever feel like hauling off and busting her one in the chops?

ERNEST (laughing)

Well, I tried it once.

FRANCES

You did? (What happened?)

ERNEST

Tears, hysteria, recriminations. I never heard the end of it. Besides, I'd rather find a more gentlemanly way to do things.

FRANCES

...You always were a gentleman, Pop.

The music ends. People applaud, and Dick and Lillian return to the table.

LILLIAN

This man is a dancing fool.

DICK

And this woman is in-de-fatigable!

ERNEST

I've never seen dancing like that!

Suddenly TWO YOUNG WOMEN with cameras and notebooks appear.

49.
WOMEN
Oh, Miss Farmer, could we have
your autograph?

LILLIAN
Why of course you can!

Lillian eagerly grabs the notebook and pen, then somewhat
reluctantly offers them to Frances. Frances sees the hesitation.

FRANCES
Why don't you sign, Ma? Go
ahead.

LILLIAN (to the women)
May I?.

The women nod, somewhat bewildered. Lillian is ecstatic.

LILLIAN -
What'll I write? I'll sign it, 'Frances
Farmer's mother'.

The women snap photos. Dick, smiling broadly, shoves his hat
next to Frances. The women go away and Ernest hands out the
photos taken earlier in the evening, which were given back to
him.

CUT TO

52 INT.. LAUREL CANYON COTTAGE - NIGHT

52

The phone is RINGING. The back door opens and they all enter
and are greeted by the dogs. Frances walks past the phone,
heading for the bedroom.

FRANCES
If that's for me, I'm not here.

Lillian and Ernest look at Dick for an explanation.

DICK
She's just tired, that's all.

As Dick answers the phone, the folks whisper to each other and
say goodnight.

53 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

53

Frances walks in, takes off her dress and sits at the dressing
table. A wedding photo of her and Dick is on the night table.
Dick enters looking pained.

DICK
That was your agent. He says your
summer stock deal is all set.

Frances stares at him.

DICK
So you're going back east, huh?

FRANCES
...Yes.

DICK
Without me. (Pause) You weren't going to tell me, were you? Just pack up and leave, is that it?

FRANCES
Dick, we need some time apart -

DICK
Hey, I'm not a complete fool, you know. I can see you're going sour on me, and when I try to do something about it, you turn your back and say it's nothing.

FRANCES
Dick, I can't even breathe here...

DICK
Dwayne! I'm Dwayne now! And you damn well better get used to it!

(Pause)
I don't suppose it occurred to you that I might want to leave too, that I might want to do theatre? No, cause you don't want me along, do you? And the reason has nothing to do with summer stock.

FRANCES
No. . .

DICK
Yeah. It's all about that night, isn't it?

FRANCES
What night?

DICK
The premiere! I never pressed you about it but god damn it, you're gonna tell me right here and right now what happened and where the hell you were!

FRANCES (quietly)
Do you want to know his name?

Dick is crumbling inside.

DICK

What?....

We watch it sink in. Confusion...self-pity...building gradually to resentment...rage. He smashes the wedding picture. Frances just sits there. Dick starts tearing up the room, screaming and throwing things, accusing, shrieking, ripping blankets off the bed, pushing books and records over.

FRANCES

My God. Don't you think you're overplaying this a bit...

DICK

I'm not acting! I'm not acting!

He rushes out of the room. Frances stares at the room, after him, then into the mirror.

Lillian, in her dressing gown, moves into the doorway. Mother and daughter look at each other. Neither says a word. Lillian retreats and closes the door behind her.

FADE OUT.

54

54 INT. THEATRE LOBBY - NIGHT

A playbill in a theatre lobby reads: "Mt. Kisco Playhouse, 1937 Summer Season: 'THE PETRIFIED FOREST'." Among the names listed is: "Frances Farmer, the 'Come and Get It' Girl." Suddenly we hear an eruption of applause.

55

55 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

We face the AUDIENCE, which is clapping, then leaping to its feet with excessive enthusiasm and yelling 'Bravo!'. Two men sits mutely without clapping: HAROLD CLURMAN, a thoughtful aristocratic man, and CLIFFORD ODETS, who is taller, slimmer, with black hair and intense eyes. As the hurrahs die down and the audience files out, the two men sit there. Finally Clurman turns to Odets. Odets nods very slightly. The men rise and leave.

56

56 INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

Frances sits in the cramped room, listening intently to Clurman. Occasionally she sneaks a glance at Odets, who is studying every detail of the room and of her.

CLURMAN

We believe in the artist's responsibility to society. We set out to entertain, but we also set out to enlighten, to challenge, to change - change the way in which people perceive their lives, their responsibilities..

FRANCES

I know.

Odets grins.

CLURMAN

If we are going to change society,
make the world a better place,
we first have to change people.

ODETS

She knows.

CLURMAN

Huh?

ODETS

(smiling at Frances) She knows.

Clurman does a take.

FRANCES

Believe me, Mr. Clurman, you don't
have to sell me on the Group Theatre.

Frances and Odets exchange a smile. Clurman goes into lower gear.

CLURMAN

Forgive my indulgence. Seems we
always lecture those who are on
time for those who are tardy. The
point is, Mr. Odets here has written
a wonderful play. Most of the roles
have been cast, but we haven't
found our leading lady.

FRANCES

What's the part?

ODETS

Lorna Moon. She's a tramp from Newark.

CLURMAN

Excuse me, but I think you'd be
perfect for the part.

FRANCES

What do you think, Mr. Odets?

ODETS

You're very beautiful, Miss Farmer.
And Harold is convinced that with
your movie background you'll be a
big draw. I certainly want the show
to be successful.

FRANCES

But you don't think I'm right
for it.

Odets thinks for a moment and looks at her levelly.

ODETS

Miss Farmer, for me this is not a
play: it's an assault...a seduction...
a plea for understanding. I think we
live in a time when new works of art
should shoot bullets...and you make
very attractive ammunition.

Tentatively, almost boyishly, he smiles.

She returns it. She's charmed.

FRANCES

And what's the title of this seduction?
This assault?

ODETS (mysterious, intimate)

'Golden Boy'.

57 EXT. STAGE DOOR - DAY

57

Odets sits on the steps, running his fingers through his hair.
Frances, Clurman and a few others exit the stage door and a
YOUNG GIRL approaches them all to beg money. Frances sees
Odets and goes to him.

CLURMAN

Don't keep her up late, Clifford.

FRANCES

Good bye, Harold.

She sits down next to Odets as the others move off down the
alley, followed by the WAIF.

FRANCES

What's the matter? Why did you
walk out of the rehearsal, Clifford?

Odets just looks down the alley. Frances follows his gaze.
The WAIF is begging money, unsuccessfully but persistently from
the actors, others, and finally from Clurman himself. She's
tough but vulnerable, and she doesn't give up.

ODETS

Look at that girl. Just look at her
a minute. What do you see?

FRANCES

What do I see?

ODETS

When you look at her, what do you see?

FRANCES

I don't know...desperation.

ODETS

How old is she?

FRANCES

Fourteen, fifteen.

ODETS

Whose sweater is she wearing?

FRANCES

Something she found.

ODETS

No, it's too big for her. It's her older brother's. Are her shoes new or old?

FRANCES

Old.

ODETS

They aren't shoes at all. They're bedroom slippers. You see, you walk by that person every day and you never even see her. But if you want to be an artist, a true actress, you have to see things other people don't. If you show it to them, then they'll see it, remember it. They'll experience her through you, with you.

FRANCES

God, I know that, Clifford.

ODETS

If you know that then why don't I see that? You don't have that kind of desperation, that kind of commitment yet. If that girl doesn't get money she starves. It's as simple as that. And that's what my play's about. I don't want to sit in there again and watch you act desperate, I want to see you be desperate. There's a very big difference between the two and if you can't do it then my play won't work.

Odets gets up and leaves.

FRANCES

(following him)
God damn it, Clifford. Wait a
minute!

CUT TO

58 INT. BAR - DAY

58

Frances and Odets are on stools at the bar. Odets is drinking
wine, Frances scotch.

ODETS

It's really very simple. Forget
your private life, forget your
problems. Forget your mother, your
lover, your this, your that! Forget
everything. Just dedicate yourself.
That's what really makes art, Frances.
Total dedication. You're not just a
pretty bauble for everyone to admire.
We're not in Hollywood now, thank God.
Art is ugliness, pain. You have to
tear yourself, bleed. It's a goddamn
sacrament, do you understand? At it's
height there is no difference between
art and politics and religion and
lovemaking - no difference - at it's
height. At it's best.. (Pause)
Want another one?

FRANCES

Yeah.

CUT TO

59-60 OMITTED

59-60

61 INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - NIGHT

61

Frances sits on the sofa as Odets paces.

ODETS

You can work every day for the rest
of your life, but even then, you know
what the truth is? You'll probably
ne-er get there! Never. I never have.
But sometimes, sometimes I can feel it.
Smell it. And my wife - (picks up
her photo from the table, puts it down)
- a great actress, so they say, - she
hasn't got there. But the smell, Frances,
the smell is worth everything.

Odets crosses to the phonograph.

ODETS

You see, I don't just want to entertain people, I want them to wake up in the middle of the night and think that everything they're doing is wrong!

He goes over to the chair and sits down. Classical music fills the air. He slumps back. Frances is under his spell.

ODETS (taking off his shoes)

You know, I've never made a living in the theatre. Hollywood supplies all my money and all my indigestion. But this is where I belong. Sometimes I think I would have been better off if there'd been no movies to write... I would have scrounged around this way and that, gotten out from under this big tent, and pitched smaller tents in many wild and undiscovered places. That's what you've got to do Frances. I'll never do it, but you might. You have an explorer's heart. I wish I could tell you how to be brilliant, Frances, but I can't. It's got to come from you, what you believe in, what you are.

There's a long look between them.

ODETS

Let's go to bed.

62

62 INT. ODETS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Odets stands by the bed strewing rose petals on the sheets. Frances watches from the doorway. He throws petals at her, then comes to her. They embrace, begin to undress and drop to carpet. They make love.

INT. ODETS' BEDROOM - MORNING

They are asleep in bed together. Frances sits up, starts to rise. He pulls her back down.

ODETS

Where are you going?

FRANCES

I have a rehearsal at ten.

ODETS

Why don't you forget about it?

They start to make love again.

62A

62A EXT BELASCO THEATRE - NIGHT

Sign: GOLDEN BOY - SOLD OUT! Ushers fling the street doors open and we HEAR WILD APPLAUSE.

62B

62B INT. BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

This is a fund-raising party. Photographers and reporters are present. Clurman is delivering a speech. To one side of him sits a well-dressed Spanish diplomat (who is cadging a canape) and his wife, on the other, Frances and Odets.

CLURMAN

...and the actor... the artist - like the scientist or politician - must not be content to simply observe the world. Our plays and films must attempt to influence minds and hearts; our works of art must shoot bullets!! So, if we are to call ourselves artists, we cannot stand idly by as bombs, fascist bombs obliterate democracy. Not only must we speak out, but we must donate as much as we can afford. Our contributions will be used to buy ambulances, medicines, and other very vital supplies...for if Fascism is not stopped in Spain, it will spread across Europe, jeopardizing our own freedom. An artist, to be vital, must be a soldier, too. And now, to present our ammunition, our check to the Spanish Consul, Senor Leon Juarez Almendros, our own leading lady, Miss Frances Farmer.

Applause. Clurman steps back and looks to Frances who steps forward and presents a check to the Spanish diplomat.

FRANCES

It gives me great personal pleasure on behalf of the Group Theatre to present you with this check for \$1,000 for the Loyalist Cause. No passéran.

Flashbulbs pop. More applause.

CUT TO

Bebe's huge desk. Variety Headline: "ACTRESS FIGHTS FASCISM"
Next to the newspaper are a dozen pencils which Bebe is lining
up precisely parallel. His expression is totally obsessive,
crazed.

Behind him a woman (TORA) is cutting his hair. A STUDIO LAWYER
paces nearby.

LAWYER

And on top of her political activities,
now she's got a lawyer. She wants out
of her contract, Mr. Bebe. She says she's
through with motion pictures.

BEBE

I'm sure it wasn't me, it wasn't me...

LAWYER

Excuse me, sir?

BEBE

I don't know who she fucked to get
where she is, but I don't think it
was me.

Tora is massaging the back of Bebe's neck. He's oblivious.

LAWYER (startled)

Well...you could always dump her,
Mr. Bebe. Teach her a lesson. There
are a million beautiful girls out
there who don't give a damn about
politics.

BEBE

That's not the point. Frances Farmer
has the world by the tit because
of this studio, and now she thinks
she can waltz off without a thank you.
(To Tora who's still massaging) PLEASE!
(She stops) No. No, that young lady has
a contract, and she's going to honor it.

LAWYER

Oh. I mean, good.

BEBE

I think it's time to take the gloves
off. (snaps his fingers and Tora hands
him the intercom phone) Get me some
reporters. (starts to put the phone back,
stops) Particularly Louella Parsons!

During this conversation, Bebe has been drawing on the Variety. We now see his work. Beneath the headline was a photo of Frances, on whom Bebe has drawn a moustache.

CUT TO

64 OMITTED

64

65 INT. BACKSTAGE DOOR - NIGHT

65

Another performance is completed. Frances is on the pay phone in the corridor.

FRANCES

No, I haven't joined the Communist Party and I don't plan to.

(Pause)

For Christ's sake, the money's for orphans and refugees, damnit...

(Pause)

Oh Mama, why is it we can't hold a conversation any more?

She hangs up and walks outside.

66 EXT. BACKSTAGE DOOR - ALLEY - NIGHT

66

Frances emerges from the stage door to a throng of AUTOGRAPH SEEKERS. She smiles tiredly, but good-naturedly complies. A little ways back stands a boyish YOUNG MAN holding a single red carnation. When the Autograph-seekers are satisfied and all but a few have trailed away, the Young Man steps forward.

FRANCES

(to a fellow actor) Good-bye, Luther.

YOUNG MAN

Miss Farmer...I've never done this before...but...I had to tell ya' you're great!

He shyly hands her the flower and takes his hat off.

She smiles and begins to walk away. The Young Man follows her.

YOUNG MAN

I'm really sad it's closing. Now what am I gonna do on Tuesday nights?

FRANCES

You can always come see it in London.

YOUNG MAN

Only if you were in it. Are you?

FRANCES

I wouldn't miss it.

