

HOUSE OF SAND AND FOG

by
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Based on the novel "House of Sand and Fog"
by Andre Dubus III

PRE-PRODUCTION DRAFT
05/14/02

FADE IN:

1 EXT. IRAN, SEASIDE COTTAGE - DAY

1

Beach. Caspian Sea. Water glistens behind the swaying pines. Refracted golden sunlight through the needles. A child's bare feet on yellow sand, running away from the waves. A peal of laughter.

SUDDENLY, the sound of CHAIN SAWS rips through the magic.

Tall pine trees start FALLING away in slow motion.

ON THE BEACH - WATER'S EDGE

NADI (late 30's), a beautiful Persian woman, startles and looks towards the noise. At her side, ESMAIL (3) and SORAYA (8), turn with her. Water rushes in unnoticed around their ankles. Nadi takes Esmail and Soraya's hands as they rise from the sand and walk slowly towards the falling trunks, mesmerized by the destruction. Nadi's eyes become moist with sadness.

HIGH ANGLE REVERSE - the falling trees reveal COLONEL BEHRANI (44), in uniform, sitting on the stone terrace with GENERAL POURAT. A servant brings drinks.

POURAT (FARSI)

What a gift from God to have the sea spread before us.

BEHRANI (FARSI)

It was an excellent suggestion to cut down the pines, Genob General.

We sense in Behrani a desire to please Pourat. Pourat accepts a drink and sips it slowly.

Nadi arrives at the stone railing. Esmail clings to her legs. Soraya stands alone. Nadi opens her mouth to speak...

BEHRANI (FARSI)

(interrupts)

Nadereh, look how lovely the sea is. Now we have so much more of it.

Behrani smiles at Pourat. There is a hot flame in Nadi's eyes, then it fades, as she looks down in supplication.

NADI (FARSI)
(quietly)
There was enough before.

Behrani stares off to the sea. His face becomes clouded.
CLOSE on his eye, white surf reflected in the dark iris.

BEHRANI (OVER)
Nadi thought it was a wonderful
idea...

His voice continues into the next scene as we

MATCH CUT TO:

2a INT. SAN FRANCISCO HOTEL, BALLROOM - NIGHT 2a

The same eye. Now it reflects a CROWD OF PEOPLE staring at him intently. We pull out and reveal Behrani (now 56) seated at the center of an enormous wedding celebration. He wears an expensive dark suit. His face is older, tanned.

Wealthy Iranian guests adorned in ostentatious clothes and jewelry, listen attentively to Behrani's every word.

BEHRANI
... but of course the cottage went
the way of the trees, once the
Ayatollahs ripped the soul out of
our beautiful country.

The camera circles him as he speaks, revealing the scope of the wedding. The large ballroom is filled with tables covered in crisp white linen. Waiters in red uniforms carry trays of caviar and vodka through a maze of swan ice sculptures and extravagant flower arrangements.

At Behrani's side, Nadi (now 50) smiles politely. ESMAIL (14), a slim, handsome boy, sits quietly picking at his food. Behrani slaps the table.

BEHRANI (cont'd)
Well, enough. Today is a day for
celebration, not sad memories.

He rises.

2b THE DANCE FLOOR 2b

SORAYA stands among a group of young women, radiant in her white wedding dress.

Behrani offers his arm and leads her onto the dance floor. The orchestra plays a slow Persian song. All eyes are on them.

2c

GUEST #1

He's so tanned. Retirement has been good to the Colonel.

2c

Esmail pushes through the guests to watch his father.

GUEST #2

You are mistaken. He works for Boeing.

GUEST #3

He doesn't work for Boeing. My son works for Boeing.

(conspiratorially)

That's his CIA cover.

Esmail turns from the conversation back to his father.

2d

THE DANCE FLOOR

2d

Behrani and Soraya seem to float through the colored lights.

SORAYA

Thank you father, for this day.

BEHRANI

You make a beautiful bride, my little bird.

(in Farsi)

I wish you happiness.

2e

THE HEAD TABLE - LATER

2e

The Behrani family and guests toast and drink merrily at the table. We MOVE through the room away from them. One by one the guests slowly fade away and vanish like ghosts - until the entire room is empty, leaving only Behrani, Nadi, and Esmail alone at the head table.

Three tiny figures. "Last Supper" without the disciples.

3

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO HOTEL, VALET - NIGHT

3

Behrani, Nadi, and Esmail wait at the valet stand. Behrani has his arm around Nadi as she shivers in the damp air. The Valet holds the door open to their Buick Regal. Behrani carefully counts out exact change. No tip.

INT. BUICK REGAL - NIGHT

4

Wet empty streets. Silence. The only sound is the liquid hiss of tires on the pavement.

Behrani and Nadi stare ahead, lost in thought - at first smiling with the residual excitement of the wedding, then a SLOW REALIZATION clouds their faces. A chapter to their life has ended. Their smiles fade.

ESMAIL

(from the back seat)

So Bawbaw-jawn, what do you do?

SMASH CUT TO:

5

EXT. 101 FREEWAY - DAY

5

The blazing hot sun rises low in the San Francisco skyline.

A road construction crew toils in the middle of the freeway. The shapes of the workers, in their orange vests, shimmer and distort in the heat waves.

BEHRANI is one of the men shoveling hot asphalt trying to keep in front of a large rolling grader.

He pauses as a man walks by with small paper cups of ice water. Behrani waves the water off, and drinks hot tea from a thermos. MENDEZ, a large Salvadorian with a long burn scar along one of his fat arms, laughs at Behrani and whispers to a Mexican at his side.

Behrani stares at Mendez, and then at the burn scar.

MENDEZ

What are you looking at, viêjo?

The rest of the workers stop to see what is going to happen. Behrani does not break eye contact.

MENDEZ (cont'd)

(spits on the ground)

Old maricón.

The foreman, a Mexican named TOREZ, comes over and puts his hand on Behrani's shoulder.

TOREZ

Back to work! Vamanos, Camello.

BEHRANI

In my country I was a Colonel. I would have ordered him beaten.

TOREZ

Si. And he was a police chief in El Salvador. He would have beaten you himself. But today, I am *Senor General*, *comprende?* Back to work!

Behrani wipes the sweat from his sunburned forehead, and reaches for the shovel. He slams it with all his force deep into the steaming asphalt.

6 OMITTED

6

7 EXT. 101 FREEWAY - SUNSET

7

TIME LAPSE - The sun sinks into the red haze of pollution. Cars blur past, their tail-lights receding as they drive away from the city. The glossy surfaces are dark, broken only by reflections of the blood-red sky.

An exhausted Behrani and the rest of the road crew throw their shovels and equipment into the back of a truck, and clamber in behind.

8 EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - DUSK

8

The truck makes its way onto the bridge. Behrani sits in the truck-bed with the others. Stares out to the ocean, his thoughts far away.

He reaches into the pocket of his coveralls and gingerly takes out a small newspaper ad:

SEIZED PROPERTY FOR SALE

THREE BEDROOM HOME, 34 BISGROVE ST.

THURSDAY THE 9TH AT 3PM

It is frayed and looks as if it was unfolded many times.

Behrani slowly and carefully reads the notice.

The truck drives into a thick bank of rising FOG. The swirling mist envelops Behrani, and finally, the whole screen.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - PRE-DAWN

The shape of a house slowly becomes visible through the tendrils of fog. The house is one story, painted white, with a lawn in need of trimming. It is on a hill, across the street from pine woodland. The mailbox has "34 Bisgrove" written on it in black and gold letters.

We glide through the mist, past two cars parked in the driveway and through the glass of the living room window.

10

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEDROOM - PRE-DAWN

10

We move through the house. Past a couple of suitcases by the couch. A DARK HALLWAY leads to a bedroom. We glide above the bedroom floor and over the bed, to reveal the face of:

KATHY NICOLO, (30's), beautiful in a worn way. She sleeps.

A man stands in the shadows of the doorway watching her. NICK (30's) takes a long drag on a cigarette. The burning ember at the end briefly illuminates his face, but not enough to see his eyes. He kneels next to the bed.

NICK

Kath.

KATHY

(mumbling)

What? What honey? What's up?

NICK

Kath-

His voice chokes off. Kathy wakes. His face is dark, his eyes shadowed and unseen. She reaches for the light to turn it on, but he takes her hand.

KATHY

What-

She tries to sit up but he stops her. They look at each other for a moment. Abruptly, he rises and walks out.

Kathy leaps from bed, and runs after him, wearing only a T-shirt.

11

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT

11

Nick is already in his car, backing up. Barefoot, Kathy runs to the car and knocks on the windows.

KATHY

Nick- Nick wait- wait Nick-
please- please-

He keeps his eyes on the mirror, his face expressionless. In the back seat are two black suitcases and a guitar case. The car reaches the road. Kathy begins to pound frantically on the windows.

KATHY (cont'd)

(screaming)

NICK! NICK! WAIT!

He throws the car into drive and accelerates away down the road. Kathy's fingers leave wet trails in the dew on the trunk lid. She stands half-naked, in the glow of the streetlights, her breath white against the dark sky.

A phone RINGS.

12a/b INT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MORNING (SIX MONTHS LATER)

12a/b

Kathy lies in bed watching the phone ring on her bed stand. Her face and pillow are wet from tears. She stares at the phone, as it continues to ring insistently. The ringing stops, then almost immediately, starts up again. Kathy sighs. Picks up the receiver.

KATHY

Hello?

MOM

Kathy?

KATHY

Mom? Do you know what time it is?

MOM

Of course I do, it's nine o'clock.

KATHY

Mom... That's six AM here.

MOM

Oh, geez, K. Your father used to get up at 5 AM every day of his life.

(beat)

Are you still off the...you know...

KATHY

Christ, of course, Mom. Just because I'm in bed at 6AM doesn't mean I'm on drugs.

MOM

Ok, ok, just an innocent question. Me and Frankie wanted to know. You do remember you have a brother don't you? You could call him sometime. He cares for you, Kathy. Say, is Nicky there? I haven't talked to him in months.

Kathy glances at the empty side of the bed.

KATHY

He's right here. He's sleeping.

MOM

Put him on.

KATHY

He's sleeping, Mom. I gotta go.

MOM

But-

KATHY

I gotta go.

MOM

Just one last thing, we're coming out to visit on the 18th. Frances won a trip to Reno, and I thought we'd stop by. Check up on you-

KATHY

When? The 18th? Ok. But Nick's away on business then.

MOM

That's too bad... Hey, when are you two going to have children?

Kathy stops. This one is almost too much for her.

KATHY

As soon as I can talk Nick into it. Look, I gotta go.

(Mom tries to interrupt)
Bye mom- Bye!

MOM
 (squeezing in one more)
 You're still not smoking?
 Because....

CLICK. Kathy hangs up and falls back onto the bed. She lies there for a moment, then sits up and swings her legs over the side of the bed.

13

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

13

Morning light filters in. The living room looks like it has not been cleaned in six months. Piles of video tapes surround the TV, which has been left on all night. Stacks of dirty dishes and empty frozen dinners litter the floor. The couch is covered in pillows and blankets, like a nest.

Kathy walks naked across the house towards the kitchen. Stops and turns off the TV, rubs her eyes, then continues through the middle of the living room. Naked, in the no-man zone.

There is a LOUD KNOCK ON THE DOOR. A man's face peers in one of the side door panels. He cups his hands to the glass and squints to see in.

Kathy FREEZES like a deer at a water hole, then DARTS down the hall to the bedroom.

KATHY
 (screams)
 Just a second!

14

MOMENTS LATER

14

Kathy hurries to the front door, now wearing a short, faded pink robe. Looks in a peephole - a cop, and two other men. Opens door. As the door swings open, it pushes aside a pile of unopened MAIL on the floor under the mail slot.

Deputy LESTER BURDON - a tall man with a crooked moustache, a LOCKSMITH, and a MAN IN SUIT stand on the porch.

MAN IN SUIT
 You Kathy Lazaro?

KATHY
 Yeah. Why?

WHACK. The Man In Suit slaps a bright orange sticker on the outside of the open door and nods to the others. The Locksmith kneels and begins to unscrew the doorknob and lock.

The Man In Suit hands her a court order. He speaks as he walks down the hallway to the back of the house:

MAN IN SUIT

Kathy Lazaro, due to the nonpayment of business taxes associated with this property, the county has petitioned the court on its behalf to reclaim these costs.

He slaps another orange sticker on the back door. Walks back.

MAN IN SUIT (cont'd)

This should come as no surprise to you. I'm sure you had ample warning; your house is up for auction starting tomorrow morning.

KATHY

Auction? Are you out of your mind?

The Locksmith pulls a cigarette from his pocket and starts to light it. Kathy grabs the unlit cigarette from his mouth and throws it out of the open front door, into the bushes.