YOUNG MAN
I love to...but I'm going
to d.

FRANCES (smiling)
You an actor?

YOUNG MAN
Yes!...Well, okay, I'm still in
. But as soon as I graduate...
California, here I come.

FRANCES (after a pause)
You really serious? About acting?

YOUNG MAN
Yes.

FRANCES
Don't go to Hollywood.

YOUNG MAN

FRANCES
You will crush you.

YOUNG MAN
Sound as if you hate it.

FRANCES
Certainly not anxious to go back.

YOUNG MAN
You'll break a lot of hearts.

FRANCES
I'll mend.

YOUNG MAN (after a pause)
About your husband?

ng, her eyes shoot to the Young Man's face.

FRANCES

YOUNG MAN
You be getting back together?
When you quit Hollywood.

nl, seems much older, and there is no sign
shadows.

FRANCES
Is this?

N
ng a divorce?

astard!

on.

N
ss Farmer.

alks toward him)

N
e, lady.
d with me.

ows the flower away.

A67

re Odets took Frances
scussing writing for
that the Group
Frances comes in, spots

t down, have

2.

?

st that
I don't

tonight?

you tomorrow.

CLURMAN

Tomorrow.

Odets rises - they leave - Odets calls back over his shoulder

ODETS

We'll talk.

CLURMAN

Yes, we'll talk.

The two exit. Clurman rises, crosses to the bar and begins a conversation with two members of the Group.

B67 INT ODETS APARTMENT -- NIGHT

B67

Frances is in bed reading the newspapers. She calls out to Odets who is returning from the living room with brandy.

FRANCES

If I were standing still in that town, Clifford, I think I'd go mad. Yet they're going to force me to come back even though they have no fucking idea what to do with me.

ODETS

(in the hall) They know you've got something.

FRANCES

But they don't know what it is.

ODETS

(entering the bedroom) Do you?

FRANCES

All I ever wanted was to be part of something...one play or even one movie, something that was really fine... really memorable. And now I have. But I can't go back to Hollywood after this. What you do there isn't really acting at all. It's just sketching...And the money is so seductive. It confuses you. It eats away at your ideals. I don't want to be too comfortable. I want to go on. I want to keep developing.

ODETS

I'm planning to write a tragedy about what America does to its artists. We live in a strange, dry country, Frances. A strong heart is needed, iron

(MORE)

ODETS

(Continued) nerves, to continue in any way as an artist here. They keep you keenly conscious of success, the American Dream, the Cinderella Story, and that whole fraud. And its up to us as artists to dive in and fight this sickness, this eating away of our individual souls. The only weapon we have to draw on is truth. We must hold it before us like a shield. Truth is the greatest revolutionary force. (They kiss) How do you like that?

He reaches out and turns off the light.

FRANCES

Clifford - when we're in England
I'll fuck you in Stratford and
bear you a little Shakespeare.
What do you think of that?

CUT TO

67C INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

67C

It is much later. Odets sleeps peacefully while Frances paces, drinking from a tumbler, looking out over Central Park. She wanders over to Odet's typewriter, looks at what's written and heads back to bed.

67D EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST - DAY

67D

Frances walks along carrying a brocery bag. She turns and enters an apartment building.

68 OMITTED

68

68A INT ODETS' APARTMENT - DAY

68A

Frances comes in the front door with a bag of groceries, removes her key. Walks into the dining room and stops short. Clurman is sitting at the table reading a magazine.

FRANCES

Hello, Harold.

CLURMAN

Frances.

FRANCES (going to kitchen)

Where's Clifford?

CLURMAN

He's not here.

FRANCES

Oh. What's up?

She arranges flowers at the table. Clurman rises.

CLURMAN

Bourbon?

FRANCES

Okay.

He crosses into the living room and mixes two drinks while the two of them ad lib small talk about the weather.

FRANCES

(coming into the living room with the flowers)

Pretty aren't they?

CLURMAN

Lovely. (Hands her her drink) Cheers.
(they sip in silence)
I hear you're meeting with the studio lawyers to get out of your contract.

FRANCES

That's right. I don't want them breathing down my neck while we're in London.

CLURMAN

Well...well, you see, that's the point. You won't be opening in London.

Frances looks like she's been punched in the stomach.

FRANCES

You don't think I'm good enough?

CLURMAN

What?! Good Lord, no, it's just...It's money. We needed backing and...well, we found it.

FRANCES

Who?

CLURMAN

An actress.

FRANCES

A rich actress.

CLURMAN

Yes. That's the deal. She plays Lorna.

FRANCES (growing angry)

But...Harold. We're supposed to be different, right? Clifford says this theatre is supposed to be different! A group working together!

CLURMAN

I know, but -

FRANCES

And this play - the play is all about what greed and money do to people.

CLURMAN

Yes, but right now we have to be practical.

FRANCES

Then I'll give you the money! I'll back the damn production.

CLURMAN

(It's too late, Frances. Besides, you don't have that kind of money anymore. You -)

FRANCES

What does Clifford say?

CLURMAN

(You haven't done a film in -)

FRANCES

Does Clifford even know?
(off his silence)

I'm gonna tell him. Where is he?

CLURMAN

He knows, Frances.

Clurman takes a letter out and puts it on the table.

CLURMAN

He approved it....I'm sorry, but, well, you've done a great service to the Group. Your name has helped draw people - you've helped us grow - you've grown yourself.

FRANCES

But what about me? This theatre means everything to me. What am I going to do?

CLURMAN
Well...Hollywood wants you back, right?

Her eyes fill with rage. She hurls her drink in his face.

FRANCES
Prick! (she turns and leaves the room)

He stands and, with as much dignity as he can muster, leaves.

69 INT. SMOKE-FILLED BOOKIE JOINT - DAY

69

Blackboards and betting charts cover the walls displaying evidence of an illegal gambling operation. Several desks fill the room, each with a man on the phone taking bets. Behind a glass partition with venetian blinds, we see Harry sitting at a desk in intimate conversation with an attractive dark haired girl. A nameplate on the desk reads Thomas Slocum. The door to the office is marked PRIVATE. One of the men pushes it open.

MAN
Call for you, Tom.

HARRY
Who is it?

MAN
It's personal.

Harry picks it up.

HARRY
Yeah?

70 INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - DAY

70

Frances is on the phone. Her eyes are very red and her cheeks streaked with tears. A bottle and glass are beside her and she appears to be drunk. A half-packed bag lies on the bed.

FRANCES
Harry? Harry?

HARRY
Frances,...is that you? Where are you? What's the matter?

FRANCES
The bastards! The bastards! They tricked me. I want you to kill him, Harry. You'll do that for me won't you? I loved him...I love him.... that bastard.

71 INT. HARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

HARRY
Oh...you....gotta calm down.

FRANCES
Don't tell me what to do! Just
give me his head on a platter!

72

72 INT. ODET'S APARTMENT - DAY

Frances unfolds the crumpled letter which Clurman gave her.

FRANCES
Two lines! Two fucking lines!
'This affair is now ended. My wife
has returned from Europe.' Just
like that!

HARRY
Frances.

Frances picks up the letter and begins to cry again.

FRANCES
...Harry, I hate being in love. I
don't ever want to be in love again.
I hate it! I hate it!

73

73 INT. HARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

Harry sits uncomfortably listening to Frances' sobs.

HARRY
I know, Frances,... it's rough...

He hears a click on the other end and slowly hangs up, a look of anguish on his face. The dark-haired girl runs her fingers through his hair and asks if he's all right. Harry suddenly stands up and turns to face out the window. His shoulders heave a deep sigh.

INT. ODETS' APARTMENT - DAY

Frances hangs up, crying and starts to pack. The letter goes in the suitcase a do the clock and dog statue. She stares at Odets' photo then puts it in and covers it. Then she collapses sobbing on the suitcase.

TWO WORKMEN are carrying in boxes. Frances is unpacking. She directs the men through to the kitchen, then walks out onto the terrace to watch the sunset. The light is warm and welcoming. She leans on the railing and sighs. We get the feeling she is back in Los Angeles and will make the best of it.

74 INT. SOUND STAGE - "FLOWING GOLD" SET - DAY

74

We see the slate: 'Flowing Gold', Scene 31A, Take 10.
The camera is slated.

ASST. DIRECTOR

Background!

DIRECTOR

Action!

FRANCES

(falls in the mud) (Actor off Cam laughs)
I suppose its funny!

ACTOR

Well, I'm laughing..

DIRECTOR

Cut. Let's do it again.

ASST. DIRECTOR

Okay, first positions.

75 INT. SOUND STAGE - "FLOWING GOLD" SET - LATER

75

Slate: Take 11. She falls again, this time splattering mud over her face and hair. She lies still a moment.

ASST. DIRECTOR

That's a cut - first positions.

76 INT SOUND STAGE - "FLOWING GOLD" SET - LATER

76

Slate: Take 12. Same action as before.

Standing comfortably, chewing gum is the DIRECTOR, paying little attention to the action. Seated near him is the CAMERAMAN reading Daily Variety. The headline reads: STUDIO WINS FARMER WAR ON HOLLYWOOD". The ASST. DIRECTOR tugs on the Director's sleeve.

ASST. DIRECTOR

How was that?

DIRECTOR

Good, good. One more time.

FRANCES
(standing up) For God's sake...why?

DIRECTOR
Because we want to get it perfect...
just the right combination of fury
and confusion. You can understand
that, can't you, Miss Farmer? We're
serious artists here, right? Right.

The Director glances across the stage to Mr. Bebe who is
watching it all. Bebe nods.

Frances sees this interaction. She hesitates, then approaches
Bebe. She wipes some mud from her face and drops it at her
feet.

FRANCES
Look, Mr. Bebe, you can hold me to
my contract, but you can't break me.
I'm back, and I'm gonna make it work.

BEBE
I'd like nothing better, Fanny.

She turns and walks, with an air of pride, to her dressing room.

77 EXT. ELEGANT HOME - AFTERNOON

77

Cars line the driveway and we hear the sounds of a large
party in progress.

A car pulls up. BOB BARNES gets out, goes around to open the
door for Frances. She's exhausted. She doesn't move.

BARNES
Well...come on.

FRANCES
This is a mistake.

BARNES
Come on, it's just what you need! Let
everyone see you. Talk to them, live it
up!

FRANCES (tiredly)
But we've been at it since five this
morning. At least you could've let me
go home and change.

BARNES
Look, Frances, I didn't want this job.
Think I'm crazy? But you begged me:
improve your image. So please...lemme
try, huh? (to Valet) Hold it a second,
will ya, chief? (to Frances) Come on.

FRANCES
Okay, let's go get 'em.

BARNES (taking pills from pocket)
Here, take one of these. Studio
makes 'em in the basement. They
keep the fat off. Come on (he eats one)
they make you feel nice and peppy.

FRANCES
(taking one) Like you, Barnes?

BARNES
Yeah, like me.

They head for the door.

78 INT. HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - EVENING/AFTERNOON?

As they walk up the hostess, CONNIE, steps forward to greet them.

BARNES
Hi! Bob Barnes! Looks like a swell
party!

CONNIE
Frances!

FRANCES
It's good to see you.

As they embrace, Frances looks around with trepidation:

FRANCES
God, who's here?

At that moment several people pass by her

SNIDE VOICE
So nice to have you back, Frances.

CONNIE
The usual vermin, I'm afraid.

Frances picks up a drink from a passing tray and peers into the crowd of guests in the living room. The Director from the mud scene is there among the many watching to see what she'll do.

FRANCES
Connie, can I use the upstairs bath-
room?

CONNIE
Of course. You remember where it is?

Frances nods and makes her way upstairs. Connie hooks her arm with Barnes and leads him into the party.

79

79 INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - EVENING

Later. Frances lies in a bubblebath, relaxing, sipping her drink. She obviously feels a lot better. Someone knocks.

FRANCES
Come in.

A MAN puts his head in, and stares at her.

FRANCES (relaxed)
Hi.

MAN
Hi. Oh, I'm sorry I thought this
was - I didn't know. Excuse me.
I'm sorry. Um - good-bye. Oh God!

He slowly retreats down the hall.

Frances gets out of the tub.

80

80 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Barnes is talking to a Young Man whom we recognize as the reporter who tricked Frances in New York.

BARNES
You wouldn't believe the offers! Just
piling in. I mean piling! Some of the
best scripts I've read in years!

YOUNG MAN (sarcastic)
Yes? My employer will be glad to
hear that.

BARNES
Louella? Is she here?

YOUNG MAN
How could you miss her?

He nods toward a hard-faced OLDER WOMAN surrounded by admirers.

BARNES
Louellea's here and I'm talking
to you? Swell.

Barnes walks over to her.

81 INT. UPSTAIRS DRESSING ROOM - EVENING

81

We see the open door of the closet. Frances, with a towel
around her, is going through it. Barnes comes in.

BARNES
Frances?
(enters, sees her)
Oh my God! What are you doing?

FRANCES
Picking out my armor.

BARNES
Guess who's here? Louella Parsons.
She wants to talk to you, help you
out.

FRANCES
Didn't she call me a spoiled
little bitch?

BARNES
What does that have to do with it?
Come on, she's the most important
columnist in Hollywood. What's the
matter? I thought you wanted these
people to forgive you.

FRANCES
'Forgive'....? For what?

BARNES
I'm sorry...that was an unfortunate
choice of words.

Frances pulls down a dress and inspects it.

FRANCES
You're not kidding. (shows off the
dress) What do you think?

BARNES
Snappy number.

FRANCES
Why don't you go downstairs and get me
another drink, Barnes? I'll be down in
a minute.

BARNES
Yeah, okay. And put something on
will you? I'm a married man.

He goes out.

82 INT. DOWNSTAIRS LIVING ROOM - EVENING

82

Everyone is chattering away...then hushing slightly. Heads turn: Frances is descending the stairway in a white evening gown. She looks absolutely radiant...like some kind of goddess.

Barnes walks over looking pleased, hands her a drink and helps her zip the dress all the way up.

BARNES
Better make this drink last.
Does Connie know you have her
dress?

They walk into the living room.

The Young Man/Reporter steps forward.

YOUNG MAN
Gee, awful good to see ya again,
Miss Farmer.

Frances bristles. Barnes looks on nervously. Its' all becoming unravelled again.

YOUNG MAN
My employer would like to know some-
thing very important: is it true
that your friend, Clifford, sleeps
in the nude?

Frances is boiling. She stares at him and at Louella who waves from her throne on the couch. Under her steady gaze the Young Man's snide smile gradually fades.

FRANCES
You seem like an intelligent young man.
Can't you find a more dignified way to
make a living?

He blanches. This hits home. Frances turns on her heel and leaves.

83 EXT HOUSE - NIGHT

Frances rushes out, followed by Barnes and a few curious partygoers. She is very upset. Tight. Holding it in. Barnes pleads with her, tries to stop her, but she leaps in his car and speeds off, spewing gravel over him.

84 EXT. A CLIFFSIDE ROAD - NIGHT

In the pale moonlight we SEE the dim outline of a poster tacked to the outside wall. The highway disappears down to the sea glittering dully in the distance. We HEAR the RISING SOUND of an approaching car. Its headlights crest the hill, illuminating the poster, showing a woman driving an open car, seated beside the outline of a familiar mustached figure. The poster reads, "When You're Riding Alone, You're Riding with Hitler". The lights grow brighter, almost blinding. The car, accelerating furiously, flashes by. Then we HEAR a motorcycle start up. It emerges from the blackness and speeds off in pursuit. A road sign reads: "Dimout Zone".

Frances drives fast, tears running down her face.

The MOTORCYCLE COP pulls up alongside and shouts, "Pull over!" She hesitates. He waves insistently. Gradually she slows. He gets off his bike and walks over, preparing the usual lecture.

COP

Okay....

He leans over the car and sees Frances, her hair wild and tangled.

COP (a come-on)

Where's the fire, sister?

FRANCES (sarcastic)

In my eyes, officer.

COP

Hey, cool off, beautiful. Didn't you see the sign says "Dimout Zone"?

(switching off her lights)
There's a war on, you know?

FRANCES

You bet your ass there is.

COP (testy)

I didn't make the law, lady. I just enforce it.

She switches her headlights back on.

FRANCES
God, you bore me.

She starts the car. The Cop, angry now, lunges in and grabs the keys.

FRANCES
Don't touch me!

She leaps out of the car. The Cop turns off the car lights. As Frances passes his motorcycle, she switches on its lights.

COP
Hey!

She continues to walk away. The cop starts to run after her. He catches up with her, grabs her arm and tries to bring her around. She grabs his flashlight, switches it on and flashes it all around. He grabs for it and knocks her down. They struggle on the ground. (The Cop manages to get cuffs on her. As they dig into her wrists, she tries to bite him. The Cop, winded from the battle, yanks her to her feet and drags her, kicking and screaming, to his motorcycle. He pulls out his radio mike.

COP.
Santa Monica, this is motor six-sixty-six. I got a live one here.)

FADE OUT.

85 OMITTED

85

86 EXT. BEACH HOUSE BALCONY - DAY

86

Frances puts a record on to play, then walks to the kitchen to collect two drinks. She takes them out to the balcony for herself and HARRY who is sitting reading the newspaper. She hands him his drink, then sits and picks up her diary.

HARRY
That cop weighed 200 pounds?

FRANCES
I didn't notice.

HARRY
You just went in swingin', huh?...
You gotta pick your battles a little better, ya know. Fight the ones that count.

FRANCES
They all count.

HARRY

Not if ya get knocked out in the first round. Look, now's the time to set the record straight before it's too late. They're just gonna railroad you with this scandal stuff until you don't know which end's up. They'll paint you right into a corner.

FRANCES

It'll have to wait, Harry. I'm going down to Mexico.

HARRY

What the hell for?

FRANCES

My agent figured I should get out of town until this arrest thing dies down, so I got this cheapo movie deal south of the border.

HARRY

Very diplomatic.

FRANCES

Maybe by the time I get back the newspapers will have found someone else to tear to shreds.

HARRY

If you're lucky.

There is a long pause.

FRANCES

I never thanked you, did I, Harry?

HARRY

What for?

FRANCES

For not chopping his head off and serving it to me on a platter.

HARRY

I would have, you know, but you sounded pretty crazy on the phone.

FRANCES

Yeah...I don't know. Maybe there is something wrong with me. I just can't figure it out. It hurts, Harry. It just hurts. Do you think anybody ever really loves anybody?

HARRY

Beats me.

She looks at him, then gazes out over the ocean.

FRANCES

You miss me, Harry?

HARRY

Like the desert misses rain.

CUT TO

90 INT. BROADCAST BOOTH - RADIO STATION - DAY

90

Louella Parsons sits in front of a large microphone. Behind behind her an engineer turns dials and points to her. The "ON AIR" sign lights up.

LOUELLA

Good evening, Hollywood, Louella here...with a question: What to do? What to do with a certain young blonde star who, instead of embracing the good gifts her fans bestow, spits upon them, shrugs them off...crushes them beneath the spiked heels of her disdain and drifts into drunkenness and... dare I say it? ...insanity. What to do indeed? Well, the studios have decided what to do with Frances Farmer. Unable to control her, embarrassed by the publicity attending her arrest, they're demoting her to smaller roles. Take this as a warning, all you young thespians. When you come to Hollywood, play the game. Or don't come at all. This is Louella Parsons from Tinseltown. Night, night.

VERSION B

LOUELLA

Good evening, Hollywood. Louella here. Well, well, wouldn't you know it. Barely a month after her arrest for drunk driving and obusive conduct, a certain snooty actress is at it again. Reliable sources on location with her Mexican movie report that she is holding up filming and engaging in drunken brawls in the local cantinas. What could have set her off this time? Today she is to be deported...deported from Mexico?(a throaty laugh) This reporter for one is beginning to have serious doubts about her state of mind. Ever since she returned.....

VERSION C

LOUELLA

Good evening, Hollywood, Louella here with a bit of worrying news to report.

There is every indication that Frances Farmer is becoming increasingly mentally disturbed. Conflicting reports are emerging from the location of her Mexican movie where familiar trouble has already erupted....this time even before filming has commenced. The producers accuse her of arriving late for rehearsals and attribute this to her rowdy evenings in the local cantinas where she has apparently taken to Tequila like a duck to water. Frances was quoted as saying "When you get your script in order I'll attend rehearsals. Until then I'll make the most of my time in this god-forsaken hole". Local Mexican officials did not take too kindly to this statement and the producers, no fools they, have decided to send her packing. Isn't it sad....I've always thought you were talented, Frances. You simply have poor judgement, don't you think dear?

VERSION D

LOUELLA

Good Evening, Hollywood. Louella here. Well, well, wouldn't you know it. Barely a month after her arrest for drunk driving, a certain snooty actress is at it again. Drummed out of Hollywood for her unreliable behavior, she's taken a trip south of the border to change her luck. But evidently a change of country hasn't changed her personality. Reliable sources tell me the galavanting lady has discovered Tequila and has begun reporting late for rehearsals. Consequently the producers, no fools they, have sent her packing....Isn't it sad? This reporter for one is beginning to have serious doubts about her state of mind.....

VERSION E

LOUELLA

Miss Farmer's version is that she sees no point in attending rehearsals when she has not seen a script.

VERSION F

LOUELLA

Miss Farmer was quoted as saying, "Why should I attend rehearsals? I haven't seen a script yet. Are we making a movie or not?" Then she reportedly boarded a train and left for home announcing that she would not return until a legitimate screenplay was produced. I've always thought you were talented, Frances. You simply have poor judgement, don't you think, dear?

VERSION G

LOUELLA

According to reports, Frances has been stricken with Montezuma's revenge and claims that Tequila is the only spirit that will cleanse her system.

VERSION H

LOUELLA

Frances says this is because of illness, apparently a bad attack of the Aztec Two-Step and claims that the Tequila is necessary to cleanse her system.

91 EXT. FRANCES' BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

91

A cab pulls up. Frances gets out. She looks weary and has a bruise on her cheek. A car is parked on the street in front. She frowns at it, shrugs, and carries her suitcase toward the house after paying the cabbie.

92 INT. BEACH HOUSE - NIGHT

92

She enters with her bags, then drops them, stunned. The house is stripped bare. A MAN holding a measuring tape comes out of the bedroom.

FRANCES

Who are you?

MAN

Who're you?

FRANCES

I live here.

MAN

You're Farmer? Oh...Well, look, they took your stuff out. Moved it to some hotel, I think.

FRANCES

What? Who took it?

MAN

I'm preparing it for the next tenant, he's coming tomorrow.

Frances stares at him, dumbfounded.

93 INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

93

Frances on the phone. Boxes spread out, their contents strewn over the floor, tables, etc. Frances is going through various piles, again and again, looking for something...

FRANCES

God damn it, god damn it...
(into phone)

Yes, I'll wait, I'm waiting...
(to herself)

I don't believe it. They can't do this to me!

She takes a long drink, sifts through a pile, then strews it around, starting to cry. We HEAR a voice on the phone.

FRANCES
Barnes? It's my diary! They stole
my fucking diary! You've got to
help me find it! God damn it, don't
you understand, it's my life!

She breaks down in sobs and tries to hang up the phone.

94

94 INT. STAGE - MOVIE SET - DAY

The crew is idle and the Director paces, muttering:

DIRECTOR
Never. Never again. I swear, I
swear I will never work with this
broad -

Frances, looking pretty hung-over, enters.

DIRECTOR
You're four hours late! It's insane!
It's unprofessional!

FRANCES
I'd say I'm behaving as professionally
as anyone else in this town.

DIRECTOR
Where were you?!

FRANCES
Terribly, terribly sorry; I overslept.
What's the name of this fine entertain-
ment we're all so involved in?

The Director clenches his fists as though about to punch her.
Frances walks over to the slate on the camera.

FRANCES (reading it)
Oh yes. "No Escape". That's it.
There's no escape.

She walks off to her dressing room. The director starts to
follow her, yelling behind her, then turns and comes back.

95

95 INT. FRANCES' DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Small, cramped; not like the earlier one we saw. The Hairdresser
whom we recognize as Tora, the woman who cut Bebe's hair -
stands waiting, holding her brushes and looking vexed. Frances
enters.

TORA
Look who's here. You're not the
star on this show, y'know!

Frances sits down. Tora looks at her hair and starts brushing it, pulling her head back with each stroke.

TORA

Of course, it's not up to me to say anything. I'm jsut crew... But your hair's so fine you'll lose it if you're not careful. Wonder you all don't, the things you do to yourselves. In fact, I think you are already... Fact, I think you better wear a hat for this scene. I can't do a thing with this hair - that's the worst -

Frances cries out and twists around suddenly, striking Tora who's thrown back; stumbling...falling...onto the couch.

FRANCES

Fuck you! I'm not taking this shit any more! I quit!

She storms out leaving Tora moaning and holding her jaw.

96 INT. STAGE - MOVIE SET - DAY

96

Frances marches across a backdrop toward the door. Everyone stares at her.

FRANCES

(many expletives) - Fuck you, fuck you all!

When she gets to the door she stands in it a moment, then turns and walks out.

A97 INT. FRANCES' HOTEL ROOM - DAY

A97

Frances comes into her room with a bag containing scotch. She walks into the kitchen, finds a cup, sits down at the kitchen table and pours a drink, lights a cigarette. She just sits there.

97 INT. FRANCES' HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

97

She's snoring on the couch, a sheet pulled over her naked body. A whiskey bottle, a tumbler and a bottle of pills sit on the coffee table near her.

85.
The phone RINGS. She winces, groans, tries to open her eyes then squeezes them together: hung over. Her arm flails out, finds the phone.

FRANCES

Shit.

She picks up the receiver and answers it. At the same time there is a pounding at the door.

FRANCES

What the hell's going on here?
(into phone) Hello? Hello?
(toward door) Hold on!
(to phone) Hello? (no one answers
at the other end. She drops the
receiver and starts to get up to
see who's at the door)

At that moment the pounding becomes violent. Someone is breaking it down.

FRANCES

Hey!

The door splinters.

FRANCES

What...? Help!

Men stream into the room. Back-lit from the hall they look like monsters, phantoms. They're carrying sticks.

Frances screams and runs naked into the bathroom, locking the door and pulling the shower curtain down to cover her.

FRANCES

Don't kill me! Don't kill me!

She crouches down under the sink.

98

98 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frances, crouched by the sink. Policemen outside the door try to break it down.

FRANCES

Mama, help me, help me! Don't let
them kill me, Mama.

The door is broken down, revealing three large COPS. Leering at her, one cop comes forward.

COP

Get your clothes on.

FRANCES (crying)
 You have no right! You have no
 fucking right, you bastard! Get out
 of here! Get the hell out of here!

COP
 Get your clothes on, lady -

FRANCES
 GET OUT!!

COP
 You're under arrest..

CUT TO

99 OMITTED

99

100 EXT. SANTA MONICA POLICE STATION - NIGHT

100

The police wagon pull up to the police station followed by
 a car full of reporters. Both stop - the reporters and
 photographers pile out as the cops escort Frances out of the
 back of the wagon into the station.

101 INT. SANTA MONICA POLICE STATION - NIGHT

101

Frances is being led to the booking desk. All around her
 Photographers snap her picture, and Reporters walk alongside
 subjecting her to a never-ending barrage of questions. Frances
 just smokes a cigarette and stares grimly at the dour-faced
 SERGEANT facing her.

PHOTOGRAPHER
 Smile for the birdie, Frances!

FRANCES
 I'm not here for your pleasure.

SERGEANT
 Name?

FRANCES
 You jerks drag me down here in the
 middle of the night and you don't
 even know who the hell I am!

SERGEANT
 Your name.

FRANCES
 Frances Elena Farmer. Want me to spell
 it?

SERGEANT

Age?

FRANCES

Fifteen.

SERGEANT (bristling)

Address?

FRANCES

Just put me down as a vag - a vagrant,
vagabond. Come on, this is a joke!
Assault and battery? I barely touched
that bitch!

SERGEANT

Occupation?

Frances considers for a moment, then smiles matter-of-factly.

FRANCES

Cocksucker.

The Sergeant reddens. Frances laughs as the Photographers snap
their shots.

102

102 INT. WOMEN'S JAIL - CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

TWO MATRONS escort Frances to her cell. Reporters and photo-
graphers ad lib questions. One photographer slips some money
to a guard and sneaks off behind the cells. They slide the
door shut. Frances calls after the matrons.

FRANCES

Hey! I'd like to leave a wake-up
call for ten o'clock. And I'll
have my bread and water in bed!

Frances looks disgustedly at the people down the hall and
lies down heavily on the cot. The bribing photographer shows
up now and aims his camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hey, Frances! Why don't you comb
your hair, okay?