KATHY (cont'd)

There's no smoking in my house.

The Locksmith sighs like this happens every day, and casually lights up another.

Kathy looks on in disbelief. She turns around and startles - Lester is right behind her. He glances down at her bare ankles. She pulls her bathrobe tighter around her.

LESTER

Is your husband home?

KATHY

What? Why do you need to know that?

LESTER

We have to notify all of the residents of the house.

KATHY

Well, he doesn't live here anymore.

Lester steps back and surveys the living room with a cop's practiced glance. The decor suggests that a woman lives here. Alone. He looks at a picture on the wall. It shows a 12-year-old Kathy and her father standing in front of 34 Bisgrove. Kathy sees a flicker of compassion in his eyes.

Man In Suit's pager goes off on his belt. He unceremoniously picks up the kitchen phone, dials and begins speaking loudly.

Kathy turns angrily and almost runs into Lester again.

LESTER

Supposed to be a hot one. I'd dress lightly if I were you.

KATHY

That's ok, 'cause I'm not leaving.

LESTER

I'm afraid you have no choice, Mrs. Lazaro. All of your things will be auctioned off with the property. Do you want that?

On his words, the Locksmith starts drilling the door. Wood and metal shavings spill out onto the hallway floor.

Seeing this, Kathy starts to CRY.

KATHY

(over the drill noise)

You can't evict me. I never owed a fucking business tax. You have no right to do this.

Everyone stops their work to look at the weeping woman.

MAN IN SUIT

(leaving)

Well, this is where I get off. Deputy Sheriff Burdon will assist you in vacating the property.

Lester stands awkwardly. Kathy slowly stops crying.

LESTER

Do you have a lawyer?

KATHY

I can't afford a lawyer. I'm a house cleaner.

Lester takes a pad of paper and writes some information on it. He rips the page out and hands it to Kathy.

LESTER

This is the number for the Legal Aid office. They might be able to help.

(MORE)

LESTER (cont'd)
 (very solemn)
 Nothing's written in blood. You
 just have to clear out today. You
 might be moving back in next week.
 Okay?

She nods, fighting the tears.

LESTER (cont'd)
 In the meantime maybe you can call
 some friends or family. Stay with
 them.

KATHY
 There is no one to call.

Lester looks at her intently, as if he knows her from
 somewhere long ago, and is just recognizing her.

LESTER
 I'll tell you what, I know some
 movers that owe me a favor. I'll
 give them a call.

He offers his hand.

LESTER (cont'd)
 Lester.

15 EXT. STORAGE FACILITY - DAY

15

A single garage sized storage bay is filled with Kathy's
 belongings. She digs through the boxes, trying to organize
 them.

A Sheriff's Dept. cruiser passes behind her. A couple of
 seconds later, it slowly backs up and stops in front of the
 door. Lester, in a pressed uniform, gets out of the car.

LESTER
 Everything work out for you?

KATHY
 Yeah. Thanks. I'm across the
 street.

Lester glances to the other side of the busy highway. A sign
 above a low building proclaims *El Rancho Motel* in glowing
 pink neon, and on the marquee- *Vacancy - \$34.90/Nite.*

LESTER

Well, I'm sorry about all that, but
I'm glad I could help, even if it
was only a little.

Lester takes out a card and writes his number on the back.

LESTER (cont'd)

This is my direct number at the
Department. I'm never there, but
if you ever need anything...
anything at all, leave a message.

He hands her the card, as she takes it, their hands touch
just briefly, and their eyes meet.

16

EXT. CONCOURSE HOTEL - DUSK

16

Behrani, still dressed in tar-splattered coveralls, walks
down the ramp into the garage of the hotel to his Buick. He
opens the trunk, and takes out a garment bag.

17

INT. CONCOURSE HOTEL - DUSK

17

Behrani walks across the carpeted lobby towards the elevator.
A DESK CLERK is helping a pair of GERMAN TOURISTS.

DESK CLERK

(calls out to Behrani)

May I help you?

Tourists turn and look at the filthy Behrani for as long as a
man would regard a dead bug on his windshield, and then turn
away. Behrani flushes.

BEHRANI

My car is parked here.

(then quieter)

You asked yesterday, also.

The Desk Clerk turns back to the tourists. An almost
imperceptible roll of the eyes. Elevator arrives. Behrani
gets on, his jaw clenched.

18

INT. CONCOURSE HOTEL, PUBLIC BATHROOM - NIGHT

18

MONTAGE - Behrani, shirtless, scrubs the grease from his
face, arms, and hands. He dries off with paper towels,
shaves, uses deodorant, and dresses in a pair of tan slacks,
a white button down shirt, and a tan silk tie.

He changes shoes, and wraps his dirty clothes and shoes in paper and stuffs them into the garment bag.

Behrani stands regarding himself in the mirror - a wealthy businessman.

19 INT. CONCOURSE HOTEL, HALLWAY - NIGHT 19

Behrani walks down the hallway. An Asian maid bows her head respectfully. He smiles.

20 EXT. POOLDAR APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT 20

A fancy high-rise apartment complex.

21 INT. POOLDAR APARTMENT COMPLEX, GARAGE - NIGHT 21

Behrani drives the Buick past row after row of expensive and exotic cars. He parks and walks towards the elevators.

22 INT. POOLDAR APARTMENT COMPLEX, ELEVATOR - NIGHT 22

Behrani steps into the elevator, next to a well-dressed PERSIAN COUPLE. They nod politely. As the elevator rises, he looks down and notices a smudge of grease on his wrist. He pulls the cuff down to hide the stain.

23 INT. POOLDAR APARTMENT - NIGHT 23

Expensive furniture. Imported Persian carpets, French paintings. A low silver table holds plastic covered crystal bowls filled with pistachios, dates, and fine chocolates.

Behrani walks straight to the washer, and loads his clothes in. As he does so, his son Esmail enters carrying a skateboard. His knees are scraped, bleeding.

BEHRANI

Wash up. Do not get blood on the floor.

Esmail nods, and walks towards the bathroom. Behrani goes into the

24 KITCHEN 24

where he takes a loaf of bread from the fridge, and starts to cut a slice. The door to Nadi's room opens and she stands in the doorway looking at Behrani's tired back.

Esmail walks in. His black hair is damp.

ESMAIL

I saw a commercial on TV today for an electric razor. The man liked it very much, he said...

(mimics)

..."I liked it so much, I bought the company." I am now ready to start shaving, Baw-baw. Can I have some money to buy that razor?

Behrani exchanges a look and a secret smile with Nadi.

BEHRANI

Yes. Fine. Of course.

NADI

Behrani, Soraya and her new husband soon will end their sugar moon. I would like to make a party for both our families.

He nods and turns back to the sink, so that they cannot see his face. He suddenly seems very tired.

Nadi kisses Esmail and goes back into her room, closing the door. Behrani looks at her closed door for a moment, then returns to cutting the bread. Suddenly he winces. Holds up his BLEEDING THUMB, red runs in a dark stream down his arm.

CUT TO:

25

EXT. ISFAHAN, IRAN - DAY (FLASHBACK)

25

A fat bleating sheep. A dusty doorway. Dark rough hands grab the thick matted wool and JERK the head back. A KNIFE slices. Blood FOUNTAINS.

Sheep's legs buckle. Droplets of blood spatter the sandy ground. CUPPED HANDS fill with red. Then disappear.

A weathered Iranian man in a black suit, BEHRANI'S FATHER, squats and smears the red ichor across the wood of the doorframe. He stands and shows his crimson palms to a cheering WEDDING PARTY.

YOUNG BEHRANI and YOUNG NADI, hold each other's hands as the wedding party swarms around them, pushes them across the bloody doorframe.

.6

INSIDE THE HOUSE

26

The door closes behind them and there is a sudden awkwardness in the quiet of the dark room. Then Nadi covers the distance, and presses herself against Behrani's chest. After a moment, she raises her face to his. He kisses her gently.

27

INT. POOLDAR APARTMENT, BATHROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

27

Esmail carefully places a band-aid over the cut on Behrani's finger.

BEHRANI

You have your mother's heart.

ESMAIL

(points to his own bloody
knees)

And you have your son's clumsiness.

A27

INT. LESTER BURDON'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

A27

The room is dark. Somewhere outside, a lawn sprinkler ticks and whirs. Lester enters. Begins to undress. His movements are mechanical, without emotion. He watches the sleeping form of his wife, CAROL, as he hangs his uniform up neatly.

He slowly lies down in the bed. Listens to the BABY MONITOR on the bedside stand - rhythmic sounds of a child's breathing. Lester's eyes remain open, staring at the ceiling.

28

INT. TOP FUEL GAS STATION AND FOOD MART - NIGHT

28

Florescent lights cast a green pall. Behrani works the night shift with SERGEI, a young balding Russian who chews gum as he struggles with a crossword puzzle. They both wear tan uniforms. Behrani's says "Massoud". He looks exhausted.

Behrani eats a Snickers bar, and opens a small black ledger. On the first page, at the top, is written the number \$280,000 in tiny precise handwriting. Below is a long list of expenses and deposits.

Behrani flips through the pages until he reaches the most recent balance. \$48,314.97. He carefully WRITES in the word "Snickers" and then .83. PAUSES to glance at the wrapper, and then adds the 's' to the "Snickers".

Behrani rings up the purchases for a CUSTOMER- bread, a quart of milk, a sixpack. The bell tinkles as the customer leaves.

SERGEI

(mutters)

Land of milk and honey. They never
tell you the milk's gone sour and
the honey's been stolen.

Behrani smiles and turns back to his ledger and finishes
adjusting the total so that it reads \$48,314.14. He slumps
against the counter, pulls out and unfolds the auction ad
from his uniform pocket: SEIZED PROPERTY FOR SALE.

SERGEI (cont'd)

(from crossword)

Hey, Massoud? You know another
word for "destiny"?

BEHRANI

(in Farsi)

Destiny.

As he contemplates the notice, the hum of the florescent
lights grows louder and louder until it becomes a roar.

29

INT. CPA'S TWO STORY DUPLEX - DAY

29

A vacuum roars across white shag carpet. Kathy vacuums by
the kitchen. She wears a pair of tiny shorts, and a
sleeveless shirt (no bra). In the next room, CPA's DAUGHTER
(12) in blue and white pajamas watches TV.

The OWNER of the house, a bearded man with thick glasses sits
on the deck outside and watches Kathy through the glass of
the sliding doors. He sips from a drink as he glances at her
nervously. Kathy ignores him and continues her work.

After a moment he walks over, hands her a typewritten note,
and walks off into the next room where he talks with his
daughter. Kathy sets the still running vacuum down, and
opens the note.

"WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO OUT SOMETIME?"

Kathy glances at him in the next room, folds the note back up
and puts it into her pocket, then resumes her work.

30

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

30

Behrani joins a wheezing FAT MAN in an ill-fitting suit, and
a YOUNG COUPLE. They listen to an AUCTIONEER, as he shows
them around the property.

AUCTIONEER

...the county seized this property
for non-payment of taxes. There's
three bedrooms... a single bath....

The auctioneer's voice fades away as Behrani looks at the house. The wind picks up, blowing leaves around his feet. He looks up at the pine trees across the street, swaying gently. Sunlight breaks through the needles. They are very much like those at the Caspian summer home.

The spell is broken by the voice of the auctioneer.

AUCTIONEER (cont'd)

... a widow's walk would increase
the value of the property.

BEHRANI

(interrupting)

What is this widow's walk?

AUCTIONEER

It's a deck on top of the house.

So you can see the ocean.

(to others)

Let's look at the inside.

As they walk away, Behrani turns and looks back at the trees, shimmering in the sunlight.

31

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MOMENTS LATER.

31

The rest of the group has moved into the backyard. The auctioneer's voice drones.

Behrani walks alone through the quiet, empty house. Sunlight moves across the floor in a window-shaped pattern.

The hum of voices fades away. Behrani stops, closes his eyes, and listens to the faraway rumble of the ocean.

He smiles.

32

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY, 3:30PM

32

Behrani and the buyers mill around nervously. Behrani assesses the competition: the young couple - harmless, the fat man, on the other hand, looks like a pro - a speculator.

AUCTIONEER

(checks his watch)

Alright. The bidding will begin.

(MORE)

AUCTIONEER (cont'd)

The suggested opening bid is set at thirty thousand. Do I have any bidders?

Behrani reacts to the low sum. The young wife lifts her hand.

AUCTIONEER (cont'd)

I have thirty.

The auctioneer turns to the fat man. They seem familiar with each other. The fat man nods.

AUCTIONEER (cont'd)

Thirty five. Do I hear forty?

The young wife starts to lift her hand. Her husband forces it down.

YOUNG HUSBAND

(whispering)

We don't have that much saved.