FRANCES

...Take me the way I am.

103 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Frances, looking disheveled, dazed, and over-tired from a sleepless night in jail, sits before the JUDGE. She is accompanied by a MATRON. Next to the PROSECUTOR sits Tora, her jaw heavily bandaged, glaring at Frances. The spectators' section is packed.

JUDGE

Have you driven a car since you were placed on probation?

FRANCES

No, I couldn't get my hands on one.

JUDGE

Have you reported to your Probation Officer as directed?

FRANCES

I never saw him. Why didn't he show up?

JUDGE

Did you expect him to look you up?

FRANCES

I expected him to be around so I could get a look at his face...

Suppressed laughter ripples through the courtroom.

JUDGE

You're on your way to a contempt citation, young lady....Is it true you resisted arrest at the Knickerbocker Hotel last night?

FRANCES

Sure it's true. I was fighting for my country as well as myself.

JUDGE

And you caused trouble on a movie set in Mexico?

FRANCES

Same reason. Different scene.

JUDGE

Miss Farmer, you were advised at the last hearing that if you took one drink of liquor or failed to be a law-abiding citizen -

FRANCES
What do you expect me to do? I
get liquor in my orange juice and
in my coffee. Must I starve to death
to obey your laws?!

The Judge bangs his gavel.

JUDGE
Miss Farmer! In light of your flagrant
disregard for the conditions of your
probation, coupled with the unwarranted
assault on the Plaintiff here...you
leave me no choice but to order you to
begin a sentence of 180 days in the
County Jail.

FRANCES
Fine!

JUDGE (rising)
You are a deeply troubled young lady...
I only hope you change your course
before it's too late. Court dismissed.

The Judge pounds his gavel. Frances is about to say something
when suddenly the realization of what's happening hits her.
The Judge is leaving the bench. A REPORTER runs out of the
room.

FRANCES (frightened now)
Wait a minute...I haven't got a
lawyer...

The Judge ignores this.

FRANCES (shouting)
What I want to know is do I have any
civil rights?

The Judge closes his chambers door behind him. Frances turns
to see the Matrons coming toward her.

FRANCES
I want to make a phone call...
She lunges at the Matrons, trying to get past them.

FRANCES
I have a right to make a phone call!

104 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COURTROOM - A ROW OF PHONE BOOTHS - 104

The Reporter is phoning in his story. The hallway is pandemonium.

REPORTER

'The kleig-lighted road to fame and fortune is strewn with heartbreak and despair. Today film star Frances Farmer, tarnished by alcohol and drugs' - am I going to fast for ya?

In the next phone booth we see Harry listening to the Reporter's spiel. He regards the confusion around him with calm eyes.

105 INT. HALLWAY AND COURTROOM DOORS - DAY

105

The doors burst open. The Matrons and Two Cops come out dragging Frances. Reporters and Photographers rush past her.

FRANCES

They're stealing my civil rights! Help me! I'm being kidnapped! Oh God, help me! Help me!

She suddenly sees the phone booths. She kicks a photographer in front of her - pushes one matron and punches the other in the jaw, sending her sprawling. Frances runs to the phones.

REPORTER

Oh my God, she's loose!

Frances throws herself at the door of the booth. The Reporter is delirious with joy: what a story!

REPORTER

She's attacking your co-respondent! Right here in the Court Building! Good God, this bitch is crazy! Somebody stop her! Ya got that?

Frances pounds at the door a few more times, then she's grabbed from behind by the cops and dragged toward the stairs. Harry follows but is turned back by a cop. He walks past, then stops at the phone booth.

REPORTER

With what must surely be the final act of madness, the curtain falls on Frances Farmer's once promising career. The crazed blonde who at 27...

Harry opens the door to his booth. The Reporter looks up at him.

REPORTER
Hold it a second, Bub...

Harry says not a word, but kicks the Reporter hard in the groin. The Reporter sags. In the confusion, no one has noticed a thing. Harry pulls the door shut and walks away.

106

106 INT. ANOTHER COURTROOM - DAY

Frances is sitting in a wooden chair. The venetian blinds over the tall windows are almost completely closed. The room is dim and terribly quiet. A WOMAN is murmuring something to a kindly looking JUDGE. Another MAN is standing beside her. Frances can't quite make out the words.

WOMAN
In her present excited state her mother is not able to control her. We don't feel she should be institutionalized, but the Meadowwood Convalescent Home is willing to take her, and we feel that this would be more appropriate.

JUDGE
A difficult decision, but, I'm sure the proper one.

WOMAN
Thank you.

He nods to the other Man who, together with the Woman, turn away from the bench. They cross to Lillian who sits at the table.

WOMAN
The Judge agrees to Meadowwood. You can have her.

Frances recognizes the Woman as Alma Styles. Lillian goes to Frances.

FRANCES
What?

She feels an arm slip around her shoulders and she stiffens. Her mother's face appears by hers.

LILLIAN
It's alright now, little sister, everything's going to be just fine.

FRANCES
Mama, what's....

LILLIAN
Shhh, shhh. You're not going to
jail, Frances. The Judge has put
you under my care. I'll see you
get the rest you need.

FRANCES
You're taking me home!

Two other WOMEN appear at either side of Frances and Lillian.
Lillian tenderly takes her daughter's face in her hands.

LILLIAN (smiling)
First things first, little sister.
Trust me.

She kisses Frances on the forehead. Frances looks at the
two Women. They are smiling understandingly at Lillian.
Frances looks a little alarmed.

107

107 OMITTED

108

108 EXT. ENTRANCE DRIVE - DAY - MEADOW WOOD

A wood-panelled station wagon turns the corner of a tree-lined road and heads up toward tall wrought-iron gates. On a white-washed wall are black letters: "MEADOW WOOD CONVALESCENT HOME". The station wagon, a similar sign on its door, pulls up. The gates swing slowly open, and it travels up a long tree-lined driveway. As it goes by, we see Frances sitting in the back seat between Lillian and one of the Women from the previous scene.

The car heads up toward a large Spanish-style building set back among some trees.

109

109 INT A SMALL OFFICE - DAY

Frances sits in front of a desk nervously smoking a cigarette. Lillian stands at a window looking out at a broad expanse of well-manicured lawn ending at a row of oaks in the distance.

LILLIAN
See, little sister, everything's just
beautiful here. The countryside, the
view...

Lillian smiles enthusiastically at Frances, who stares accusingly back: she's not falling for that.

An awkward moment of silence. Lillian fidgets, doesn't know what to say. She is rescued when the door opens and DR. SYMINGTON (early 30's, glasses, white coat and ingratiating smile) enters. He holds his right hand out to Frances.

MAN

Good afternoon, Miss Farmer. I'm Dr. Symington.

Frances stares at the proffered hand. Lillian steps in quickly and takes it.

LILLIAN

Hello, Doctor, I'm Lillian Farmer.

SYMINGTON

I'm very pleased to meet you, Mrs. Farmer. I'm sure we'll have more of a chance to talk later. Right now I think it's important that your daughter have a chance to settle in. Perhaps it would be best if you said your good-byes here.

He smiles pleasantly. Lillian is obviously very put off by the idea. She looks at Frances who stares unseeingly out the window.

LILLIAN

But you don't understand.. I have some important background that you should know about if....

SYMINGTON

I have no doubt, Mrs. Farmer. If you'll speak to the girl at the desk, she'll arrange an appointment.

He goes to the door and opens it. Lillian is momentarily at a loss, but she acquiesces. She bends down and tightly hugs Frances, who just sits there.

LILLIAN

I'll see you real soon, Frances.
You be a good girl.

She waits for a reply and then, getting none, starts out the door.

FRANCES

Mama!

Lillian turns back expectantly.

LILLIAN

Yes?

FRANCES
...I want you to take me home,
Mama.

Lillian looks to the Doctor, who nods sympathetically at her.

LILLIAN
Everything will be fine. The
doctor knows best.

She goes out and glances back in the room. The Doctor closes the door. He goes back to his desk, noticing Frances flicking ashes on the rug. As he sits, he moves an ashtray forward for her to use.

SYMINGTON
I find these initial meetings to be
much easier without the concerned
relatives in attendance.

FRANCES
Am I supposed to say 'thank you'?

SYMINGTON
Thanks are hardly necessary.

FRANCES
Aw, shucks, ma'am. T'weren't nothin'.

SYMINGTON
I'm glad to see you haven't lost your
sense of humor.

FRANCES
It ain't for lack of trying.

SYMINGTON
So it seems. May we be serious for
a moment?

FRANCES
Why, Doctor! We've only just met!

He reddens ever so slightly and looks away.

SYMINGTON
I feel I've known you for a long time...
you see, I've followed your career...
you're a fascinating case...I'm looking
forward to resolving your predicament.

Frances' face begins to set in hard planes.

FRANCES
Oh! Are you really?

SYMINGTON
Among persons such as yourself,
creative people under great stress,
erratic behavior is not at all uncommon
and certainly nothing to be ashamed of.
It's just that the anxieties which
fuel your talent can also generate
certain character disabilities which
...(can cripple your ability to
function)

He stops as Frances rises and leans over his desk:

FRANCES
Doctor, do you expect me, for one
moment, to believe you have greater
insight into my personality than I
do?

SYMINGTON
Please sit down...

FRANCES
You may discuss my predicament, Doctor.
You may discuss it with anyone you
like, but not with me. I'm not interested.
I can solve my problems without
recourse to a veterinarian.

SYMINGTON
I see.

FRANCES
Besides, I don't want to be what
you want to make me.

SYMINGTON
And what's that?

FRANCES
Normal. Average. (Dull, average, mediocre)

SYMINGTON
All right. Will you please take your
seat now? (smiles) Symington says.

FRANCES
...Did you really say that?

SYMINGTON
Just a little joke, Miss Farmer.

FRANCES
This whole fuckin' thing is a joke!

SYMINGTON
Stay calm, please.

FRANCES
No, you stay calm. But you're finding that difficult, aren't you? I'm not doing the expected thing, am I? I'm not sitting here in a while you quietly dissect my personality. Look, all I want is a little peace and quiet and I don't have to talk to you or anyone else about my god-damn "anxieties". You got that?

SYMINGTON
I'll have someone show you to your room.

FRANCES
Oh, that's good, very professional. In control. But the tiny beads of sweat on your upper lip give you away.

Symington stares at her. With a careful, almost scientific gesture he moves thumb and forefinger over his lip, then rubs the two fingers together. Yes, there is sweat.

SYMINGTON
You really should get some rest now. Nurse will meet you outside.

He pushes a button on his desk and reaches for a folder. Frances hasn't moved. She gazes at him evenly.

SYMINGTON
Is there something else?

FRANCES
You didn't say 'Symington says'.

His eyes are very calm now. He smiles at her patronizingly.

SYMINGTON
Symington says.

110 INT. FRANCES' ROOM - DAY

Small, white, spartan and rather pleasant. Lillian is standing by the bed, checking pillows and mattress as well as bedding.

The door opens and a tall, sullen-looking MATRON walks in. Lillian doesn't pay much attention to her.

LILLIAN
Not much on mitred corners, are
you?

MATRON
You Farmer?

LILLIAN
Why, yes.

MATRON
(walking toward her) Let's get that
coat off.

111

111 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Frances is walking with a NURSE. They pass a variety of
other patients, some of whom look old, some playing the
piano, some dancing, but few of whom seem overtly crazy.

FRANCES
So this is the madhouse....

The Nurse smiles confidentially at her.

NURSE
Honey...take my word for it. This
is a resort.

They get to the door and HEAR Lillian's protesting voice:

LILLIAN
You have no right! Stop it! What are
you doing?!

The enter and SEE the Matron struggling to get Lillian's
coat off of her. Lillian pleads with Frances.

LILLIAN
Tell them who I am! Tell this crazy
fool who I am!

FRANCES
Are you crazy? Unhand that woman!
That's Amelia Earhart!

Frances bursts out laughing. The Matron releases Lillian who is
also laughing, and comes for Frances.

112

112 INTO FRANCES' ROOM - DAY

CLOSE-UP OF A HYPODERMIC NEEDLE,

A little fluid squirts out the tip.

FRANCES (o.s.)

But what is it?

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL Frances strapped down on a white cot. The Nurse is holding the syringe while an ATTENDANT stands by.

NURSE

It's just vitamins.

This sounds reasonable. Frances relaxes somewhat.

NURSE

A, C, B-Complex, certain minerals...
now just relax... (inserts needle,
presses syringe, removes needle)
There, that wasn't so bad, was it?

INT. FRANCES' ROOM - LATER

She lies in bed, shaking. The covers are pulled up around her.
A nurse sits by her.

FRANCES

What is it? What've they given me?

NURSE

They've given you insulin- It throws
your body into shock.

FRANCES

Oh God.

NURSE

It's all right, dear. I'll be here.

Frances shakes more and more. The nurse puts a bar in her mouth.
Frances goes rigid. Her eyes widen, her back arches. With a loud
hoarse cry she starts to convulse. The SCREEN BEGINS TO FADE
into a bright white light. She is unconscious. The SCREEN IS
NOW BLANK.

113 EXT. COURTYARD - MEADOW WOOD - DAY

113

Frances sits beside Lillian on a bench. Other patients with
ground privileges wander aimlessly about.

There is an open carpet bag at Lillian's feet and, in her lap,
a bundle of letters and tlegrams that she's showing to Frances.
Frances seems restless.

LILLIAN
...and here's the one from Duluth.
A war widow with two children. She
works in a defense plant and she's
very concerned about you. I answered
her that she shouldn't let worry
over you affect her vital work; and
that you'd be back on the silver screen
in no time.

She hands it to Frances, who lets it drop beside her on
the bench.

LILLIAN
And here's one from nice Mr. Zeiss.
He says that...

FRANCES
Why are all these opened?

LILLIAN -
Well, they needed immediate answers,
Frances. It's good manners and good
sense. You shouldn't be bothering your-
self with these right now.

FRANCES
Then why did you bring them?

LILLIAN
It's your fan mail, Frances.

FRANCES
(looking off, under her breath)
You kill me, Mama.

LILLIAN
What? (Thank you!)

FRANCES
Go on....

Frances sighs. She looks for something to divert her attention.
She watches a leaf float down the fountain.

114 INT. SYMINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

Frances is alone in the room. The door is ajar. She's
standing over Symington's desk, holding up a vial of red
fluid to the light. After a moment, Symington enters holding
several folders. Frances' manner changes very subtly.

SYMINGTON
Sorry to keep you waiting, the staff
review ran over. Did you enjoy your
mother's visit last week?

FRANCES
Yes. It was very good to see her.

SYMINGTON
Really? Any problems?

Symington puts the folders in a drawer. All except Frances'.

FRANCES
Not at all. She brought me my fan mail.

(a performance)
I had no idea there were so many strangers concerned about me. But I guess that's the best thing about working in the movies. You make so many friends. I want to go back and prove to them that the faith they put in me wasn't a mistake.

SYMINGTON
You're telling me you feel guilty.

FRANCES (slightly edgy)
No...What I mean is...I'm just very excited by the prospect of getting on with my life, that's all. .

SYMINGTON
Do you really believe your mother's trying to kill you? . . .

FRANCES (laughing)
What?

SYMINGTON
She told me you said, "Mama, you want to kill me."

FRANCES
I never said...Oh look. That's just a figure of speech. She said something funny and I said...

SYMINGTON
And you accused her of tampering with your mail.

FRANCES
Oh for Christ's sake.....I'm sorry. She misunderstood, that's all.

SYMINGTON
But you tell me you had a pleasant visit and your mother says you were sullen and uncommunicative. Whom do you think I should believe?

FRANCES
Doctor, I hate to break this to
you but my mother is a little batty.

SYMINGTON
Frances, you're still filled with
anxiety. You feel guilty and hostile
toward your family and friends. Con-
sequently, I didn't recommend your
release at the staff review.

FRANCES
You what?

SYMINGTON
Mental illness is an elusive thing,
and though I'm pleased you're feeling
more....capable, it's perhaps unrealistic
to expect you to be completely cured
after so short a time. Don't you agree?

Frances stares at him. Stunned. Horrified.

SYMINGTON (smiling)
I'm sure you'll see it my way in the
end.

FRANCES
Dr. Symington, how big is your dick?

SYMINGTON
Huh?

FRANCES
'Cause if it's long enough, which I
doubt, why don't you wrap it around
and fuck yourself in the ass!

Symington smiles patronizingly.

FRANCES
I want outa here, you understand? I'm
ready to get out! So you go back there...
you go back and you tell them to let me
out!

SYMINGTON (calmly)
Frances, I'm warning you....

FRANCES
No, I'm warning you! You and the
cops and the lawyers and the judges
and the reporters and the goddamn
executives. Who do you think you
are, God? You bubble around with
your folders... (she knocks her folder
to the floor)...and your pencils...
(she grabs some pencils and throws
them at him)...and your god-damn buttons...
(she pounds on the inter-com: a voice
says, 'Yes, Doctor?')... all your
badges of authority! But you have no
authority! You're nothing! You're a zero!

She tears open the door. Two huge ORDERLIES are waiting.
Frances tries to barrel past, but they easily restrain her.

ORDERLY

Doc?

Symington sits forward, his hands smoothing his hair.

Frances smiles sarcastically at him:

FRANCES

Symington says....

SYMINGTON (tonelessly)

Sedate her.

They haul her away.

115 EXT. MEADOW WOOD CONVALESCENT HOME - DAY

115

A few PATIENTS stroll about, visiting with relatives. Frances
lies on a chaise lounge. She's wearing a robe and dark glasses,
a big hat, and she seems to be sleeping. THE CAMERA CLOSES IN.
Her hair is a mess, her skin splotchy. And something is
moving: her hand...one finger on one hand is moving in agitated
little bursts. We realize she is not sleeping at all....

From the background we see a man being shown directions to
Frances by an attendant. He approaches.

MAN (o.s.)

Hi there. Here - I brought you
some candy.

Frances looks to one side and sees him. It's Harry. She frowns.
She takes off her glasses and runs her fingers nervously
through her hair.

FRANCES

Oh my God, I look awful.

HARRY (friendly)
You have looked a whole lot better.

FRANCES
They're doing stuff to me, Harry. Can you see it? You feel it? They're giving me stuff and they're using it to put thoughts in my head. You understand? They're trying to re-arrange what's in my head, they're trying to drive me crazy! Oh Harry!

Harry looks around warily.

FRANCES
I can't stay here anymore, you understand? I can't, I can't. I gotta get home. I gotta get somewhere else, anywhere, okay?

HARRY
How about a walk in the woods? Come on.

He helps her up. They walk away. A White-coated ATTENDANT approaches as they walk.

ATTENDANT
Oh, Miss Farmer! Time for your bath, Miss Farmer!

HARRY
(whispering) Listen: to the left. Straight through the trees and over the wall to your left. My car is there.

The Attendant reaches them.

ATTENDANT
It's time for your bath!

FRANCES
Oh good. I love my baths. Best thing here, Harry. The baths.

Frances starts to move off with the Attendant. For an instant Harry - and we - wonder if she really is crazy. She gets behind the attendant.

HARRY
Frances! Did you hear what I said?
She turns, smiles sweetly; madly.

FRANCES
Of course, Harry.

The Attendant is between her and Harry.

ATTENDANT

Sorry Sir, this is off limits.

We SEE her face turn dark. She suddenly SHOVES THE ATTENDANT toward Harry. She runs. The Attendant staggers toward Harry who knocks him down with two punches. ANOTHER ATTENDANT runs up. Harry whips out an icepick and brandishes it at them:

HARRY

You want crazy? I'll show you crazy!

Harry feigns a lunge at them. They retreat. Harry runs after Frances.

117 EXT. HILLSIDE - DAY

117

Frances and Harry crash over the hill and come to a high wall.

Harry lifts Frances up by the waist and she grabs the top of the wall, hauling herself up. Harry helps push her over, then climbs up and over the wall, too. We SEE, over the wall, Harry's car waiting on a dirt road. Harry and Frances jump down as

The Two Attendants come running over the hill and up to the wall. One tries to climb over as the other fumbles for the key to the gate. The first looks over to see...

Harry and Frances drive off through a field of sheep.

The first attendant gives up, muttering "Oh shit" and drops back to the ground with the second attendant.

118 INT. HARRY'S CAR - DAY

118

Harry, eyes bleary and shoulder hunched, tries to concentrate on the road ahead. The RADIO DRONES quietly, a lazy saxophone ballad. After a while, there's movement in the back seat and Frances sits up. She yawns and stretches as Harry watches her in the mirror.

HARRY

Morning, gorgeous.

FRANCES (yawning)

That sure looks like fun...

(leaning over front seat)

You know how long it's been since I was behind the wheel?

HARRY

Forget it, Tiger. You're not driving.

FRANCES
Have I told you how mean you're
turning, York?.....Where are we
going mean man?

HARRY
Idaho. I've got friends there with
a ranch. Put you on a horse.

FRANCES
I should've known...

HARRY
What?

FRANCES
This is another one of your schemes to
get me off alone somewhere.

HARRY
That's right.

FRANCES (smiling)
Take advantage of me.

Harry laughs.

HARRY
Yeah. I like to kidnap all my dates.
Hey I got some clothes for you in
back. Hope they fit.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE/INT. HARRY'S CAR - LATER

They pass a poster: "BUY WAR BONDS!" Frances stares at it.

FRANCES
I don't think I'd be much good in
a war...

HARRY
Whattaya think you're in now?

FRANCES (sleepily)
Not a war exactly. It's more a...
a misapprehension maybe...

HARRY
Huh?

FRANCES
A misunderstanding, people taking the
wrong meaning from things. I wasn't de-
claring war, Harry. I was just saying my
prayers.

Harry looks at her quizzically.

HARRY

Who to?

Beat.

FRANCES

Harry, I have to go home. I have to talk to Mama.

HARRY

You don't know what you're saying. Who do you think put you into the flip house to begin with? Your mother thinks you're crazy and she'll keep on thinking it as long as it suits her.

FRANCES

No, she just didn't want me going to jail, that's all.

HARRY

Yeah? She's a shark, Frances. She's sicker than you. I'm not taking you there, and that's that!

She rubs his neck and his attitude seems to soften. She looks at him fondly, thoughtfully.

FRANCES

You know something, Harry? Aside from meanness, you're almost perfect. There's only one other thing wrong with you.

HARRY

What's that?

FRANCES

You can't drink.

HARRY

I'll drink you under the table.

119

119 EXT. ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

The car is parked beside a few other cars.

120

120 INT. ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

Frances and Harry sit at a table cluttered with empty glasses. The JUKEBOX PLAYS, a few COUPLES dance. Frances is gulping down a tall scotch.

FRANCES

Ohhh, that's lousy Scotch!

HARRY

Hey! Another shot for the lady and a double for me!

FRANCES

What a man!

HARRY

Hey, you're a good quarter-horse, kid, but you can't go a route of ground.

FRANCES

To quarter-horses.

HARRY

No. To thoroughbreds.

He knocks back his drink.

THE JUKEBOX

A hand puts a nickel in, and we HEAR Bing Crosby singing "Love Is So Terrific". We PAN across the dance floor, where Harry and Frances are dancing.

BING'S VOICE

Love is so terrific
Such a funny feeling
Makes you want to cuddle
And coo....

Frances squeals with delight when she hears the song. She holds Harry forcefully and starts to lead him around the floor. Harry starts to sing along:

BING & HARRY

Makes you sentimental,
Makes you kinda gentle
Ouch! (Frances pinches Harry)
Terrific thing.

Around them an infection is spreading: all the women are leading their men. For an instant it is magical, liberating...she leans her head against his shoulder.

FRANCES

Why are you always leaving me, Harry?

HARRY

I'm not leaving, I'm just dancing backwards.

FRANCES

You should stick around sometimes.
Take care of me.

HARRY

Look, Frances, I'm only gonna ask this
one time. I mean it. I swear after
this, I'll never ask again: Will you
marry me?

FRANCES (after a long pause)

I know a thing or two about
marriage. You...you understand me more
than any-one, Harry...maybe even more
than Mama. But....you're too important
to me. I'd fail you. I don't know how
or why, but I would. And that's a chance
I just can't take. Do you understand?

HARRY

Well...I'll act like I do until I do.

They are silent for a moment.

HARRY

There's just one more thing.

FRANCES

What's that?

HARRY

Will you marry me?

She laughs happily. He joins her, but his seems a little
forced. She leans her head on his shoulder and holds him
tight. They dance....

121 EXT. ROADHOUSE - NIGHT

121

Frances holds Harry by the arm as they half-dance, half-
stumble to the car. Harry's still singing.

HARRY

Makes the winter turn to spring...

Frances fishes the keys from Harry's pocket and helps him in
the passenger door. She gets in the driver's side, starts the
car.

HARRY

Makes you melt your collar
Makes you want to holler...

Frances leans over and kisses Harry, then drops the clutch and
starts off.

HARRY
Love is so terrific...

The car, weaving a little, moves away from us, heading up a road marked: "Portland-Seattle".

HARRY (v.o.)
Ouch! Terrific thing!

122

122 EXT. FARMER HOUSE - SEATTLE - DAY

Harry's car, Frances at the wheel, drives up and stops.
Harry shakes his head.

HARRY
It's not too late to keep going up to Vancouver. Be the smartest thing.

FRANCES
Thanks, Harry, but...I can't explain it. She's my mother. She's just... I can't give up on her that easy.

HARRY
You give up on her?

FRANCES
Yeah. It's just...something I gotta do, I guess.

HARRY (smiling warmly)
Frances, you're crazy.

FRANCES
I know. Don't tell anyone.

He laughs. We SEE Lillian come out onto the porch with uncharacteristic trepidation.

HARRY
Anyway...if you need me...

FRANCES
I got your number, Mister Man.

She kisses him, and walks toward the house. Harry waits a moment before he drives off. As Frances reaches the top step, Lillian suddenly opens her arms:

LILLIAN
Welcome home, little sister.

123 INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

Frances and Lillian enter. On the sofa sits Alma Styles.
Alma and Lillian seem slightly furtive. Caught in the act.

FRANCES

Well, who have we here...?

LILLIAN

Frances, you remember my lawyer,
Alma Styles?

ALMA

Hello, Frances. You seem to be
having quite a time of it.

LILLIAN

I called Alma because I think
we'll need...some legal advice.

ALMA

Frances, the doctors at Meadow Wood
have petitioned the court for your
return. Your mother has asked me to
intervene so you can stay here.

LILLIAN

I swear I didn't know what they were
doing to you at that place. I wouldn't
have let them hurt you.

FRANCES

It's okay, Mama. It's okay.

ALMA

You realize, of course, your mother is
now your legal guardian. In the eyes of
the law, you no longer have any rights
as an adult. You're going to have to
hold your tongue and be selective about
whom you mix with. That man who drove
you here, for instance -

FRANCES

You leave him out of this!

LILLIAN

Shhhh.....

ALMA

You're going to have to be very very
careful, Frances.

124 EXT. END OF FRANCES' STREET - EXT. HARRY'S CAR

124

Harry pulls up at a stop sign. He rubs his forehead wearily as a car crosses the intersection. It stops dead in front of him. Another car pulls up along side. Another behind. Harry thinks about this. His hand slides down slowly under the seat. We SEE the handle of his ice pick. Harry turns to smile at the MAN in the next car. The Man flashes an FBI badge, points a revolver:

FBI MAN (smiling)

How ya doin', Al?

HARRY

You got the wrong guy. Name's Slocum.

FBI MAN

No, it ain't. And it ain't Harry York, neither

HARRY

Look, I'm tellin' you...

The FBI Man pulls the hammer back on the revolver. ANOTHER MAN opens the passenger door.

FBI MAN

I'd give you till ten, Al, but we ain't got the time.

125 OMITTED

125

126 INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

126

Frances sits at the piano playing Mozart. Lillian is lounging on the couch, leafing happily through her scrapbook.

LILLIAN

Frances, play 'Flow Gently Sweet Afton'.

Frances' brows mesh.

FRANCES

Oh Mama, I'm so...tired of that song.

LILLIAN

Please. I want you to. It would make me so happy.

Frances sighs and begins to play it. Lillian scrunches down and begins to hum along.

LILLIAN

It's just a flow gently sweet Afton day. Life has been so good to me. Why, I have just about everything one could wish for.

She smiles warmly at Frances. Frances abruptly stops playing.

LILLIAN

What's wrong?

FRANCES

Nothing. I think I'll just go out for awhile.

LILLIAN

Where are you going?

FRANCES

For a walk, Mama. Just a walk.

She gets up and Lillian rouses herself.

LILLIAN

How long will you be?

FRANCES

Not long.