They want it all at once. Anyway, I told you, I get to raise the hand.

Behrani raises his hand.

AUCTIONEER

The price is now forty thousand.

The fat man turns to look at Behrani and his eyes narrow. Behrani smiles pleasantly, as if he could continue bidding all day. Behind his back, his hand is clenched into a white-knuckled fist. BLOOD begins to seep from the band-aid.

FAT MAN

Forty-two fifty.

BEHRANI

(easily)

Forty-five.

AUCTIONEER

Will there be a fifty thousand dollar bid for the property. Do I hear fifty, ladies and gentleman? Fifty thousand?

Behrani locks eyes with the fat man. For a brief moment there is a battle of wills. The fat man turns and walks towards his car. Relief floods Behrani's face.

AUCTIONEER (cont'd)

Forty-five thousand, going once, going twice- Sold!

He steps forward, smiling, and shakes Behrani's hand. As Behrani walks away, the auctioneer looks down at his palm, smeared with blood from the band-aid. His smile slowly fades.

33 EXT. LEGAL AID OFFICE - DAY

33

Mission District, San Francisco. A sign in a window on the second floor, above a health food store, reads LEGAL AID. Kathy checks the scrap of paper Lester gave her before walking into the entrance.

34 INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - DAY

34

On the wall are posters for women's movement marches, announcements of lesbian poetry readings, and boycotts of fruit and vegetable farms in the state. Kathy sits, filling out a form on a clipboard. GARY, the male receptionist watches her. When she's done, he walks her inside a door.

35 INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE - DAY

35

A giant framed poster of Ghandi hangs from the wall behind a large desk. Kathy sits in an overstuffed leather office chair, sipping coffee, stares at the poster.

CONNIE WALSH, the Lawyer, stands by the window reading a file. She is dressed in expensive gray slacks, a white blouse, and wears round designer glasses. Her feet are bare.

Outside it has started to rain, and the shadows of raindrops slide across her face and the pages of the file.

CONNIE WALSH

Five hundred dollars. They evicted you from your house for that?

KATHY

You got it.

Kathy looks out at the rain-spattered windows.

KATHY (cont'd)

How much is this going to cost me?

CONNIE WALSH

It's on a sliding scale. Look, you've been getting mail about this for months. Why didn't you do something about this earlier?

KATHY

I never opened it. I threw it out.

CONNIE WALSH

You threw it out?

KATHY

I signed a statement at the courthouse saying I never had any business. It's even certified. I already did my part. It's their mistake. Let them fix it.

(beat)

It's very important that I have my house back by the 18th.

Connie sips her tea. Gary walks in and hands her a sheet of paper. Connie studies it, and sighs.

CONNIE WALSH

When did you file your letter?

KATHY

March.

CONNIE WALSH

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but evidently the county has already sold your house.

KATHY

But they can't do that.

CONNIE WALSH

The auction date has been set for months. It was in that mail you've been throwing away.

KATHY

(softly)

Those motherfuckers.

CONNIE WALSH

Let's not get emotional about this. Get me that tax statement. If it's in order, I'll demand they rescind the sale, or we'll file a lawsuit against the county, and you'll get your house back.

KATHY

Before the 18th, right?

CONNIE WALSH
It's possible.

36

INT. POOLDAR APARTMENT - DAY

36

Behrani enters. He wears a bright blue baseball cap, and carries a bouquet of tiger lilies. Esmail watches TV in the next room. Nadi kneels polishing the silver table, dressed in her sleeping gown. She looks up briefly, then turns back to the table, scrubbing harder.

NADI (FARSI)
You should have a brown colah on
your head, not a blue one.

Behrani puts the tiger lilies into a vase, then takes off the cap, respectfully.

NADI (FARSI) (cont'd)
Why are you not working today,
Behrani?

Esmail mutes the TV, throwing the house into a sudden, and disturbing silence. Behrani speaks, his words as carefully chosen as a ceremonial proposal of marriage.

BEHRANI
Nadereh, today God has kissed our
eyes. Do you remember our bungalow
near Damavand? Do you remember how
I ordered the trees cut down on the
north side so that we may view the
Caspian?

NADI
(fearful)
Saket-bosh, Behrani. Please be
quiet.

BEHRANI
Do you remember when Pourat brought
his family there for New Year? How
beautiful it was?

NADI
Hafesho, Behrani! What is the
matter for you? Please.

She stops polishing, and closes her eyes.

BEHRANI

Nadi, I today have bought us another bungalow. I have purchased this home for a price of which no one would believe. It is worth two, maybe three times that. We will live in the home for a short time,...

Nadi starts shaking her head from side to side.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

...and then sell it and find one even better-

She stands, and throws down the rag, and begins to yell.

NADI (FARSI)

I did not come to America to live like a dirty Arab! So kaseef! A family roaming the streets like gypsies! All our possessions damaged and ruined along the way!

Nadi swoons, and holds her fingers to her temple. She stumbles into her bedroom and slams the door. A second later, Daryoosh's music comes from the room.

Behrani looks lost. He turns to Esmail in the next room.

ESMAIL

I don't want to move.

Esmail stands, and walks into the bathroom.

37

Behrani is still for a moment, and then tears his hat off and throws it to the floor. He storms into the bathroom. Esmail turns, eyes wide.

37

Behrani KICKS his foot through the wicker clothes hamper, cursing in Farsi. Esmail cringes away from him.

38

Behrani whirls. Walks to Nadi's door. Throws it open. He grabs the tape recorder, pulls it free of the wall, and THROWS it across the room where it knocks over a lamp and SHATTERS the lightbulb.

38

The music STOPS. Nadi SCREAMS in fright as Behrani approaches her in the darkness. She quiets as he begins to speak.

BEHRANI

Perhaps you did not come to America to live like a Gypsy, but I did not come here to work like an Arab! To be treated like an Arab! For four years, we have lived a life which we could not afford and spent almost everything to marry Soraya with a good family. This apartment alone has cost us over one hundred and forty thousand dollars in rent. And what of Esmail's university education? Soon we will have nothing... and then you'll see what it is like to walk in the shoes of the Gypsies.

(lowering his voice)

So beginning tomorrow, you will begin packing and there is no more to discuss, Mrs. Behrani. Do not open your lips.

Her face quivers with fear, and she remains quiet.

39

INT. STORAGE BAY - NIGHT

39

Kathy searches inside the storage shed with a flashlight, looking for the tax statement. Several boxes are already opened. She places the flashlight between her shoulder and head. Small bugs fly around the beam of light, batting against it, and brushing against her face. She picks up one of Nick's T-shirts. Holds it up to her face and inhales his scent.

The flashlight begins to fade.

KATHY

Fuck.

She shakes it, and the beam returns.

VOICE

(very close by)

Hello?

Kathy SCREAMS and DROPS the flashlight. It rolls to a stop at a man's feet. Only his outline is visible in the darkness. The man reaches down, and picks up the flashlight so that it blinds her. She shields her eyes, frightened.

The man reverses the flashlight, and shines it in his own face. It is Lester. He makes a mock "scary face", growls, and then smiles.

LESTER
Sorry if I scared you.

KATHY
Shit. Don't do that.

LESTER
You get a hold of Legal Aid?

KATHY
Yeah. Thanks.

She steps out of the bay, closes the door, and turns off the flashlight. She notices Lester's white Toyota station wagon and blue jeans.

KATHY (cont'd)
You working undercover or something?

LESTER
Excuse me?
(looks at his sneakers)
Oh, no, I'm off. I just... I drive by this way. I thought I'd check in on you. See how you're holding up.

They fall silent. Kathy rubs her arms in the cold. She wears only shorts and a thin T-shirt, and her nipples are sticking out. She is self-conscious. They stare at each other awkwardly. Lester looks away.

LESTER (cont'd)
Can I buy you a cup of coffee?

KATHY
That'd be all right. Lemme just grab a sweater.

She nods to the motel across the road.

40

INT. EL RANCHO MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

40

Kathy stands in front of the mirror in a dingy bathroom. She quickly rubs on some deodorant, and then adds eyeliner to her bottom lashes. She gives herself a quick once over, and pulls on the sweater.

41

INT. TRUCK STOP DINER - NIGHT

41

They sit across from each other, drinking coffee. Kathy's eyes stray to Lester's gold wedding ring, glinting in the light.

LESTER

They already sold your house? Boy, they don't fool around, do they?

KATHY

No one at home knows about this yet. It's not hard to...

(searches for the right word)

rescind these things, is it? That's my lawyer's plan.

LESTER

I really don't know much about that, Mrs. Lazaro.

KATHY

Kathy. Nicolo's my maiden name.

LESTER

It suits you better.

The way he looks at her makes her nervous - a hungry look.

KATHY

You have any kids, Mr. Burdon?

LESTER

Two.

They become quiet again.

KATHY

My husband left me eight months ago. No one back home knows that either.

LESTER

You always keep so many secrets?

KATHY

Just when I have to.

LESTER

I understand.

KATHY

Do you?

LESTER

I think so.

42

INT. LESTER'S TOYOTA STATION WAGON - NIGHT

42

They stop in front of the El Rancho Motel. Lester reaches over and touches her knee. Just a brief touch, but it is noted.

LESTER

Do you mind if I give you some professional advice? Do it all through your lawyer, Kathy. I wouldn't even drive past until the keys were back in my hand.

Kathy waits. They sit in silence. Her glance skips across his face. When he doesn't do anything, she gets out of the car.

KATHY

See ya.

LESTER

Sure.

He drives off.

43

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

43

Behrani unlocks the door, and steps aside to let Nadi walk in. Outside, the movers back up the truck into the driveway.

44

Nadi walks through the empty house slowly, gingerly like a cat, her eyes sweeping the rooms. Esmail and Behrani are quiet, following behind.

44

She walks slowly, her steps in sync with the warning beeps of the reversing truck.

She walks into the kitchen. The truck beeping STOPS.

At the far end is a window, opening onto a small garden. A bird flutters away from the birdbath.

NADI

It is like our garden in Isfahan.

She turns and smiles at them. Behrani and Esmail smile back.

45 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - LATER 45

The Behranis sit on the floor of the living room, eating pizza. Moving boxes surround them, waiting to be opened. They are quiet, but there is a joy, and a sense of peace.

46 INT. EL RANCHO MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT 46

Kathy lies on the made bed and stares at a brown water stain on the ceiling. She turns to the phone, and dials the area code of Boston.

MOM (PHONE)

Hello.

There is a knock on the door. Kathy pauses, then hangs the phone up.

Kathy opens the door. A slim middle-aged black man, the MOTEL MANAGER, stands outside the doorway.

MOTEL MANAGER

Your credit card didn't go through.
That's two days now.

KATHY

I get my paycheck Friday. Can you
let me slide till then?

MOTEL MANAGER

Sorry. No can do. The owners keep
a mighty close eye on me.
(as if it explains it)
They're Chinese.

He stands in the door, shifting from foot to foot.

KATHY

Can I at least get a little privacy
here?

He backs out onto the landing. Kathy begins to stuff things into her suitcase. She walks into the bathroom and scoops her toiletries into a plastic supermarket bag. She pauses, and looks to see if the manager is watching. He's not. She stuffs the hotel towels into the bag.

47 EXT. EL RANCHO MOTEL - NIGHT 47

Kathy walks down the stairs with her bag and suitcase. Above her the manager locks the room.

She stops at a glowing green cigarette vending machine.
Contemplates it.

KATHY

Fuck it.

She takes some change from her pockets, and feeds the coins
in.

CLINK. CLINK. An eternity of CLINKS. Distant traffic
whispers on the street. She pushes the button. A pack of
Virginia Slims falls into tray.

KATHY (cont'd)

(without humor)

You've come a long way, baby.

48

IN THE CAR

48

Kathy lights a cigarette with an expert touch, it's like
riding a bicycle - you never forget. Takes a long drag. She
begins to cough, and covers her mouth with her hand. Another
drag. This one goes down smoother.

She rolls down the window and slowly breathes the white smoke
out into the night air, starts the car, and drives away.

49

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT

49

Kathy parks her car on the wooded side of the street, across
from her house.

50a

INSIDE THE BONNEVILLE

50a

51

She smokes and watches the house. The Behranis are moving
about in the living room bathed in yellow light, unpacking
their boxes, placing mirrors and pictures on the walls.

51

50b

Kathy stubs out her cigarette, and lights another. The flame
of the lighter turns her face red for a moment. She takes a
deep drag, watching these intruders, deep in thought.

50b

52

INT. LESTER BURDON'S HOUSE - NIGHT

52

Lester eats dinner at a cramped round table. His wife CAROL
moves quickly trying to control the kids and serve a meal.
Lester ignores them all, eyes on his food as he eats
mechanically.

53a INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 53a

Behrani sleeps in a pale blue shaft of moonlight.