Frances goes down the hall for her coat. Lillian follows part way.

LILLIAN (smiling)

I'll have lunch ready by one.

FRANCES

I'll be back.

LILLIAN

At one. Promise?

FRANCES

Sure.

Frances returns wearing the coat. Lillian half-blocking her path.

LILLIAN

Say you promise.

FRANCES

I promise I'll I promise, Mama.

Lillian nods, moves aside. As Frances heads out the door:

LILLIAN
You know, the surest way to lose an
appetite is to drink, little sister.

FRANCES
Yes, Mama.

LILLIAN
I don't want you drinking, Frances.

FRANCES
(from down the sidewalk) Yes, Mama.

Lillian enters and re-establishes herself on the couch with a peculiar look on her face. She begins to him "Flow Gently Sweet Afton".

127

127 INT. FLEA BAG HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

DERELICTS sleep on broken couches and armchairs. In a corner by a pay phone Ernest Farmer sits at a rickety desk piled high with briefs. Frances sits across from him. They've been talking.

FRANCES
So what do you think?

ERNEST
I don't know, Honey. Your mother has such big plans for you..... What you have to understand, Francie, is that she...well...she wanted so much for herself too, and for me, and time I ever saw her happy was if her name was in the papers....but she could have been...if times were different she could have been a politician or... I don't know.

FRANCES
But Dad, I'm asking about me. What do you think I should do?

ERNEST
Well, Francie, sometimes you get your heart set on something and you really go after it but, after you get your hands on it, it just doesn't look the same. Then you have to be real smart to know if you should hold onto it because it's all you've got...or just let it go. This is the way of things, but I guess you already know that.

FRANCES
Dad...whatever I decide, will it
be okay with you?

ERNEST

Always.

Frances rises from her chair, looking around the room to hide
her tears. Ernest rises too.

ERNEST
I'm sorry, I...I don't have a desk
in my room, and...(it's not a proper
office) -

FRANCES
I don't care, Dad. I love you.

ERNEST
I love you, too, Francie.

They hug each other for a long moment, then Frances slowly
leaves. Ernest looks sadly after her, then follows her down-
stairs.

128

128 EXT. FLEA BAG HOTEL - DAY

Frances exits and starts across the road. Ernest comes to the
window to watch her leave. It has been raining and the water
on the glass distorts his view.

129 INT. FARMER HOUSE - FRANCES' ROOM - DAY

Lillian is straightening up Frances' room, rearranging things
to suit herself. She hears the door slam downstairs. She
tacks a sign on Frances' door and comes to the top of the
stairs.

129

FRANCES (o.s.)

I'm back, Mama.

LILLIAN
Oh Frances, do I have news for you!
Guess who -

FRANCES
(appearing at stair bottom)
Wait, Mama, wait. I have something
to tell you. I've decided...well...
I'm not going back to Hollywood.
I thought that's what I wanted, and
I went after it with all my heart, the
way you taught me, Mama, and it near-
ly killed me. So now...now it's over.
(MORE)

FRANCES

(continued) I want a different kind of life, something...simple. I want to live someplace quiet and peaceful...in the country maybe, and I'll have dogs and cats and plant a garden. I feel so light suddenly, so clear for the first time in....It's going to be okay, Mama, I know it. And I love you very much.

She goes to hug her mother, but Lillian has changed. Frances' news has chilled her.

LILLIAN

Have you gone crazy? They want you back! Don't you understand what's happened? Your agent called today! He's sending the scripts. He wants to fly up here in a week with the publicity people! Frances, you can't do this to your fans! Why they've stuck by you all through this nightmare. You can't turn your back on them now! They love you!

FRANCES

Haven't you heard what I said?

LILLIAN (backing Frances down the stairs) I told him to come up! I told him you'd show them all that there's nothing wrong with you any more, that you're completely cured!

FRANCES

I'm not cured. I was never sick! They had no business putting me in there! My only responsibility is to myself now!

LILLIAN

You...you selfish, selfish child. At least you can talk to him, hear what he has to say.

FRANCES

No!

LILLIAN

And now you're throwing everything away? Is that it? You had everything. Beauty, a brilliant career, a wonderful husband. You were a movie star!

FRANCES

Mama, shut up!

LILLIAN

And now you're throwing it away? You're gonna be a nobody! A nobody! Do you know what it's like to be a nobody your whole life?!!

FRANCES

You'd do it, wouldn't you? You'd send me back. You would.

Frances starts down the hall toward the front door.

LILLIAN

Where are you going? (Lillian races in front of her and blocks her way at the door) You're not going anywhere!

FRANCES

Yes I am. You get out of my way, old woman!

Lillian slaps Frances. They wrestle. Frances pushes Lillian back onto the stairs.

FRANCES

Don't you try to stop me. Don't you dare!

Frances shakes Lillian then holds her tightly by the neck.

FRANCES

If you follow me, Mama, I swear I'll fucking kill you!

Frances storms out. Lillian sits heavily on the stairs, massaging her neck.

LILLIAN

That's it. You've done it now.
You've done it now.

130 INT. LARGE OFFICE - DAY

130

Dark. Blinds drawn. We hear the soft coo of Lillian's voice. The CAMERA SHIFTS gradually onto her earnest face.

LILLIAN

All my life I've tried to live up to my parents' example. To have the independence of mind and spirit that made this

(MORE)

LILLIAN

(continued) country great. I taught that to Frances: Speak out. Aspire. Make something of yourself, something (to be proud of) -

DR. DOYLE

Yes, yes, Mrs. Farmer.

ALMA STYLES

Frances has always been a battleground, Lillian.

DR. DOYLE, a psychiatrist, and the others are seated with Judge Hillier around a table.

DOYLE

The point is - it's your opinion that Frances is getting steadily worse?

LILLIAN

Yes.

Doyle fills in a line on the printed form before him.

DOYLE

And you feel you're unable to control her any longer?

LILLIAN

No....

ALMA

Remember, dear, you did sustain bodily harm.

DOYLE

And the only course open to you is to commit your daughter for a period of time to a mental institution?

LILLIAN

Well, Alma told me that...

Alma looks coolly at Lillian.

LILLIAN

Yes.

Judge Hillier nods slightly, approvingly toward Alma.

DOYLE
(closing his folder) I believe
that's all I need to know about
Miss Frances Farmer.

HILLIER
I think in all future documents
she should be referred to as
Mrs. R. H. Richardson.

LILLIAN
Her married name?

HILLIER
Yes. It's less recognizable. I'm
sure you'd prefer to keep un-
pleasant publicity to a minimum.

LILLIAN
Oh yes.

HILLIER
Now. Can you tell us where we might
find Frances?

130A INT. BARE ROOM - DAY

130A

Frances sitting in a chair, in a strait jacket. She sits,
looks around, rises, walks around, sits down again.

131 INT. COURTROOM - DAY

131

Hillier behind the bench. Doyle sits at a table with Alma
Styles seated across at the other table. A COURT REPORTER
taps out notes in an odd, jerky style. This scene to INTERCUT
with shots of FRANCES IN STRAIT JACKET where appropriate.

DOYLE
...patient has also given away all of
her earnings without regard for her own
welfare. Her violent responses have recent-
ly included aggression against her mother,
and her paranoid reactions seem uncontrollable.
In view of the deep-seated failure to respond
satisfactorily to insulin shock, it is my
opinion she may ultimately require per-
manent institutional care.

HILLIER
Counsellor, as Guardian ad litem for
Mrs. Richardson, do you waive jury
trial?

ALMA

Yes, your honor.

She signs a paper which is taken to Hillier.

HILLIER

Having heard the testimony of a legally qualified and reputable physician...and being further satisfied of the truth of all matters set forth in the certificates of said physician, I do hereby order that the said Mrs. R. H. Richardson, an insane person, be confined to the Western State Hospital for the Insane at Steilacoom.

He bangs his gavel.

HILLIER

So ordered! Are the gentlemen from Steilacoom present?

Two ORDERLIES rise.

132 EXT. STEILACOOM - DAY

132

Huge, dark-red brick buildings with barred windows, loom out of the fog and trees. A van pulls up to the front entrance. Two MEN get out, open the back doors and assist Frances out. She is strapped into a strait-jacket. She yells and struggles violently but a piercing SCREAM stops her. She looks up at the building.

From a top floor window, a thin, white hand protrudes from the bars and waves "hello".

133 INT. STEILACOOM HALLWAY - DAY

133

Frances is dragged kicking and screaming down the shiny linoleum-covered hallway. There are many patients here, talking to imaginary birds, laughing at unheard jokes. A few of them notice Frances, most do not. The two Orderlies arrive at a door and throw it open. A bare 6' x 10' room is revealed with a narrow cot and no windows. Frances is pushed inside and the door locks shut with a resounding click.

134 INT. TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

134

A MEDICAL STUDENT wheels a small electrical machine up to a table. On the table Frances is securely strapped down. TWO DOCTORS grease Frances' temples and put two metal electrodes on them. The electrodes are connected to the machine.

DOCTOR #1
What's she getting, anyway?

DOCTOR #2
Standard series to start.

DOCTOR #1
Fifteen?

Doctor #2 nods and jams a rubber bar into Frances' mouth. The Medical Student steps forward.

STUDENT
Can I push the button on this one?

Doctor #1 shoots a silent query to Doctor #2.

DOCTOR #2
Sure.

The Medical Student pushes the button with great gravity. Frances' body immediately begins to convulse. It seems as if it will never stop.

135 INT. STEILACOOM - A WOMEN'S WARD - DAY

135

Beds three inches apart. Women patients lie on them in varying stages of madness and decay. Some are bound to their beds with coarse cloth strips. One bed is empty, the bonds chewed through. We find Frances sitting on the floor staring at a hissing radiator. Her lips are caked with blood. Her eyes are glazed. She is dreaming. Or remembering....

DISSOLVE TO:

136 FRANCES MEMORY

136

Frances is helping her mother put dinner on the table - Frances is acting in Uncle Vanya - Frances is playing the piano - Frances and Harry are dancing - Frances watches rose petals strewn on a bed.

DISSOLVE TO:

137 INT. STEILACOOM - THE HYDRO-THERAPY ROOM - DAY

137

Dr. Doyle ushers a patient and two ATTENDANTS into a sparse tiled room. In the center are three steel baths with ham-mocks suspended above them. The Attendants help the patient into a bath and strap her in, then put a tarp over the tub. Frances is already in a tub, covered with a tarp. She notices Dr. Doyle.

FRANCES
Doctor...ummm...I don't think these
treatments are helping me. In fact,
I think they're doing more harm than
good. Don't you think the best thing
would be if I could just go home?

DOYLE
I know you believe that.

FRANCES
...Don't you?

DOYLE
I'm afraid not. You see, we observe
things that you're unaware of: signs,
indicators. Your problem cuts very
deep, Frances, and we have to get at
that deeper stuff so that when you do
get out, you'll really feel secure.
Does that make sense?

FRANCES
No. Cut the bullshit, Doctor. I know
better.

DOYLE
Listen to yourself, Frances. The
resistance, the anger in your voice.

FRANCES
Doctor, tell me, what do I have to do
to get out of here?

DOYLE
Be patient, that's all. Take an interest
in your treatment and don't dwell on
your resentments. You'll be yourself
again, I assure you.

FRANCES
...I see.

DOYLE
We'll talk more about this. I'll see
you later.

FRANCES
Doctor - if I'm not myself now, just
who do you think I am?

The Doctor smiles sympathetically.

DOYLE
We'll talk.

He leaves. The patient in the tub next to Frances babbles at her:

PATIENT

I know who I am.

Frances glares at her.

138 INT. STEILACOOM - DINING HALL - DAY

138

Everyone is eating. A parade of lunatics. The edge of incipient violence is palpable. Frances eats listlessly. Others are playing with their food, devouring it ravenously, fondling each other. Suddenly a call starts up at one end of the hall. Other voices join in. At first we don't understand it, but gradually the words become clear:

CHANT

Come and get it! Come and get it!
Come and get it!

The whole hall joins in. The Nurses make no effort to stop it. Others at Frances' table smile at her, try to push her to her feet. When they succeed the hall breaks into applause and a new chaotic chant:

CHANT

We want Frances! We want Frances!

The chant is quickly silenced by hushing sounds. Everyone is watching Frances. She limbs up on the table. Her eyes are glazed. This feels like some kind of automatic behavior. She takes an exabberated posture and speaks in almost a whisper:

FRANCES

Come and get it...

The hall breaks into riotous applause, catcalls, stomping.

Frances climbs down from her bench. That was the entire performance.

139 EXT. STEILACOOM - NIGHT

139

Two dark FIGURES move stealthily along the shadow of the main building. A little ways ahead, a door opens, sending a shaft of light across the ground. The two Men duck back into the shadows. Five young SOLDIERS EXIT, paying off and waving goodbye to one of the ORDERLIES. The door closes. They head off down the road laughing and joking together.

The two Men emerge from the shadows and approach the door. They try the handle. It opens. The first one in is HARRY, followed by the other Man carrying a rolled-up bundle.

140 INT. STEILACOOM - NIGHT

140

We SEE Harry and the other Man walking quickly down a dim hallway. They come to a large door with a small barred window. The Man puts on a white lab coat and takes a key out to unlock the door. He does - they enter. We HEAR the door lock behind them.

141 INT. WARD - NIGHT

141

Just inside the door the Doctor in the lab coat flicks on a flashlight and they walk down through the room. The beam of light sweeps over women PATIENTS in their cots, crammed side-by-side. Some are asleep, others stare blankly at the ceiling. A few smile invitingly at the two Men, whispering obscenities. The light falls on Frances. Harry goes to her, putting his arms around her. She is very heavily sedated. Tears spring to Harry's eyes. Her hands and feet are tied.

HARRY (whispering as he
unties one of her arms)
Frances! Frances!

FRANCES
Wh..? (she barely mumbles)

HARRY
Frances, it's me, Harry.

FRANCES
(mumbles)

DOCTOR
Watch out, Harry. Let me look her over.

HARRY
Oh God! Let's get her out of here
tonight, right now! Let's take her
with us!

DOCTOR
The hearing's tomorrow. If she gets
out legally, they can't come after
her.

HARRY
Look at her! She'll never pass that
test tomorrow...

DOCTOR
I'm taking care of that, Harry. Just
hold her.

He pulls out and prepares a hypodermic needle. Harry glares at him but puts a hand over Frances' mouth. The Doctor pushes up her sleeve. Her arm is covered with sores.

DOCTOR
(about the hypo) Reserpine. I guarantee you this'll clear her head. She'll wake up feeling smart and sail right through the hearing.

The Doctor injects her. Frances starts to struggle and moan.

DOCTOR
Shut her up!

The Doctor withdraws the hypo and massages her arm.

HARRY
You'll be okay, honey. He's just given you something to make you think, so that tomorrow you can tell them what they want to hear, okay? Tell 'em you were crazy as a loon and they cured you and you're grateful.

DOCTOR
This stuff stakes pretty quick. Let's go.

HARRY
Frances, remember tomorrow. Remember what I told you. What're you gonna tell them? Come on.

FRANCES (groggily)
'M grateful.

HARRY
That's right.

WOMAN IN WARD
Take me!!

ANOTHER WOMAN
Take me!! I'm grateful!

DOCTOR
Harry!

HARRY
I gotta go now.

FRANCES
Harry!

The men leave with the women in the ward calling after them. Frances starts to untie her other hand and feet.

142 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The two Men come out and the Doctor quickly locks the door.

DOCTOR

We're all square now, Harry. Right?

HARRY

All square, Doc.

DOCTOR

Good. Because I don't want to see you again.

He starts to walk away. Frances' face appears at the tiny barred window. We can just see her.

FRANCES

Harry.

HARRY

I love you, Frances.

He walks away, too.

143 INT. WARD - NIGHT

Frances turns to face the women on their cots. Collects herself. Practices tomorrow's speech. (Dialogue in ward different - ad-libbed - from speech in hearing room. Ward speech includes dialogue with talky-lady ending in: "I was sick but now I'm normal. I'm normal. But you're all fucking crazy!")

FRANCES

I realize now that I was a very sick woman.

WOMEN IN WARD

Sick! She's sick!

FRANCES

I couldn't relate to others in a normal way.

WOMEN

Normal, she's not normal.

FRANCES

And I was not taking responsibility for my actions.

143AA

143AA INT HEARING ROOM - DAY

We SEE THREE DOCTORS and Dr. Doyle sitting behind a table.
Listening intently.

FRANCES

But now, thanks to your treatment,
I feel ready to face myself, -

143BB

143BB INT. WARD - NIGHT

The patients listening intently. One talks back to her.

FRANCES

- ready to resume the career which
I so singlehandedly shattered. I only
hope...I hope -

143CC

143CC INT. HEARING ROOM - DAY

FRANCES

...that one day I can make you all
proud of me. Thank you. Thank you
so much.

The doctors blink, exchange looks of subdued astonishment.

143DD

143DD INT. HEARING ROOM - LATER

Dr. Doyle has called a press conference. He reads a
statement.

DOYLE

I think this case demonstrates just
how successfully anti-social behavior
can be modified. Not long ago Miss
Farmer seemed totally unresponsive
and today she is being returned to
her family completely cured. I believe
this is a significant victory for
the mental hygiene movement in the
state of Washington.

143A

143A EXT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

The vegetable garden is overgrown, the paint peeling. The
house is in disrepair, but we can tell from the freshly-mowed
lawn that some effort has recently been made...

A van pulls up. Frances gets out. She walks into the yard
and looks around, heaves a sigh. Then Christmas lights spring
on over the porch. Lillian comes out grinning broadly,
followed by Alma Styles (or reporters). Frances blanches.

144 INT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

144

Frances sits on the couch next to Lillian. Grouped around them are several REPORTERS. Lillian is handing out dried fruit and pouring tea while answering their questions. Frances is uncomfortable.

LILLIAN

Frances gave me this box down in Hollywood. I filled it with my own dried fruit. Will you pass it, Herb?

HERB

Sure. Thanks.

REPORTER

Are you planning to go back to Hollywood, Miss Farmer?

LILLIAN

We haven't decided exactly what we're going to do.

FRANCES

No. No, it all depends on what offers I get.

HERB

Who did your hair, Frances?

She touches it shyly. It's swept up in a continental style.

FRANCES

Well, I like to try different styles. Sometimes if you're old-fashioned enough, you find you're modern. Right, Mama?

Lillian laughs. "Oh that's right."

REPORTER

What do you think of all this, Mrs. Farmer?

LILLIAN

It's a miracle. Just a miracle.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Frances, could you get a little closer to your mother?

He flashes a picture.

145 EXT. FARMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The porch light goes out. Shadows pass over the curtained windows. Across the street a mtch flares. Harry is leaning against a tree. He lights a cigarette and settles back to wait.

145A

145A INT. FARMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lillian is fussing with the fire in the fireplace. Frances is clearing dinner dishes from the table.

LILLIAN

Oh, baby, don't both with that.
I'll do it.

FRANCES

I'll just stack them, Ma. I'll do them tomorrow.

Lillian smiles warmly at her.

Frances takes the tray with dishes and napkins into the kitchen. She puts the dishes down, starts to fold the napkins. She finds one with a stain on it and pockets it.

INT. FARMER HOUSE - ON THE STAIRS - LATER

LILLIAN

You know, little sister, I never resent you for refusing to see me in the hospital. I knew you had to manage on your own before you could come back.

FRANCES (reaching her door)

Thank you for understanding, Mama.

LILLIAN

I want you to get a good rest.

FRANCES

I will. I promise.

LILLIAN

Good night, dear.

Lillian waits until Frances has shut her door before walking to her room.

146 EXT. FARMER HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door opens and Frances, suitcase in hand, slips out onto the porch. She eases the door shut behind her, tiptoes down the steps and, without looking back, starts down the road.

146A

146A EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Frances rounds the corner, then see him: Harry, standing by his car, smiling.

They embrace. She smiles. They hug for a long time. He holds her away from him so he can look at her. Then he takes her suitcase and goes to the car, opening the door for her. She gets in. He goes to the driver's side, puts the suitcase inside, gets in and they drive off.

146B

146B INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Harry and Frances lie in bed together. Motionless.

HARRY

It doesn't matter.

FRANCES

I'm sorry, Harry.

HARRY

Look. I don't care about what's happened before. I just want you to stay with me this time. Okay?

Frances reaches for a cigarette.

FRANCES

I can't, Harry.

HARRY

Why? You gamble with every other part of your life, why don't you gamble with me, once?

FRANCES

Because I'd lose.

HARRY

You don't know that...what are you afraid of anyway?

FRANCES

I'm not afraid of anything. It's just that place nearly killed me, Harry. There were so many people in there.

(MORE)

FRANCES

(continued) Every time I turned around someone was watching, looking over my shoulder, touching, pressing against me, grabbing, sticking things in me. When I feel someone touch me now - my skin starts to crawl. ...I just have to be by myself for awhile.

HARRY

You're always going off by yourself. It never works out.

FRANCES

I just need some time.

HARRY

No. This is it. This is all the time there is. I can't keep going through this with you, Frances. It's too hard. Either stay with me or...

FRANCES

What?

There's a long pause. Frances hugs Harry.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Harry gets up and starts to dress. Frances remains motionless; asleep. Harry turns off the light, pulls up the covers on Frances and gets his hat and coat. He stands a moment in the open doorway. It's raining lightly outside. Then he leaves.

Frances lies still. An eye opens, then closes.

147 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

147

Barren desert. The middle of nowhere. A lone male HITCHHIKER, poor, stands at a crossroads. A truck coming the wrong direction for him, raises dust along the highway. It slows, stops, and lets Frances out. She is now dressed in jeans and a workshirt. She has a heavy tan.

She glances across at the Hitchhiker and nods casually. He responds in kind. A relaxed silence follows. Two strangers passing. His voice, when he speaks, is gentle, calm.

HITCHHIKER

Pretty morning.

FRANCES

It's always beautiful this time.

HITCHHIKER

No people.

FRANCES

Yes.

Beat.

HITCHHIKER

Where you goin'?

FRANCES

Wherever...

HITCHHIKER

Yeah, I know what that's like...
Where ya been?

FRANCES

Down south of here. Pickin' fruit.

She stops. She sees now that the car heading up the road is a cop car. She averts her face...then tries to hide her gesture.

HITCHHIKER

What's the matter?

Frances sighs as the cop car speeds away.

HITCHHIKER

They looking for you?

She's uncertain whether to trust him. Takes the plunge.

FRANCES

Yeah.

HITCHHIKER

What'd you do?

FRANCES (laughing)

You know, I've never been able to figure that out.

He laughs. He takes a small flask out of his pockets and offers it, no strings:

HITCHHIKER

I've got a little whiskey here,
warm you up.

She smiles, truly grateful and comes across the road.

FRANCES

Thank you.

150.
She sees a ball of dust nearing...a car coming his way.

FRANCES
Maybe you'll get lucky.

The car passes by.

FRANCES
Maybe not.

She takes a swig of his whiskey. Another car comes up, red lights flashing. It stops.

FRANCES
Shit!

HITCHHIKER
Run, lady...run.

She does. The cops jump out and the hitchhiker attempts to slow them up but is tossed aside.

HITCHHIKER
Morning, officers, how are you gentlemen.....hey, wait, she didn't do anything!

The cops chase Frances, gradually gaining on her. The Hitchhiker runs the other way.

148 EXT. SMALL TOWN JAIL - DAY

148

Frances and Ernest walk out the door followed by a portly SHERIFF. He watches them get in Ernest's car and drive off. Hiss expression says very clearly: I'm glad that's over with.

149 INT. ERNEST'S CAR - DAY

149

Ernest is at the wheel, Frances at his side. Silence, then:

FRANCES
Dad...? Why don't you just pull over here and let me out?

Ernest writhes slightly with discomfort.

ERNEST
Francie, you know I can't do that.

FRANCES
Why? It's such a simple thing. You
just let me out and I disappear down
a road and you never have to see me
again.

ERNEST
They'll just hunt you down, Francie.
Besides, your mother will know.

We SEE them approaching a side road.

FRANCES
You don't have to stop, just
slow down. You can tell Mama I
jumped out. She knows that's the
kind of thing I'd do. She won't
blame you.

ERNEST
But I gave her my word. And, she's
still your legal guardian. My hands
are tied.

They are nearer the side road...

FRANCES
You know where you're taking me.
You know what she'll do. Just
give me a minute, slow down, give
me an instant for once in your life.
Please!

ERNEST
I can't...I can't....

FRANCES
Daddy!

They pass the side road. It disappears behind them. All the
life seems to drain from Frances.

ERNEST
I'll try to protect you, Francie. I
will, I'll talk to your mother. We'll
have a real talk.

Frances just sits there.

ERNEST
Are you...are you hungry?

FRANCES
I pity us, Dad. I pity the two of us.

150 INT. FARMER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -

150

Lillian is sitting on the piano bench, waiting. We HEAR A CAR PULL UP outside and stop. Doors slam. Steps come up the walk and onto the porch. The door opens and Frances and Ernest enter. Lillian rises to face her daughter.

FRANCES (coldly)
Do I go right away or do I have
time to take a bath?

LILLIAN
No word for the mother, of course.

FRANCES
You were hoping for a kind word?!
What would you like to hear?

She starts up the stairs to her room.

LILLIAN
I am trying, little sister, to
get you on your feet.

Frances stops, turns.

FRANCES
No! All you've done is try to break
my spirit, try to turn me into you!
But I'm not you, Lillian, and I never
will be, and thank god for it!
That goes for you, too, Ernest!
Frankly, I don't know how, with the two
of you, I turned out as sane as I am.

She comes down a few steps.

FRANCES
But I've got to tell you, Lillian, that
one day before you die, you will realize
what you've done and hang your head in
shame.

LILLIAN
Frances, when you get well you'll thank
me for this.

FRANCES
No! You're not talking now. You listen.
You can send me away, Lillian, you can
pretend I'm crazy and pretend I'm still
your little girl who can't take care of
herself, but one thing you can't pretend
anymore. You can't pretend I love you
because I don't. I can't. Not after what
you've done to me. Because you see, I'm
(MORE)

FRANCES
(continued) still me... I'm trying
real hard all this time to be me...
and you, little sister, you haven't
been any help at all.

Ernest has gone to the door and opened it to discover the
men in the white coats waiting. Now Frances, seeing them,
heads for the door.

FRANCES
Okay boys, let's go.

The way she goes out that door we know she's never coming back.

A151 INT. STEILACOOM - A ROOM

A151

Frances sits on a stool and has her hair cut short.

151. INT. STEILACOOM - VIOLENT WARD - NIGHT

151

The ward is a huge room packed with nearly naked women, their
hair cropped very short. The walls are filthy, as are the
floors. The SOUND OF GARBLED VOICES and SCREAMING never stops.
These are the forgotten ones... beyond hope. Everyone here
has lost any notion of what they might have once been. Their
faces are slack, only their eyes glow with an animal ferocity.
Some wander aimlessly about, unheeding of others who are
pushing, kicking and screaming at them. Many squat in the dirt
by the walls, mired in their own urine and excrement, chant-
ing wordlessly to themselves. Some appear lifeless, their
prone bodies shoved out of the way. Some women are involved in
violent sex with themselves or each other, some in mindless
fist fights. In a far corner we SEE a group of men in various
military and medical uniforms, their backs to us, facing the
wall, grouped around something.
An ORDERLY shows two soldiers into the ward, locking the door
behind him. They make their way through the women to the group
and we see the soldiers cheering, laughing, joking and slapping
each other on the back. As we move in closer we see the object
of their hilarity.
It's FRANCES, lying spread-eagled on the floor. Four hospital
ATTENDANTS pin her arms and legs. A SOLDIER, his pants down
around his ankles, is squirming violently on top of her. Frances'
eyes are open but glazed, her face turned away from her
attacker. She is passive and unresisting. She is reciting to
herself, over and over.

FRANCES
We shall hear the angels, we shall see
the whole sky all diamonds....

Two of the SOLDIERS, waiting their turn, chat idly.

SOLDIER #1
...Best deal I ever made. Twenty
bucks to fuck a fuckin' movie star.

SOLDIER #2
Yeah, it's worth it I guess.

SOLDIER #1
What's she saying, anyway?..

SOLDIER #2
Who knows. She's crazy, ain't she?

Frances keeps reciting as one rapist gets off. The Soldiers
cheer as another quickly takes his place.

152 EXT. STEILACOOM - DAY

A heavy snow is falling. From the Violent Ward, a thin white
hand protrudes from a narrow window to catch a snowflake.