54 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT 54

Kathy sleeps in the Bonneville across the street from the house. She shivers from the cold. Wakes up, starts the engine, and runs the heater.

53b INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 53b

Behrani opens his eyes, woken by the engine outside. Wind whips the branches, casting shadows across his face. He drifts off, but it is a more troubled sleep now - his face tense, his eyes trembling under the closed lids.

55 INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - MORNING 55

Birds chirp. Kathy sleeps in the car. A WHITE TRUCK with lumber and carpenter's tools pulls into the driveway.

56 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MORNING 56

Behrani and a tattooed CARPENTER (late 20's) stand in the back yard, looking at the roof. CARPENTER #2 smokes in the background, watching.

CARPENTER

Well, the only affordable way to put a terrace up there is to put the stairs on the outside...

(points)

...but it would have to block the kitchen window. I could do that for about a grand. If we have to go through the roof, you're talking four to seven.

Behrani glances at Nadi, puttering contentedly behind the glass of the kitchen window.

BEHRANI

But this window must be obstructed?

CARPENTER

Don't see any other way.

Behrani nods.

BEHRANI

That is acceptable. Can you start today?

57 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MORNING

57

The carpenters unload their truck. Behrani watches from the porch, drinking hot tea. Something catches his attention. He sees the Bonneville across the street. It seems out of place, the only car parked on that side of the street. A slight movement within.

He walks towards the car, the birds in the trees behind the car getting louder and louder. Something ominous about it. Stops by the driver's side door. Through the glass, he sees Kathy, still asleep. Her arm rests over her eyes. She still wears the tiny shorts and sleeveless shirt from yesterday.

Behrani looks at her bare legs and arms, and shakes his head. He frowns, sips his tea, and walks back to the house.

58 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - LATER

58

Behrani's car is gone. The tools are spread out across the lawn. The shirtless carpenters have already begun to RIP portions out of the roof with hammers, and pieces of wood litter the border of the house. A large portion of roof skitters off the edge, and falls to the ground.

Carpenter #1 turns on his power saw and presses the whirring blade into the roof. It lets out a high pitched SHRIEK and spits out a spray of sawdust.

59 INSIDE THE BONNEVILLE

59

Kathy wakes with a start. She turns to see the sawdust and the destroyed roof. Gets out of the car, and runs barefoot across the lawn.

60a BY THE HOUSE

60a

Kathy stops underneath and yells up.

The men cannot hear her over the power-saw, so she climbs up the ladder onto the roof.

KATHY

What are you doing?

They turn off the power-saw.

CARPENTER #2

Excuse me?

KATHY

Who said you could do this? This is my fucking house.

CARPENTER

Who are you?

KATHY

I own this house. Me. Get off my roof.

CARPENTER

Are you Mrs. Bahrani?

KATHY

No.

The carpenter looks Kathy up and down. Her skimpy outfit, hair tangled and matted, sleep still in her eyes. She is suddenly very conscious of how pathetic she looks.

CARPENTER

(dismissive)

Mr. Bahrani hired me. You'll have to talk to him.

She looks at the impassive faces of the tattooed construction workers. One of them casually ashes off the edge of the house with his cigarette.

Anger floods her face. She stomps down the ladder, and begins to step across the shingles towards the front door.

CARPENTER (cont'd)

Watch out for the-

She glances up at him and...

60b

CLOSE ON: A two by four with RUSTY NAILS sticking out of it. Kathy's bare foot steps down on the nails, and four of them SINK DEEP into the ball of her foot.

60b

60c

Kathy stares down at the board in shock. She inhales quickly, and lets out a SCREAM. She jerks her knee up and a blood fountains from her foot onto the lawn.

60c

KATHY

Shit.

She hops and then sits down, and twists her foot up so that she can see the bottom. There is so much blood that the puncture wounds are not even visible.

KATHY (cont'd)

Fuck.

The carpenters run from the ladder and help her up.

CARPENTER

Here.

He offers his arm, and they help her hobble up the front steps to the door. She is in agony. They knock on the door, and after a moment Esmail opens it.

Nadi appears over Esmail's shoulder. She is wearing a designer sweat suit, and has a large ruby ring on one hand. Kathy stares at them.

CARPENTER (cont'd)

Sorry Ma'am, can we use your washroom to clean her foot?

Kathy's face turns sheet white. The carpenters catch her as she wavers. Nadi's face fills with concern.

NADI (FARSI)

Esmail. Go get a plastic bag.

Esmail runs off.

NADI (cont'd)

(to Kathy)

It is o-kay.

Esmail returns with the bag, and Nadi covers Kathy's foot with it. The carpenters carry her inside. As they walk down the hallway to the bathroom, Kathy looks around at the strange furnishings.

61

61

KATHY

When did you wallpaper?

62

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

62

The carpenters set Kathy on the edge of the tub, and run cold water over her foot.

CARPENTER

Have you had a tetanus shot lately?

Kathy ignores him. She is transfixed by her foot. A bright red drop of blood falls in slow motion, splashes into the water and swirls in a spiral down the drain.

KATHY

(dry swallows)

I think I'm gonna be sick.

Nadi enters behind them with a bar of soap and a plush white towel. Esmail looks in over her shoulder.

NADI

Ees it yet bleeding?

(In Farsi, to Esmail)

Bring me a bandage!

Nadi gently washes Kathy's foot with the soap. She reaches for the towel.

KATHY

I don't want to ruin your towel.

Nadi smiles, but doesn't seem to understand. She wraps Kathy's foot in the expensive-looking towel. Esmail rushes in with a box of medicines and an Ace bandage.

ESMAIL

(to Kathy)

I use it for skateboarding. Don't worry I washed it.

CARPENTER

Sorry, but I have to know what the story is before I continue the job.

Kathy looks down at Nadi, who is gently bandaging up her foot.

KATHY

I'll talk to her husband.

CARPENTER

Fine. Sorry about your foot.

He walks out. Nadi uses a safety pin to hold the bandage in place.

Kathy sits on the sofa, with her bandaged foot resting on the silver tea table. She looks at a two-sided picture frame on the end-stand.

The shiny frame is engraved with Arabic script. The photo is of Behrani posing proudly in his uniform. Kathy scrutinizes the imposing rigid face.

She turns the frame. The other side shows a young, laughing Behrani holding infant Esmail high up in the air. Nadi hugs him trying to reach up to her son. They both glow with happiness.

Nadi enters with a tray containing a teapot and saucers.

NADI

This is of course our family pictures.

KATHY

Thank you.

Nadi smiles as Kathy accepts a cup of tea. She sits down at the far end of the couch. Both women are very quiet.

Nadi puts a cube of sugar in her mouth and sips her tea. Kathy stares at Nadi sucking on the sugar cube.

Nadi's eyes tick to Kathy's bare legs, and the high cut of the cotton shorts. A brief disapproving look passes across her face.

They sip their tea in the silence, avoiding each other's gaze. Kathy glances at the folded white towel, her blood drying on it. She puts down her teacup.

KATHY (cont'd)

I think I should go.

64

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MOMENTS LATER

64

Kathy limps out of the house. She stops, and looks out at the yard littered with pieces of wood. Reaches into her pocket for a lighter and the pack of cigarettes. She shakes the pack, looks inside. Empty. She crumples the pack.

She rummages in the bushes and finds the unsmoked cigarette she plucked out of the locksmith's mouth during the eviction.

Lights it, winces at its staleness, but keeps smoking as she hobbles to her car.

65

INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE - DAY

65

Kathy sinks into the chair and puts her bandaged foot up onto Connie's desk. She unwraps a fresh pack of Virginia Slims.

CONNIE WALSH
What happened?

KATHY
I'll tell you what happened. My
yard is a constructions site.

Kathy lights a cigarette.

CONNIE WALSH
You were there, Kathy?

KATHY
Damn right. I stepped on some
nails.
(getting worked up)
I was bleeding on my own doorstep,
waiting for a stranger to answer my
door...

Kathy's voice breaks, and she looks away, taking a long drag
on her cigarette. Taps the ash into a used coffee cup.

CONNIE WALSH
Kathy, you can't just go over
there. You've got to let us handle
this.

KATHY
I want them out of my house.
They're already more at home there
than I ever was. That's not right.

CONNIE WALSH
Did you get their name?

KATHY
Bahroony. Behmini. Something like
that. They're Middle Eastern.

CONNIE WALSH
One moment.

She opens the door, and calls out to Gary.

CONNIE WALSH (O.S.) (cont'd)
Gary, I want you to type up a
letter for the courier service...

Kathy looks out the window. Connie's voice fades away. On
the building next to her, a man feeds pigeons with birdseed.
Something scares them. Kathy watches as they soar off.

56

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

66

The carpenters sit on the roof, eating lunch. The framework of the widow's walk is already half constructed.

Below, an APPRAISER walks around the house pushing a stick with an orange wheel at the end. A meter on the stick counts off the feet of the exterior of the house. Behrani watches nervously from the porch.

67

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

67

The appraiser walks through the house making meticulous notes.

APPRAISER

(to self)

...three Bedrooms...

Behrani opens the door to the bathroom.

BEHRANI

The bathroom.

The appraiser glances in, and then walks off.

68

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - LATER

68

The appraiser sits at the kitchen table, punching numbers into a calculator. Each time he pauses, Behrani holds his breath. Finally, he pushes away from the desk.

APPRAISER

(sighs deeply)

Damned hard to sell a house nowadays. This is what you'd call a real buyers market. Well... sorry, but she comes in at... one hundred and seventy four.

Behrani remembers to breathe.

CUT TO:

69a

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MORNING

69a

Behrani tapes a "FOR SALE BY OWNER" sign on a utility pole at the bottom of the hill.

59b Another sign is hammered into the lawn in front of the house. 69b
Behrani looks up at the half-finished widow's walk, and then
adds to the sign with magic marker "WATER-VIEW PROPERTY".

70 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 70
Behrani enters. Nadi stands near the window, looking out at
the sign in the yard. She has been folding laundry.

NADI
Behrani.

BEHRANI
Yes, Nadi-joon?

NADI
When must we move again?

Behrani's face softens. He walks over to her.

BEHRANI
Not too soon. Perhaps once we get
a buyer we will tell them to wait
until Fall. Would you prefer that?

NADI
(lowers her head)
I will do as you wish, Massoud.

He hugs her, and smells her hair.

71-73 OMITTED 71-73

74 INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - DAY 74

Kathy drives with her left foot, keeping the bandaged right
one elevated on the seat next to her. A cigarette hangs
loosely from her mouth.

She picks up Lester Burdon's business card from the dash,
glances at it, and sets it back down.

75 INT. GAS STATION, BATHROOM - DAY 75

MONTAGE - Kathy brushes her teeth in the bathroom, pulls off
her shirt, washes her underarms with a paper towel, adds
deodorant, pulls on another shirt, and does her makeup.

She looks better. Feels a little better. Limpes to her car.

76

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPT. - DAY

76

Kathy sits in her car, watching the Sheriff's Department. She wears sunglasses, and smokes a cigarette. A couple of cops stroll up to the entrance and go inside. Otherwise it is quiet.

She picks up Lester Burdon's card again. Twirls the wedding ring she still wears on her finger. She stubs her cigarette out and reaches for the keys.

CLINK! CLINK! CLINK! Sound of metal on glass - right by her ear. Kathy jumps, and lets out a squeak.

Lester Burdon stands at her window. She rolls it down.

LESTER

This is a surprise.

KATHY

A good surprise, or a bad one?

LESTER

Good. It's good.

KATHY

My lawyer thinks she can get my house back. I thought you'd like to know.

LESTER

I'm glad to hear it.

A young DEPUTY TRAINEE walks by.

DEPUTY TRAINEE

Thanks for letting me ride along today, Mr. Burdon.

Lester waves to him and turns back to Kathy.

LESTER

How's the El Rancho? Still all the comforts of home?

KATHY

I'm not there anymore. I'm staying at the Bonneville.

LESTER

I don't know it.

KATHY

You're looking at it, Les.

LESTER

I'm just getting off duty now. I'm surprised you found me.

KATHY

Hey, you found me.

77

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

77

The road crew works in the stifling heat. Behrani pulls up to the shoulder and exits his car. He is wearing a suit. He walks to where Torez is reading the comics.

TOREZ

You're late, Behrani.

BEHRANI

I am not late. I have come to tell you I am no longer to return to this job.

TOREZ

You tell the office, Colonel?

BEHRANI

No.

TOREZ

So why tell me, man?

Torez goes back to his comics. Behrani turns, and watches the crew slaving over the hot cement. Mendez looks up. His eyes narrow when he sees Behrani in his suit. Behrani smiles, gets in his car. Turns on the AC and drives away.