As it opens and closes, capturing individual flakes, a VOICE
BEGINS TO SING "You Are My Sunshine". We recognize Frances'
voice, still surprisingly strong and steady.

DISSOLVE TO

153 INT. STEILACOOM - TREATMENT ROOM - DAY

TWO NURSES discuss Frances' condition as we SEE, background,
that patients are getting electroshock treatments from a
doctor.

OLDER NURSE
I don't know why they even bother. She's
had enough of this to knock sense into
a bull elephant.

YOUNG NURSE
Yeah?

OLDER NURSE (nods)
I checked the files. This one holds the
record for shock treatments. 215 and no
end in sight.

YOUNG NURSE
You're kidding.

OLDER NURSE
Yeah, well, you know doctors. They
sure hate to use that word.

YOUNG NURSE
What?

OLDER NURSE

'Incurable'.

CUT TO:

153A EXT. FARMER HOUSE - DAY

153A

Total disrepair: peeling paint, broken steps, fallen shingles..
This building is easing slowly back to nature.

153B INT. FARMER HOUSE - DUSK

153B

It is cold and Lillian is sitting huddled over a low fire in the living room fireplace. Another chair is pulled up close to hers with a rug spread over it. Lillian squints towards the window.

LILLIAN

Old Man Haegger has been stretchin' his neck and peering over here all afternoon. Don't tell me that man is not a communist.

Ernest enters from the kitchen stirring oatmeal in a child's bowl.

ERNEST

He's been our neighbor 27 years, Lil!

LILLIAN

Well, that certainly proves he's not a communist, doesn't it?

ERNEST

He's just lonely, Lil. Here, have your oatmeal while it's warm.

LILLIAN

It's too sweet.

ERNEST

You haven't tasted it.

He sits in his chair next to Lillian and pulls the rug over his knees. Lillian tries a spoonful.

LILLIAN

Runny!...and you always make it too sweet.

Silence...the silent and alone and separate though together nature of their days. We catch a glimpse of the scrapbook, covered in dust, under a pile of magazines. All photographs of Frances have been removed from the room, except one or two of her as a baby or toddler.

LILLIAN

We've got to repaint Frances' room,
Ern. She'll be coming home any day
now, you know.

Ernest knows that Frances is never coming home.

154 INT. STEILACOOM - VIOLENT WARD - DAY

154

Frances, barely conscious, lies on the bare floor. Doyle and an ORDERLY approach her. Doyle nods toward her as if to say: that one. He and the Orderly get her.

DOYLE (leaning over her)

We've come to take you home, Frances.
Frances. Frances.

Doyle and the Orderly help Frances to her feet and half drag her out the door.

154A INT. HALLWAY - DAY

154A

Frances is being wheeled past other patients, doctors, etc. We see some of this from her point of view. At the end of the hallway is a line of patients, each strapped down on a gurney. Frances is pushed to the head of the line.

155 INT. RECREATION ROOM - STEILACOOM - DAY

155

All the furniture has been pushed to one side. Blankets have been hung over the windows to prevent patients with ground privileges from looking in. DR. HARLINGTON is lecturing a group of resident doctors and nurses. He is surrounded by charts and diagrams of the human brain which he refers to from time to time.

DR. HARLINGTON

This is my revolution. With this instrument, working actively and conscientiously, I can transform a lunatic asylum into a rest home! The patients for whom this operation brings the best results are those who are tortured with self-concern who suffer disabling self-consciousness, whether it expresses itself in pains of the body organs or terrible

(MORE)

HARLINGTON
(continued) distress from feelings
of persecution. It can also be used
as a last resort on those who seem
impervious to other forms of treat-
ment.

Harlington moves over to a chart of the human head, using
the pointer to simulate the leucotome. ..

HARLINGTON
The operation is simplicity itself.
One merely inserts the leucotome
beneath the eyelid, breaking through
the bone, and pressing up into the
pre-frontal lobe, manipulating it so
as to sever the nervous connections
of the Thalamofrontal Radiation to
the body of the brain.

He steps back from the chart, absently testing the point of
the instrument with a soft pink finger. He smiles slightly.

HARLINGTON
Now, to demonstrate not only the
simplicity but also the speed of
the process, I will perform Trans-
Orbital Lobotomy on ten patients in
less than an hour. (he nods toward
the door)

Dr. Doyle is standing at the door. He opens it and ushers in
the first patient - Frances. Doyle accompanies her to the
electro-shock equipment on the far side of the room.

HARLINGTON
These patients will be given mild doses
of electroshock to sedate them, although
I should point out that the procedure is
completely painless. I've performed
many of them while the patient remained
awake. From a clinical standpoint, it is
quite fascinating to watch the change take
place.

He goes to Frances, who is lying quietly on the gurney,, and
shouts into her ear.

HARLINGTON (shouting)
How do you feel?

FRANCES (very groggy)
I....I...help me.....

HARLINGTON (shouting)
I'm going to do something that will
make you feel a lot better.

Harlington nods to Dr. Doyle who starts working on the portable electroshock unit and, during the following speech, Doyle gives Frances a mild dose.

HARLINGTON
Now we know that lobotomy works. But now we can apply it on a much larger scale. The old way, the Pre-Frontal technique, required a full day's work by a surgical team to treat a single patient. In the same period of time, working alone, I can treat fifty. Consider the numbers. A lobotomy program in a State Mental Hospital must be considered against a background of shortage of everything except patients. My method is inexpensive, it's fast, and it's safe. Only a little more dangerous than operating to remove an infected tooth. In fact, my first experiments were performed quite successfully with an ordinary ice pick. (he holds one up, puts it down.)

Of course, this instrument is a little fancier (he opens a velvet lined case and displays a gold-plated leucotome) although they're both basically the same.

Harlington nods to his assistants. Immediately they and a photographer rise and come forward. Two men hold up a large piece of green felt behind the Doctor while two other men set up lights and the camera. When he is satisfied that the camera is situated correctly, Harlington lays the leucotome on Frances' face, measuring the distance from the eye to the top of the forehead. She is now unconscious.

HARLINGTON
In plain language, my icepick technique severs the nerves that deliver emotional power to ideas. Along with the cure comes a loss of affect...a kind of emotional flattening...with diminished creativity and imagination.

He lifts Frances' eyelid and positions the leucotome. He then raises a shiny metal hammer and prepares to drive the leucotome into the brain. He pauses to pose for photographs first.

HARLINGTON

Patients become like good solid cake with no icing. But after all, it is their imaginations and emotions that are disturbed. This patient will soon be leaving the hospital!

He pauses, poised with happer and leucotome, while a final photograph is taken. Then, with a dry smile he raises the hammer and taps the instrument into the brain.

HARLINGTON

Lobotomy gets 'em home!

The CAMERA MOVES IN VERY CLOSE until Frances' staring eye fills the screen. The eye begins to dilate and we are swallowed up by blackness.

156 OMITTED

156

FADE IN ON:

157 INT. TELEVISION STUDIO/TELEVISION SET SCREEN

157

The show is "This Is Your Life". Ralph Edwards comes out to much applause.

EDWARDS

Well, hello everybody. Tonight we want you to meet a beautiful lady whose life might well have served as the model for a play by Eugene O'Neill or a novel by Theodor Dreiser. The talented star of Broadway and Hollywood, Miss Frances Farmer.

The TV Camera pans quickly to catch Frances, looking older but still quite beautiful, walking onto the stage and over to Ralph Edwards.

EDWARDS

Hello, Frances.

FRANCES

Hello, Ralph.

EDWARDS

We know that there are periods in your life that have left unhappy scars on your memory. What then prompted you to accept our invitation to relive your life with us here, Frances?

FRANCES

Well, Ralph, first place I want to be able to tell something of my own experiences to help people who have, I know, been in the same kind of predicament. I received so many letters -- people who want hope or advice even which perhaps I can suggest where to find it. It's that sort of thing that I wanted to do for them -- and for myself, I would very much like to correct some impressions which arose out of a lot of stories that were written about me, I guess, but they weren't about me, suggesting things that I couldn't possibly have been doing -- which I never did -- I wasn't in a position to defend myself at the time these stories were published, and I'm very happy to be here tonight to let people see that I am the kind of person I am and not a legend that arose.

EDWARDS

Well, this is your life, Frances Farmer, now you come sit down over here in our chair of honor and we'll pursue with you the often uncertain path of your life.

There is much applause as Ralph Edwards leads Frances to a sofa on the stage. They both sit.

SOMEWHERE DURING THE SHOW - We move away from the screen to see that the television set is in the living room of a comfortable, tastefully furnished home. On the couch in front of the set sits Harry York with his dog nearby. He still looks athletic, young for his age. Tears stream down his cheeks as he watches. Once, he turns to look at the photo he has of Frances, taken during her Hollywood glamour years.

Meanwhile....

EDWARDS

Other stories accuse you of being an alcoholic. Were you, Frances...

FRANCES

No, I was never an alcoholic.

EDWARDS

Did you ever use dope?

FRANCES

No....never.

EDWARDS

In Hollywood, your friends blame you for the break-up of your marriage. Up in Seattle, your family, too, say the fault is yours. Your nerves are stretched tight, almost to the breaking point. On the sound stages your brilliant mind fails you now, you become more and more uncooperative, less and less competent. Resentment against you mounts in all quarters until no more parts are offered you. In loneliness and despair you turn to drink to blot out the raging conflicts of your mind. In October of 1942 you're picked up for drunk driving in Santa Monica and are placed on probation. When you break that probation only two months later you react violently to being put in jail, you're completely without funds, so your family comes to your side and psychological tests indicate that you're suffering from schizophrenia, hallucinations, fantastic delusions, disorganized emotions. Can you tell us what happened then, Frances.

FRANCES

Well, you know....I didn't think then and I still don't, that I was actually sick, but there were so many people who seemed to think I was mentally ill that I just had to find out why and whether it was my fault and what was happening.. it ah...you know, if you get treated like a patient, why, you're apt to act like one.

EDWARDS

How were you treated at the hospital, Frances?

FRANCES

Well, we received shots or hydro-therapy baths or electric shock treatments. They were supposed to relax the tensions and keep us quiet, but I really don't think it helped me much.

EDWARDS

Have you any thoughts, Frances, on how your cure came about or your recovery?

FRANCES

Well, it took me a long time going this way, and finally I realized that I would have to do it for myself. Because first of all, any cure, to be effective, has to

(MORE)

FRANCES
(continued) be based on faith in
oneself which means faith in God.

EDWARDS
Well, your faith has been rewarded,
Frances. (He rises) We've wired 125
Hollywood producers urging them to
look in on This Is Your Life tonight
and to keep you in mind for an impor-
tant dramatic role. You're going to
be a busy gal, Frances, dashing from
interview to interview and we know
that you've been depending on your
friends for transportation and so the
Ford Motor Company wants to give you a
helping hand by presenting you with
(the curtains in the background fly open
to reveal the car) this beautiful 1958
four-door Edsel Pacer - with its excep-
tional power, ease of handling and above
all, dependability, this Edsel will get
you wherever you want to go. How about
it....

FRANCES (over the applause)
Oh...thank you very much.

She rises and Edwards continues his monologue as he leads
Frances over to the Edsel and all the friends who appeared on
the show.

EDWARDS
And now, as your friends gather around
you, I'm sure they join me in wishing
you only the best in your new career.
And tonight we're hosting a party for
you and your friends after the show at
Hollywood's own Roosevelt Hotel. Now
we know that all over the country
millions of people are waiting to welcome
you to the screen and to the stage. Your
life certainly proves the great need
for sympathetic understanding of the
mentally ill as patients, not outcasts.
So, Frances Farmer....one book is closed
now, its pages sealed. But another lies
wide open before you. With faith in God
and confidence in yourself it will be a
great book. This Is Your Life. Good night,
and God bless you.

FRANCES
Thank you very much.

Applause.

158 EXT. ROOSEVELT HOTEL - HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

158

Next door to the hotel an Arthur Murray sign with neon-lighted dancers shines through the night. On the sidewalk a group of PEOPLE are coming down the front steps, Frances among them. They all talk happily. Frances is silent but smiling.

WOMAN

Where shall we drop you, Frances?
Home?

FRANCES (vaguely)

No...no, someone's picking me up.

The people all excuse themselves, calling goodbye. Frances waits by herself for a few moments, but soon begins to walk away down the sidewalk.

She turns a corner and, as she removes her gloves, she drops the This Is Your Life book. She pauses to pick it up, then continues to walk, unaware that a Man has started to follow her.

It's Harry - a few feet behind - looking much as he did when they first met.

HARRY

Frances!

He catches up to her as she stops.

FRANCES (flatly)

Oh. Why, Harry York. How nice to see you, again.

Harry is a little puzzled by her reaction.

HARRY

How...how ya doin' Farmer?

FRANCES

I'm doing just fine, thank you. Did you watch the show?

HARRY

Sure I did, that's why I'm here.

FRANCES (concerned)

How did I look?

HARRY

Oh, you always look like a million bucks.

FRANCES
You look good, Harry.

They are both silent a long moment.

FRANCES
I got a new car. Only it's white.
Did you know Mama died?

HARRY
Yeah. Yeah, I heard about that.

FRANCES
Dad, too. I sold the house. I'm a
faceless sinner, Harry....

HARRY
Why do you say that?

FRANCES
I'd ask you to take me home, but I'm
a faceless sinner.
(she smiles)
...You smell good, Harry. Familiar
you know? I'd ask you to take me home
but....

Harry is alarmed now.

HARRY (taking her by the arm)

Frances!

She angrily bares her teeth and pulls away from him; then just
as suddenly she relaxes and becomes lucid.

FRANCES
Don't be mad at me, Harry. Some things
just happen for the best.

Beat.

She takes his hand as if to shake it. Harry clasps hers tenderly.
She holds on like an old woman, stroking his hand. For an in-
stant she gets lost in time, just holding his hand. Then she
looks up.

FRANCES
It's going to be slow from now on.
Do you know what I mean, Harry?

HARRY
I'm not sure.

FRANCES.

Very slow.

(uncertainly)

But we're not going to stop, are we, Harry?

HARRY

No.

FRANCES (reassured)

No, we're not.

It is as if she is able to express in words the last remnant of her indominatable will....but the words bear no emotional power.

FRANCES

It was very nice to see you again.

She begins to walk away.

Harry starts after her.

HARRY

Mind if I walk with you a little ways?

FRANCES

That would be all right.

HARRY

Just a little ways.

He offers his arm. She takes it. All rather formal. They stroll off together into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.