78

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - EVENING

78

The sky is getting darker. The wind blows softly in the pine trees. The workmen are packing their things into their truck. We move past them and to

79a

THE BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

79a

The stairs of the widow's walk, neat, smooth, well put together, rise up across the kitchen window. We rise with them to

9b

THE WIDOW'S WALK - CONTINUOUS

79b

Behrani gazes out at the distant sea. He smiles and seems completely content. The carpenter climbs up the stairs, wiping his hands.

CARPENTER

Well, we're all packed up.

Behrani pulls out his checkbook, and writes a check. In the amount, he writes \$1,050. He tears the check out and hands it over.

BEHRANI

For such a professional job well done, I have included a bonus of fifty dollars, sir.

CARPENTER

Thank you sir... And good luck with that woman.

BEHRANI

(misunderstands)

Yes, she is a good one. She will surely learn to like the stairs in the window.

The workman smiles and offers his hand. They shake.

80

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MOMENTS LATER

80

Behrani sweeps the sawdust off the porch, as the carpenters pull away. Esmail skateboards in the street, attempting different tricks. Behrani smiles at his son. Esmail notices the attention, and tries even harder to impress.

A small red car pulls up. Written on the driver's door is "BAY AREA COURIERS". A COURIER hops out and quickly strides up the driveway.

COURIER

You live here?

BEHRANI

Yes.

COURIER

Here you go.

Behrani signs his name on a clipboard. The courier hands Behrani a letter and hurries back to his car. The letter has misspelled Behrani's name "Behmini", and the return address is "Society of Legal Aid, Lambert & Walsh, Attorneys at Law."

Behrani tears open the envelope as he goes inside.

81 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S OFFICE - EVENING

Behrani sits at his desk, and puts on his glasses to read the letter. His mouth moves as he reads, the skin on his face becoming tighter. He begins to RIP the letter to shreds.

BEHRANI (cont'd)
Mother- whores- God- damnit!

He throws the pieces of letter towards the trash and they scatter across the floor like pieces of confetti.

He leans against the desk for a moment, breathing heavily. He calms a bit, and then drops to the floor, searching through the pieces of paper.

Behrani lifts a scrap of paper from the floor. The letterhead has the address of the Legal Aid Society. He stares at it.

82 EXT. BEACH - SUNSET

The police cruiser is parked at the beach. The sun is setting on the horizon. Farther out, a thick bank of clouds moves in from the water. Kathy sits at a picnic table not far from a hot dog shack. Lester, still in uniform, carries hot dogs and two beers on a tray. They sit side by side.

Lester takes a swig from his beer bottle and slides the other one in front of Kathy.

KATHY
I haven't had a drink in three years, Lester.

LESTER
I'm sorry. I didn't know.

KATHY
I guess there's a lot you don't know about me.

A couple strolls past, and stare at Kathy and Lester. When Lester looks at them, they quickly look away at the ocean.

Out on the ocean, a long wave is rolling in. A seagull dives for a fish. The fog has moved in to obscure the sun. Its pale tendrils reach towards the beach. A low foghorn sound.

KATHY (cont'd)
Fog's coming in.

LESTER
I'd like to ask you something
personal, if I could.

KATHY
All right. Get it over with.

LESTER
Why is your husband no longer with
you?

KATHY
I wanted kids, and he didn't. I
don't know, I think if he really
wanted me, he would have too, you
know?

Lester puts his hand on Kathy's. She freezes.

LESTER
He's a fool.

Kathy stares at his hand.

KATHY
Have you been watching me, Officer
Burdon?

LESTER
Yes.

KATHY
Good.

LESTER
It is?

KATHY
That you didn't lie...

She stands and inhales the sea air.

KATHY (cont'd)
I was nineteen when I was married
my first time. To Donnie. It
didn't last long. We drank a lot.
Then my period was late. He said
he was too young to have kids, so
we drove to a clinic in Brookline.

She pauses, looks at his face. His eyes are serious.
Concerned.

KATHY (cont'd)

The whole family found out. My mom started getting "the look". Like she was waiting for me to fuck up again. God, I hate that look more than anything else in the world. Dad... Dad had never really looked right at me before, but now he stopped looking at me at all, just gave me his quiet profile in front of the TV.

Lester looks towards the coming fog and takes a swig of beer for courage.

LESTER

I think you're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen, Kathy.

Kathy squints at Lester, and then, suddenly, kisses him. After a long moment, she pulls away. Licks her lips, tasting the beer from the kiss, a bit dizzy. Lester breathes heavily.

83

INT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, ROOM 12 - NIGHT

83

Lester and Kathy lie tangled in the sheets. Lester watches the red numbers on an alarm clock change from 8:33 to 8:34. He rises from the bed, and pulls on his pants.

LESTER

I'm sorry. I have to go home.

Kathy watches him dress.

KATHY

I'll pay you back for the room.

LESTER

Shh.

Lester leans over the bed. Kisses her. She pulls away.

KATHY

I guess you've done this before.

LESTER

(hurt)

Why do you say that?

KATHY

I'm sorry, I'm nervous. It was a joke.

Lester sits on the edge of the bed. He looks lost.

LESTER

You're a complicated woman, aren't you?

KATHY

Nope, I'm a simple woman, actually. I'm just good at complicating things.

84

INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - DAY

84

Behrani sits in the office. He wears his finest suit and clenches a leather valise in his hands.

Behrani's eyes linger on the poster of the women's movement. Fists upraised, placards with defiant slogans, proud angry faces. In slanted letters below: "OUR REVOLUTION IS NOW!"

85

INT. LIMO, TEHRAN STREETS, 1979 - DAY

85

Explosions and gunfire sound from nearby. The Behranis sit in the back seat of their limousine as it moves down the war torn streets. Mobs loot the stores. Fires burn.

As they pass a hotel, bearded students can be seen pouring Dom Perignon into the gutters, and then smashing the bottles. A man throws a large chunk of pavement at the window of their limo right next to Behrani's face. Nadi trembles like a wet bird, and holds young Esmail and Soraya to her, their faces streaked with tears. Behrani swallows his fear.

BEHRANI (FARSI)

The car windows are bullet proof.

NADI (FARSI)

(to children)

The windows are bullet proof. Everything is fine.

They pass another limo askew in the street. The doors are open, and GENERAL POURAT and his FAMILY hang from light-posts nearby with signs around their necks which say "MUSLIMS DO NOT STEAL FROM THEIR MUSLIM BROTHERS" and "MUSLIMS DO NOT TORTURE AND KILL THEIR MUSLIM BROTHERS".

Behrani glances at Nadi to see if she has seen the hanging bodies. Nadi is busy comforting the children. He sighs gratefully.

86

EXT. AIRPORT - DUSK

86

Behrani and his family run from the car and board the transport plane. Behind them, deep in the city, a building explodes, sending a fireball into the sky. Behrani, the last to board, turns, and watches the burning city.

The flames reflect in his glassy eyes as he takes a last look at Tehran, and then closes the hatch.

CONNIE WALSH (O.S.)

Mr. Barmeeny?

87

INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - DAY

87

Behrani looks up. Connie Walsh stands in front of him. He notices her bare feet, and frowns.

BEHRANI

Behrani. My name is Colonel Massoud Amir Behrani. I wish to speak with Mr. Walsh, please.

CONNIE WALSH

I'm Connie Walsh. This is my office, Colonel.

She offers her hand, and they shake.

CONNIE WALSH (cont'd)

Please come with me.

She turns and leads Behrani to her office. They pass Gary's receptionist desk. Gary's PHONE rings, and he answers it.

GARY

Legal aid.

88

INT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, ROOM 12 - CONTINUOUS

88

Kathy sits on the bed, wearing a towel.

KATHY

Hey Gary, it's Kathy. What's shaking?

GARY (PHONE)

Progress, Kathy, we're making progress!

KATHY

What kind of progress, Gary?

GARY (PHONE)

(dramatic whisper)

My boss will kill me, but oh-what-the-hell, the county made a mistake. They're willing to rescind the sale, and Connie's in talking with the owner about it right now. He looks like a nice man. You could have your house back very soon.

KATHY

I could kiss you, Gary.

89

INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE - ONE MINUTE EARLIER

89

Connie closes the door behind her, cutting off Gary's voice. Behrani is on the edge of the seat, his valise on his knees.

CONNIE WALSH

I'm sure our letter came as a shock to you, Colonel. The situation is this: San Mateo County has made a number of mistakes. First, they levied a tax on my client - which she did not owe. Second, they evicted her for non-payment. And third, they auctioned the property. Unfortunately sir, that's where you come in.

BEHRANI

But I now own the house. I paid for it cash. I have a bill of sale. Here, please...

He opens the valise, and hands her the paperwork - all in order, neatly stapled. Connie scans it quickly.

CONNIE WALSH

Are you willing to sell the county back the house? I'd see to it they made it as comfortable a transaction as possible.

BEHRANI

Please listen to me very carefully, Miss Walsh. The only comfortable transaction possible is if the county tax office pays to me one hundred and seventy four thousand dollars.

CONNIE WALSH

Mr. Behrani, you only spent a quarter of that amount.

BEHRANI

(stands)

The market can already pay me this. Good morning, Miss Walsh.

Behrani moves to the door. Connie comes around the desk.

CONNIE WALSH

Wait, please. From a legal standpoint you are in the right, but the true owner of this house is living in a motel, Mr. Behrani. All her belongings are locked in storage. Why should she have to wait to get back into her home? Just because you want to turn a profit?

BEHRANI

Miss Walsh, things are not as they appear. What seems as a selfish move, is a matter of necessity for me and my family. I cannot even afford to move. I am sorry. I do not have a choice in this matter.

90

EXT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, POOL - DAY

90

Kathy sits out by the pool in a bathrobe, her foot bandaged and propped on a small table. Her eyes are closed. A couple of KIDS loudly splash in the shallow end.

A shadow falls on her face. Kathy opens her eyes. Lester stands above her. She lowers her sunglasses to get a better look at him.

KATHY

Well, this is a surprise.

They fall into an uncomfortable silence.

KATHY

(changes the subject)

Hey, my lawyer says the Arabs will
sell the house back.

LESTER

(a bit forced)

Really? That's great.

He sits next to her. Another long moment of silence.

KATHY

So. This wasn't just a one night
fling?

LESTER

(flushes)

No. I'm not sure what's happening
here either, Kathy, but I do know
I'm not trying to make you some toy
of mine. I need to see you before
another day passes...

KATHY

And what?

Lester doesn't answer. He takes her hand.

LESTER

Let me take you on a proper date
tomorrow night. We can celebrate
the house.

91 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST., WIDOW'S WALK - SUNSET

91

New porch furniture and a large cloth umbrella now adorn the
small deck. Behrani and Esmail stand at the railing. Nadi
walks over to join them. The sun is a ball of bright saffron
sinking into the sea, turning the water purple and orange.

The sun dips below the horizon and, with a flash of green,
begins to fade. Behrani puts his arms around Nadi and
Esmail, and hugs them to him. Together they look towards the
ocean as the light dies on their faces.

92 INT. CPA'S TWO STORY DUPLEX, KITCHEN - DAY

92

Kathy stands on one foot, the other awkwardly hangs over the
sink. She dials the wall phone as she starts to unwrap the
bandage on her foot. On the other end, the answering machine
comes on. It's her Mom.

KATHY

Mom... I know you probably tried to call... There was this tremor up here and the whole county's phones are messed up...

She looks down at the partially unwrapped foot - it's black and blue. Infected. She winces, and wraps it back up - doesn't want to deal with it.

KATHY (cont'd)

...they're not sure how long it's going to take to get it fixed. Anyway I'll talk to you later, Ok? I've got to run, I'm...

MOM (PHONE)

(picking up)

Kathy? Is that you?

Kathy freezes, then quickly hangs up the phone.

The phone rings. She backs away from it.

93

IN THE FOYER

93

She reaches into her pocket and pulls out her cigarettes and lighter. A piece of paper falls out onto the floor. She picks it up.

It is the CPA'S note, asking her out. She looks up, and sees herself in the mirror. Not a pretty sight. She takes a pen, scribbles "I'M MARRIED" on the note, and tucks it into the edge of the hall mirror.

94

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

94

Behrani peruses the real estate pages of the newspapers. Nadi hums as she cleans the kitchen. Suddenly, the humming STOPS. Behrani looks up. Nadi stands in the kitchen door, watching him.

He smiles to her, unsure of what's happening. Nadi comes over to him and kisses his cheek.

NADI

Why did you not stay with me last night, Massoud?

She takes his hand, and leads him into her room, closing the door behind them.

95

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

95

The room is lit by moonlight. Behrani and Nadi make love under the covers. Quietly. Tenderly. Daryoosh music plays in the BG. The Persian singer's voice rises higher and louder, as Behrani's breath quickens.

The tape player CLICKS OFF at the moment of Behrani's CLIMAX. They lie together, still as statues, pale blue in the moonlight.

96

INT. HYATT REGENCY ORION ROOM - DUSK

96

Kathy and Lester are dressed to the nines, sitting by the window of a thirty-story-high revolving restaurant. The tops of skyscrapers look gold and pink in the dusk light. San Francisco Bay is far below, whitecaps covering the water.

Lester wears polished black cowboy boots, and a white shirt buttoned at his throat; Kathy a slightly wrinkled dress.

WAITER

Would you like to look at the wine menu?

LESTER

No. That's okay.

He waves the waiter away.

KATHY

You don't have to go without because of me, Lester.

LESTER

Oh, I don't miss it. I'm not a big drinker anyway.

KATHY

Me neither. I mean, I wasn't. Only when I did lines. They're what almost killed me.

(catches the waiter)

Hey! A decent Napa Valley Chardonnay, for the gentleman.

The waiter nods. Disappears. Lester raises his eyebrow.

KATHY (cont'd)

You ever done anything against the law?

LESTER

That's a strange question.

KATHY

A conversation starter.

The wine arrives. Two glasses. Lester pours himself one. Looks deep into her eyes. Decides to trust her.

LESTER

I planted evidence.

KATHY

You did?

LESTER

This little runt of a guy was beating his wife like it was a pastime. She was too scared to turn him in. We'd show up and there they are, standing at the door like Romeo and Juliet, arm-in-arm - marital bliss. Welts, bruises all over her.

KATHY

You think she liked it?

LESTER

My partner thought so. I didn't. That little freak was on parole, so I stuffed two eight-balls in their closet. He's back in jail, and she's safe.

KATHY

Saving the damsels in distress?
Are you going to save me?

LESTER

Maybe.

KATHY

Do you always feel the need to wear this cape and mask, Les?

Lester starts to answer, but from Kathy's perspective, his voice trails off until his lips are moving silently.

Kathy glances at the wine. Distracted.

KATHY (cont'd)
(snaps out of the trance)
I'm sorry, Les... Tell you the
truth, the wine's distracting me.

LESTER
I'll send it back.

KATHY
No.

She rests her fingers on his.

KATHY (cont'd)
See, whenever I think of my
sobriety I don't think of wine, I
think of cocaine. That's what I'm
proud of staying away from. I
didn't go to rehab because I wanted
a glass of wine, it was because I
had to do a mile of coke...

LESTER
You're a grown woman, Kathy, maybe
you threw the baby out with the
bathwater?

He pours her a glass. Under the table she slips the tight
shoe off of her bandaged foot. Feels relieved.

KATHY
But what if the baby's not a baby?
What if it's something else in
disguise?

LESTER
Then toss it out for good and don't
look back.

KATHY
Do you ever look back, Les?

LESTER
All the time. That's my problem,
Kathy, I'm sentimental about my
fuckups.

KATHY
Me too.

Kathy stares at the glass of wine. She picks it up, and sips
it. Puts the glass down, and looks out at the city. Her
reflection in the window looks back at her.

LESTER
So far so good?

KATHY
(smiles at Lester)
So far so good.

96pt They sit lost in each other's eyes as the restaurant begins to REVOLVE faster and faster. The scenery outside the windows changes rapidly: CITY - BAY - BRIDGE - BAY - CITY - BAY..... becomes a BLUR, the tables a dizzy whirlwind of light and color against the gathering darkness. 96pt

97 INT. LESTER'S TOYOTA STATION WAGON - NIGHT 97
A spinning car wheel rolls to a stop. They pull up in front of the hotel.

KATHY
What are your kids' names?

LESTER
Nate and Bethany. Nate's five.
Bethany's twelve.

KATHY
Where is your house?

LESTER
Millbrae. A housing development
you have to drive through to get to
the mall.

KATHY
I know where that is. I've
probably driven past it a dozen
times. Maybe I've even seen your
wife.

LESTER
Carol.

KATHY
Yeah. Carol.
(beat)
What's your situation, Les? You
haven't breathed a word about it.

LESTER
My situation is my wife thinks I'm
working overnight patrol till
tomorrow morning.
(MORE)

LESTER (cont'd)
I guess that's pretty presumptuous
of me, isn't it?

KATHY
Is that really your situation?

LESTER
I married my best friend, Kathy,
that's my situation. For seven of
the last nine years I haven't
wanted to give her more than a hug
and a peck on the cheek.

KATHY
What about her?

LESTER
It's not the same for her.
(looks away)
I'm sorry Kathy. I don't mean to
dump any of this at your feet.

KATHY
Come inside.

98

INT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, ROOM 12 - NIGHT

98

MONTAGE - the world is blurry as Kathy and Lester make love.
Her eyes are open as they do, filled with emotion, trembling
under his touch... Lester rides her, mid-coitus, and pants
heavily, as he looks deeply into her eyes.

LESTER
(whispers)
I love you.

99

INT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, ROOM 12 - MORNING

99

Kathy wakes up, slides the curtain and looks out the window.
She winces from the bright sunshine. Hung over. An empty
bottle of champagne floats in a plastic "Eureka Motor Lodge"
ice bucket. Lester dresses by the bed.

KATHY
(croaks)
What time is it?

LESTER
Ten. I should have been home two
hours ago.
(laughs)
Things are finally in motion.
(MORE)

LESTER (cont'd)
 Maybe I'm relieved in a way. I'm
 finally going to get it over with.

KATHY
 It?

LESTER
 Telling her the truth. Stopping
 this masquerade ball I've been at
 for years. In a way, I feel found.
 And soon, so will you. When this
 is all done, I promise I'll move
 you back in myself.

100 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S OFFICE - DAY

100

Behrani carefully lifts a framed photo from a moving box. In
 it Behrani and Pourat sit next to the smiling Shah at a
 formal dinner party. Several unsmiling men stand behind them.

101 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - DAY

101

Nadi slices eggplant. Fragrant Iranian dishes simmer in pots
 on the stove. Behrani enters the kitchen, carrying the
 photo. He glances to make sure Esmail is not near, and
 places his arms around her waist, kissing the back of her
 neck. She shrugs free of him with a smile.

BEHRANI
 Nadi-joon, do you not think you
 will be able to cook one meal in
 one day?

NADI (FARSI)
 Dust on your head.

He lifts up the photo and points to it.

BEHRANI
 Do you know whom you speak with?
 The man who has kissed the hand of
 Shahanshah at least three times.

She waves him off, and moves to rinse her hands in the sink,
 a bounce in her step. Behrani's eyes fall on the kitchen
 window, and on the staircase which obscures it. A shadow of
 guilt crosses his face. The phone RINGS, distracting him.

102 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

102

Esmail is in front of the TV. The phone continues to ring.
 Behrani enters.

ESMAIL

Why is maman making such a big meal?

BEHRANI

Your sister returns from her sugar-moon today. Tomorrow we will give for her a large celebration.

Behrani answers the phone.

BEHRANI (PHONE)

Yes? Yes, this is it. Of course. This afternoon? Yes, three o'clock.

He hangs up the phone, and turns. Esmail is sitting on the couch playing a video game. Behrani joins him.

BEHRANI

And today, people are coming to view this house for buying. We have two gifts from God today. Wish me luck, bright eyes.

ESMAIL

We will have to move?

BEHRANI

Yes, but we will have enough money to live well. Perhaps to buy more properties like this one.

He hangs the framed photo on a nail in the living room.

BEHRANI

(points his finger at Esmail)

Trust your father.

Esmail nods.

103

INT. LEGAL AID OFFICE - DAY

103

Kathy's face is haggard, her eyes tired, bloodshot. Her fingers tremble from the champagne hangover, as she takes a long puff on a cigarette.

CONNIE WALSH

Look Kathy, the county has done their part, and the new owner won't go along with the deal.

(MORE)

CONNIE WALSH (cont'd)
 He's asking for four times what he
 bought it for. All we can do now
 is sue the county, but that will
 take months.

Kathy looks out the window. A dead pigeon lies on the ledge,
 the wind blowing gently across its feathers.

KATHY
 You mean I can't legally get my
 house back?

Connie shakes her head.

KATHY (cont'd)
 Well what the fuck am I doing
 sitting here talking to you, then?

104 OMITTED

104

105 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

105

Behrani walks out of the house with a professional-looking
 couple, the potential BUYERS.

BEHRANI
 And as you see, very excellent
 rooms, it is cool inside, even
 during the day. Let me show you
 the widow's walk.

106 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST., WIDOW'S WALK - DAY

106

They stand on the widow's walk. The couple smile as they
 look off to the ocean - as if they were imagining themselves
 here at sunset.

BEHRANI
 The sunsets are quite beautiful.
 There is very little fog in this
 area.

107 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY

107

Behrani and the buyers now stand on the sidewalk. Nadi sits
 on the porch steps, looking on.

HUSBAND
 When would the house be available?

BEHRANI

Not until autumn at the earliest.
We would need some time to find a
new home.

HUSBAND

That might be acceptable-

They all turn as Kathy's Bonneville PULLS INTO THE DRIVEWAY.
She gets out of her car.

NADI (FARSI)

That is the woman who hurt her
foot, Massoud.

Behrani looks at her, then at her Bonneville. He's putting
it all together, figuring out who she is.

BEHRANI

Yes. She has come for a tool her
carpenter boyfriend may have left
behind. I've been expecting her.
(to buyers)
One moment, please.

He smiles a large false smile, and walks across the yard to
intercept Kathy, and pulls her toward the corner of the
house.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

I am happy you came. Please, this
way, I will show you.
(softer)

My family knows nothing of this,
miss, I would like for it to remain
so.

KATHY

I'm sorry, but I think you have me
confused with someone else.

BEHRANI

No, I am quite certain who you are.

KATHY

I'm Kathy Nicolo.

She offers her hand. Behrani shakes and releases it quickly.
Behrani glances anxiously over his shoulder at the buyers.

KATHY (cont'd)

I know my lawyer talked to you, but
I thought we could just meet face
to face, Mr. Bahrooni.

BEHRANI

My name is Behrani. Colonel
Behrani.

KATHY

My father left us this house. He
left it to me and my brother.

BEHRANI

You should be telling these things
to the bureaucrats at the county
tax office. They have made the
mistake, not I.

KATHY

They've said they'd give you the
money back. Look, I know you put a
new deck on. I'm sure they'll pay
for that.

Kathy pulls out a cigarette and shakily lights it.

BEHRANI

I am sorry, miss, but as far as I
am concerned I have nothing more to
say to anyone. Why should I be
penalized for their incompetence?
Tell me that. You should sue them
for enough money to buy ten homes.
I will even sell you this house for
the right price. That is all I
require.

Nadi watches from the porch. She glances nervously at the
buyers, who are beginning to look impatient. She steps from
the porch to walk over to Behrani.

Behrani takes Kathy by the arm and forces her towards her
car.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

(loudly)

*I am sorry, I do not know where he
left his hammers.*

(quietly to Kathy)

There is nothing more to say of it.

KATHY

Let go of me.

Kathy pulls free of Behrani. Her cigarette falls onto the driveway.

KATHY (cont'd)

You can't just move in here and try to make money on this. That's not right!

Behrani crosses his arms, and glances at the buyers behind him. Nadi has stopped halfway, her face frightened and confused.

KATHY (cont'd)

(loudly)

This is my house. I lived here, and you stole this house from me, you son-of-a-bitch!

Behrani takes a tiny step forward, and Kathy backpedals to her car. She jumps inside and reverses into the street, holding her hand down on the horn.

KATHY (cont'd)

(shouts)

This is a stolen house! He's trying to sell you a stolen house!!!

Behrani watches as the Bonneville screeches away, the loud wail of the horn following it down the hill. He turns to the buyers. The man's arm is around his wife, both of them have frozen smiles. The sale is gone. Nadi looks at Behrani.

Behrani, his face still as stone, glances down and steps on the smoking cigarette, CRUSHING it beneath his shoe.

CUT TO:

108

INT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE, ROOM 12 - LATER

108

Lester sits at the table, eating a Carl's Junior burger and drinking a Budweiser.

Kathy enters. She's still worked up. Notices Lester's suitcases by the door, and his uniform on the bed in dry cleaners plastic. Her expression softens.

KATHY

What did you tell your kids?

LESTER

A lie, Kathy. I told them a lie.

Kathy comes over, hugs him to her stomach. He nuzzles to her like a boy.

LESTER (cont'd)

My old man walked out on us. I swore I'd never do that to my own, Kathy.

Notices a blue bruise forming on Kathy's arm.

LESTER

What happened?

KATHY

My lawyer couldn't get my house back, so I went to talk to the owner.

LESTER

And he put his hand on you?

Lester's face tightens with anger. Kathy touches him.

KATHY

It's OK, Les. Let's not get emotional about this.

She picks up his beer, and drinks deeply from it. Kathy gingerly sets the empty bottle down.

KATHY (cont'd)

So... what do we do now? I mean, look at us, we're both homeless.

LESTER

(still angry)

That's still not right. He's got no right to do that.

KATHY

What are we going to do Les?

Lester takes a deep breath. Calms down.

LESTER

I've got a fishing camp south of here. Another Deputy's lending it to me till I know what I'm doing, or where I'm going.

(MORE)

LESTER (cont'd)
Come help me sweep it out, and
we'll figure out how to get your
house back.

109 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - DAY

109

Nadi looks out the window as two black Mercedes pull into the driveway.

NADI (FARSI)
They are here!

110 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - CONTINUOUS

110

Nadi, Behrani, and Esmail come out to greet Soraya, her Husband ALI, and his mother, YASMIN. Soraya and her new family are dressed in expensive clothes and jewelry.

Behrani hugs his daughter to him.

BEHRANI
Little bird. Welcome to our new home.

Soraya turns to the house. Her face loses some of its light.

SORAYA
Does it go down the hill?

BEHRANI
(embarrassed)
No. It is an investment property.
Soraya, you remember, like our
second home on the Caspian.

SORAYA
(to Ali and Yasmin)
It's an investment home.

They smile politely, exchange a look, and grow quiet.

NADI (FARSI)
Come. Please come inside.

111 EXT. EUREKA MOTOR LODGE - DAY

111

Kathy is putting their bags into Lester's Toyota station wagon. Lester walks out of the room carrying a six-pack. He hands the beers inside.

KATHY

On the way out of town, let's drive
by my house.

LESTER

You sure?

KATHY

I just want to see it.

112

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - DAY

112

The two families sit in stiff, uncomfortable silence. Ali sits next to Soraya, not touching her, as is the custom. Soraya is restless, like a pinned butterfly, her eyes glancing around the tiny room. She looks at the edge of the expensive Persian carpet which almost covers a worn shag.

SORAYA

(cheerfully)

I remember in Tehran, my father would throw splendid parties. Many important people would come: generals, diplomats, bankers. Why once the phone rang, and it was the Shah himself, calling for my father-

BEHRANI

(with edge)

Please change the subject, beekhoreem, let us eat.

NADI

Yes, let us go to the roof porch,
to eat and watch the sunset.

Everyone hurries to move, as if they could trample over the awkwardness of the moment before.

113

INT. LESTER'S TOYOTA STATION WAGON - CONTINUOUS

113

Lester and Kathy drive along Bisgrove Street, slowing in front of the house. The luxury cars fill the driveway and spill onto the street. The Behranis and Soraya's new family are on the widow's walk, dressed in expensive, showy clothes, adorned in large, glittering jewelry. They hold champagne flutes under a large white umbrella. It is a distinct show of wealth. Their laughter rolls across the yard.

LESTER

Jesus. Look at them.

Lester turns his car in a tight U-turn.

LESTER (cont'd)
To hell with these people.

He meshes the gears, and gives the engine a flood of gas. As the car peels down the street, Kathy watches Behrani turn - a reflection of the house in the passenger side window.

Time seems to slow as their gazes meet - Behrani's smile fades from his face. To Kathy, he seems strange and alien as he watches her drive by, as if he was disapproving of her - as if she were a stain, or simply a nuisance. And then the car is gone, peeling down the street, Behrani's small figure receding in the distance.

114 INT. LESTER'S TOYOTA STATION WAGON - LATER

114

Back on the freeway now, the sky and setting sun are a bloody mess over the water.

Lester reaches behind him and opens a beer. He sips it as he drives.

LESTER
Those fucking Arabs. Stealing a
woman's house. God damnit.

He drinks his beer, and drives on. Kathy reaches for a beer of her own.

115 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

115

The rest of the party is on the widow's walk. Behrani wanders the tiny living room restlessly. He looks up at the picture of himself and the Shah.

116a INT. CABIN - NIGHT

116a

A hand lights a propane lamp, and then lowers the glass. Lester blows the match out, turns to regard the room. Lester whistles through his teeth at the condition of the place. Kathy stands at the door with a suitcase, shaking her head.

There is a small bare queen-sized mattress on the filthy floor, a wood stove, and not much else. No bathroom. No sink. Just screen-covered windows, and the bugs loudly batting themselves against them.

Kathy sets down the suitcase. Lester looks through a bag of groceries on the floor.

LESTER
Are you hungry?

KATHY
(eyes still on the room)
I could eat.

116b INT. CABIN - LATER

116b

A fire flickers in the wood stove. Remains of a meal are on the floor beside the mattress. Kathy and Lester lie in the bed, under the covers after sex. Lester stares into the fire. Kathy notices.

KATHY
Les? This all would have happened anyway, right? Even if you hadn't met me?

LESTER
Yes.

KATHY
Do you still love her?

Lester nods. Sighs.

LESTER
Look, it's just- it's not her.
She's a good woman. A good mother.
But being her husband felt like an act the whole time. You ever feel that? Like you're waiting for the real you in your real life, but the one you're in just keeps going on and on and it's like you're never going to live that real life you can feel is out there somewhere?

He pauses, takes a breath, runs his fingers through her hair, his eyes intently on the ceiling.

LESTER
Then I'm serving papers, and I see you. And when I saw you, I saw me.

Kathy raises her head - looks him in the face. Her eyes begin to fill up, he pulls her closer. Holds her arms.

She winces with pain. Looks at her bruised arm. Lester's face changes. Hardens. He sits up quickly.

LESTER
You said this guy's a Colonel?

KATHY
That's what he said.

LESTER
From what country?

KATHY
I don't know, but his wife hardly
speaks any English at all.

LESTER
Maybe they haven't been here that
long. Maybe they don't know their
way around. I'll call INS
tomorrow. See if they have
anything we can use.

Lester gets out of bed, and pulls the plastic off his
uniform.

KATHY
Use for what?

LESTER
For the greater good.

He starts to dress. Kathy watches him, the sounds of
zippers, and cloth on cloth.

KATHY
What are you doing?

LESTER
I'm going to go pay him a visit.
Officers tend to listen to other
officers. It's worth a shot.

Lester pauses, and instead of pinning on his name-tag, he
places it in his pocket. Kathy gets up, pulls the blanket
around her, and walks to him. She straightens his collar.

KATHY
And what if he doesn't listen?

LESTER
Then we turn up the volume.

17a

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT

117a

The party is over. Nadi cleans up, polishing a rice bowl. She hums contentedly as she works. Behrani slowly sips tea on the couch.

NADI

Tomorrow is my sister's birthday.
I would like to phone her in Iran,
early in the morning. I promise, I
will not speak for long.

Behrani looks at her, sees how happy she is at the moment, and a small smile escapes his mouth.

BEHRANI

Fine.

The doorbell rings. Behrani rises, curious who would be calling so late at night.

He opens the door, revealing Lester in his uniform, standing under the electric porch light. There is a thick fog outside. Behrani becomes tense, concerned.

LESTER

Did you post this sign, sir?

He points to the sign in the yard. Behrani relaxes. This is a trivial matter.

BEHRANI

Yes. Is there a difficulty
officer?

LESTER

And that's your sign at the bottom
of the hill?

BEHRANI

Yes.

Lester looks at Behrani, judging him, and then gazes into the house.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Please, come in, Officer.

Behrani moves to allow Lester inside. Lester begins to pace the room, his eyes taking in the rugs, the crystal, the fine furniture. The wealth he sees makes him more and more angry.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

I am new to the area, is a permit required to post signs?

LESTER

Not on the house, but the utility pole is city property.

BEHRANI

I see. Very well, I will put the sign elsewhere. Thank you for informing me.

Lester regards the framed photograph of Behrani, Pourat, and the Shah. Behrani steps to the front door.

LESTER

You're a long way from home, aren't you?

BEHRANI

This is my home. I am an American citizen.

LESTER

Were you a General?

BEHRANI

I was a Colonel.

Lester moves to look at the family portrait.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Tell me, Officer. What more can I do for you this evening?

LESTER

What is your name?

BEHRANI

Massoud Amir Behrani.

LESTER

And the names of your family?

Behrani looks to Lester's uniform. He notes the missing nametag, just below the FTO (Field-Training-Officer) pin on Lester's lapel.

BEHRANI

Why do you need the names of my family? What is your name, Officer?

LESTER

Deputy Sheriff Joe Gonzales. Let me ask you a question, Colonel: are you selling this house on your own?

BEHRANI

I do not wish to offend, Officer, but if you will excuse me I have work to do this evening.

LESTER

Civil Code 1101, for starters.

BEHRANI

I suggest you come with me to witness the removal of the sign.

LESTER

I'm talking about the disclosure law, Colonel. You, the owner, have the obligation to tell any prospective buyers anything about the property they have a right to know.

BEHRANI

I do not understand.

LESTER

You sure about that?

BEHRANI

Are you interrogating me, Mr. Gonzales?

Nadi watches nervously from the side.

LESTER

I don't know, Colonel. You tell me. I understand your friend the Shah used to make a real habit of it.

BEHRANI

I do not know who you think you are speaking to, sir, but I have had quite enough. You have done your job; now you may leave.

Behrani opens the door, and stands, waiting. Lester reaches past Behrani, and slams the front door shut. Nadi jumps.

LESTER

You're used to giving orders, aren't you, Colonel? Let me get right to the point here. San Mateo has offered you money to give this house back to the rightful owner. They don't want trouble. The only one who seems to want trouble around here is you. You don't seem to want to do the right thing, which is to sell this house back at the price you paid, so that it can be returned to the real owner. The real owner, Mr. Behrani. That just won't wash.

Lester opens the door, walks out on the porch. He gazes back into the house, at Nadi and Esmail who have come into the room.

LESTER (cont'd)

You have a family. I'd be thinking more about them if I were you. I have more than one contact at immigration. People get deported every single day. There are a lot of things I can do, Colonel. I suggest you call the movers so I won't have to. I know we won't have to see each other again.

Behrani watches as Lester walks away. His footsteps echoing in the empty street even after he can no longer be seen.

117b

Nadi comes over, frantic.

117b

NADI

Cheeh shodeh, Massoud? What is wrong?

BEHRANI

Nothing.

NADI

Give to me answer, Behrani. What did that man say of deporting?

BEHRANI

He said nothing Nadi.

Behrani closes the door and locks it.

NADI

Do not lie to me, Behrani! I heard him. Who was that man? Beh man beh goo, Behrani! Tell to me, what have you done?

BEHRANI

It is none of your business what I have done or not done. Have you no faith in me? No respect? That man has only said I must remove the sign. That is all.

NADI

Coward! Liar! Kaseef liar! It is your fault we were forced to flee Iran! It is your fault we are here, yours and your SAVAK friends-

Behrani SLAPS Nadi hard across the face, and then GRABS her, SHAKING her violently. She flails frightened.

Esmail JUMPS on his father's back, trying to pull him away. Behrani stumbles, backwards onto a tea table, breaking it, and landing on Esmail.

Nadi falls to her knees, and cries. Behrani stands, and tries to help Esmail up, but Esmail shrugs away. He gets up on his own and goes to comfort Nadi.

Behrani opens the door and goes outside, into the fog.

118

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MOMENTS LATER

118

Behrani stands at the bottom of the hill in the dim yellow lights of street-lamps gleaming dully through the thick fog. At his feet is the "For Sale" sign, ripped in half - a tiny portion of it hangs still taped to the post.

Behrani lifts the pieces of the sign, and turns them over and over in his hands. He walks back up the hill to the house.

119

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

119

The house is quiet. Esmail and Nadi are in their rooms. Their doors closed. Behrani bolts the front door behind him. Locks the bottom lock. He gazes at the broken table, then walks to Esmail's door.

120

ESMAIL'S BEDROOM

120

Esmail firmly looks away as Behrani enters.

BEHRANI

My son, please, do not follow the
example of your father. One day,
when you are married, do not do as
I did this evening.

Behrani waits. Esmail does not look up. Stares at the wall.
Behrani walks out and carefully closes the door.

121

HALLWAY

121

Behrani walks to Nadi's room, and knocks gently on the door.
A moment later, music begins to play in the room. The
message is clear.

He goes to his own room.

122

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

122

Behrani lies in bed. His eyes are open. The clock says 2:22
AM. Outside, the branches of a tree scrape against the
window, like an animal trying to scratch its way in.

Somewhere, a car drives past, and Behrani holds his breath
until the headlights fade away. Behrani rises, the blanket
wrapped tight about him, and wanders the house like a ghost.

123

THE LIVING ROOM

123

He walks into the dark living room. Smacks his shin against
the leg of the broken table.

BEHRANI (FARSI)

Shit.

The outside lock is secure. Behrani stands by the window,
looking out at the dark yard. He scans the shadows.

Flips on the switch to the outside light. There is nothing
but a few insects, and the small lawn beyond.

Behrani moves back into the darkness of the far side of the
room, and seats himself so that he can remain. Watching.
Guarding. His eyes alert, moving, thinking.

124

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

124

Lester comes into the cabin, and takes off his coat. He
carries two bottles of wine. He seems edgy. Kathy sits up
on the mattress, anxious.

LESTER

The guy's obviously not right off the boat. I think you were right - he probably buys up seized property just to make a killing. We did the right thing. He's scum.

KATHY

What did you do?

LESTER

I set him straight. I think he'll listen. He will.

Lester hands her a cup of wine.

125

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - MORNING

125

Behrani wakes up. He is still in the chair. He stands and stretches. For a moment - he looks older, smaller. Then almost by force he snaps into his usual erect posture.

He makes a tray of tea, and carries it to Esmail's room. Esmail looks up at him, hair tussled, eyes sleepy. Behrani sits on the bed. Esmail, still a little upset, casts his eyes downward.

BEHRANI

(gently)

Do not be disrespectful, son. Look at me.

Esmail looks at his father.

ESMAIL

The man said we would be deported.

BEHRANI

No. We are American citizens. They can do nothing to us. We own this house now.

ESMAIL

I feel bad for that lady, Bawbaw-jahn.

BEHRANI

The woman's house was taken from her for a reason. She did not pay her taxes, Esmail. That happens when one is not responsible. Fahmeedee. Do you understand?

Esmail nods.

BEHRANI

Do not feel bad. Americans, they do not deserve what they have. They have the eyes of small children who are forever looking for their next source of distraction, entertainment, or a sweet taste in the mouth. We are not like them. We know rich opportunity when we see it, and do not throw away God's blessings. You know I must raise money for your university education.

ESMAIL

I can get another paper route.

BEHRANI

Man meedoonam. I know. You are a kind child, quickly becoming a man. You have my respect for your heart. Soon all of this will be behind us.

Behrani squeezes his son's bare shoulder.

126

EXT. CABIN, BY THE RIVER - MORNING

126

Kathy swims in the slow moving current. The water reflects the moss covered trees and blue sky above. She dives under the surface and comes up with a silver spray of droplets. She is cleansed to the bone; the water seems to have washed away all of her worries with the dirt and grime - she drifts, peaceful and free.

Lester appears on the river bank. He watches her, unseen, for a few moments.

LESTER

You're blocking me in.

She startles. His voice jars her out of the moment. When she sees that it is him, she smiles.

KATHY

Just take my car. Keys are on the table.

They watch each other for a moment. Lester looks wistfully at her. Walks back up to the cabin.

127

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPT. - DAY

127

Lester parks the red Bonneville in the Sheriff's Department lot and crosses the street. He stops dead in his tracks.

OFF HIS LOOK:

A parked minivan. Carol JUMPS out. The kids stare out of the backseat, still dressed in their pajamas.

CAROL

I want you to see what you are doing to this family.

Lester tries to walk past Carol, but she grabs him. There is a passive struggle. Carol tries to hold him near, and Lester tries to pull away. Pedestrians turn to look.

CAROL (cont'd)

I want you to look at your children, and see the damage you're causing.

LESTER

This isn't the time for this, Carol.

CAROL

Then when? When is the time?

LESTER

When I'm not on my way to work.

Carol watches him in disbelief, and then starts to HIT him. She FLAILS, surprisingly landing some punches. He tries to fend her off. The children begin to cry. Their faces are pressed to the glass, hands smearing snot and tears.

LESTER (cont'd)

Stop it Carol, or I swear I'm going to arrest you. I will do it.

CAROL

Arrest me! Go ahead! Arrest me in front of your children!

BETHANY

(sobbing)

Daddy..... Daddy....

Lester backs away from the onslaught, and looks at his children in the back seat. His heart breaks.

Carol slides down the minivan door to the pavement, and hugs her knees.

CAROL

I didn't mean to embarrass you.

He turns and walks back across the street, away from work, leaving his family on the other side. He tosses his gun belt into the trunk of the Bonneville, gets in, and drives off.

128

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT., ALVAREZ'S OFFICE - DAY

128

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ sits behind his desk, with his palms and fingers together. He is a serious looking man who listens intently to Behrani.

MYERS, his assistant, quietly sits in a chair to the side.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

This man said his name was Joe Gonzales?

BEHRANI

Yes.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

And he had no nametag? We checked, but we have no Joe Gonzales on the force. Did he have anything else on him? Any pins, anything that might help us to ID him? We have hundreds of deputies here.

BEHRANI

He had a golden star... A badge of two pistol barrels crossed together... And letters of gold spelling F.T.O.

Alvarez is silent for a long moment. Myers leaves and returns with a single piece of paper. It has eight pictures on it.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

There are only eight field training officers in the whole department. Do you see him here?

Behrani looks over the page, and immediately points to a picture of Lester. Alvarez turns to Myers.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ (cont'd)

Burdon.

Myers and Alvarez share a moment. Alvarez turns back to Behrani.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ (cont'd)

You are completely confident this
is the officer?

BEHRANI

Yes. That is him. That is the man
who threatened me.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

I'm sorry that this happened to
you, sir. I can promise you, it
won't happen again.

129

INT. CABIN - DAY

129

Lester comes inside. Kathy spins and gestures to the
interior. Lester doesn't react.

KATHY

I scrubbed this place top to bottom
and you don't notice?

(sees he's distracted)

What's up?

Lester turns the keys over in his hands like prayer beads.

LESTER

I need to go home for a while
today. I need to... to go home...
and to explain things to Carol
better. And Nate and Bethany. I
should be home when they come back
from school.

KATHY

You just said 'home' three times.

LESTER

It is my home, Kathy.
(less convincing)
At least until we make another one.

KATHY

(trying for courage)
If you don't come back I'll
understand.

LESTER

I'll be back in an hour. Two at
most...I don't deserve you, Kathy.

KATHY

Yes you do.

He kisses her. A peck. Then leaves.

130

INT. CABIN - FOUR HOURS LATER

130

The sunlight has changed its angle. Kathy sits in the cabin,
looking at the clock. Lester hasn't returned yet.

She picks up her keys, and walks out.

131a

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

131a

Lester's car isn't there. She gets into the Bonneville, uses
the car lighter to light a cigarette. Her last in the pack.
Turns on the radio. Kathy sits very still, despair washing
over her face.

131pt

TIME LAPSE - Kathy sits in the car and waits for Lester to
come back from his house, as everything around her speeds up.
Clouds rush across the sky. Tree branches tremble in the
wind. Ripples race across the water. Time passes.

131pt

131b

Her hope fades.

131b

She slumps lower and lower in the car seat. Suddenly, she
SMASHES her hand on the steering wheel.

KATHY

(explodes)

FUCK!!!

132

INT. CPA'S TWO STORY DUPLEX - DAY

132

Kathy comes into the house.

KATHY

Hello?

No one is around.

133

INT. CPA'S TWO STORY DUPLEX, BATHROOM - LATER

133

Kathy showers, towels off, and brushes her teeth with the
CPA's toothbrush. Through the fog, she practices different
facial expressions, ranging from pitiful to gravely serious.

KATHY

It is so wrong... It is so wrong...
It is so so wrong to take someone's
home. Mr. Behrani, please, I'd
like to talk to you about...

She tries in vain to wipe away the steamed mirrors so she can see herself. She puts on some of the CPA's deodorant.

134 INT. CPA'S TWO STORY DUPLEX, DAUGHTER'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 134

The room is a typical twelve-year-old girl's bedroom - stuffed animals and posters of "boy bands". Kathy limps in naked, takes a pair of daisy-pattern underwear from the daughter's dresser, and pulls them on.

KATHY

...You can't just invade... You
can't just invade someone's home...

She stops, and nods. She knows what she's going to say.

135 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - DAY 135

Kathy parks her car in the driveway and gets out. Behrani's car is missing. Undeterred, Kathy limps to the front door.

136 ON THE PORCH 136

There is the faintest sound of Persian music from inside. Kathy rings the doorbell, and then peers through the window. The silver coffee table lies on its side, two legs broken off. No one comes to the door.

KATHY

Hello? Excuse me, is anyone home?

The Persian music stops.

NADI (O.S.)

Please a moment wait. Oh. Excuse
for me, please.

Nadi opens the door. She is wearing a different designer outfit.

NADI (cont'd)

I am sorry for keeping you to
waiting. Deed your friend to leave
more tools?

KATHY

What? No. Can I come in?

NADI

Yes. Please come in.

She opens the door wider. Kathy enters.

137

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

137

Kathy's nostrils flare as she takes in the strange smells of the house. Nadi watches nervously as Kathy limps around the room.

KATHY

My name is Kathy Nicolo. My father was Salvatore Nicolo. This was the house he left to me and my brother when he died.

She takes a creased photo from her purse - 12-year-old Kathy and her Father, standing in front of the Bisgrove house - big smile on Kathy's face. Nadi stares at the picture.

NADI

I do not understand.

KATHY

The county evicted me from this house by mistake. Your husband bought it, and now he won't sell it back to them. And he wants four times what he paid. I have no place to live. I can't afford a motel anymore. I can't.

Nadi's face goes pale.

NADI

They are to deport us?

KATHY

What? I don't know. I don't think so.

NADI

Please, you must see, they will kill us. Please, they will shoot my children.

Nadi begins to cry. Kathy sits beside Nadi and pats her small, thin back.

KATHY

You don't understand a word I'm saying, do you?

Nadi cries harder. Kathy gets her a tissue. Nadi wipes her face.

NADI

Please. You are a very nice girl. Please- write for me everything. I want for to understand for discussing with my husband.

She pushes the piece of paper towards Kathy.

138

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST., DOWN THE HILL - DAY

138

Behrani stops his car by the light post. He gets out from his car and resolutely hammers a "For Sale" sign into the ground, using a long crowbar.

He gets into his car, and drives towards the house.

139

OUTSIDE THE HOUSE

139

Behrani pulls into the driveway, and sees Kathy and Nadi standing and talking at the foot of the porch. He slams on the brakes. In an instant, Behrani jumps from the car and storms across the lawn. Fear crosses both women's faces.

NADI

Nakohn, Behrani, don't!

Behrani GRABS Kathy by the shoulders, and begins PUSHING her across the lawn towards her car. Kathy tries to pull away, afraid.

BEHRANI

Do you think you can frighten me?
Do you think you can frighten me
with that stupid Deputy? Coming
here and telling lies?

Behrani begins to SHAKE Kathy. Her hair falls into her face as she trembles under Behrani's strength. His hands SQUEEZE her shoulders, the knuckles white from the effort.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

What do you think I am? Tell me
that? Am I stupid? Do you think I
am stupid?

NADI

Leave her alone! Basteh!
Velashkon! Stop it Behrani!
Please, to stop it!

Behrani opens Kathy's door, and SHOVES her inside. Her head SMACKS against the roof, and she just manages to pull her leg inside before the door slams shut. Behrani leans in through the window, his face only centimeters away from her.

BEHRANI

In my country, you would not be
worthy to raise your eyes to me.
You are nothing. Nothing.

Nadi begins to beat at Behrani's back. He ignores her and grabs Kathy's face with his hands. Kathy reaches for the keys in the ignition, FUMBLING...

KATHY

Please-

BEHRANI

And you tell your friend his
superior officers know everything.
You tell him that. This is our
home. Our home-

Kathy turns the car engine on, and throws it into reverse. The car TEARS free of Behrani, and backs straight across the street and onto the strip of grass on the other side. It shifts into forward, and SPEEDS recklessly down the hill.

Behrani watches her drive away. Nadi is silent behind him. He turns towards her, and she takes a step back, afraid. His eyes soften the tiniest bit, yet still the two regard each other like strangers.

140/141 EXT. PHONE BOOTH/BOSTON CAR DEALERSHIP, FRANK'S OFFICE - DAY 140/141

Kathy sobs as she dials in a phone booth on the side of a busy road. She holds the receiver up by her ear but does not speak.

FRANK (PHONE)

Kathy? K? Is that you? What's
wrong?

Frank sits in his sales office. He leans over the desk. Talks into the phone. The frame of the doorway hides his face.

Kathy twists the receiver away from her. She cries silently, her mouth a grimace of grief.

KATHY
(voice distorted by tears)
Nick's gone, Frankie.

FRANK
What? What do you mean, 'gone'?

KATHY
He left... Me.

A moment of silence.

FRANK
When, K?

KATHY
A while ago.

FRANK
Did he take the Pontiac?

KATHY
No he didn't take the Pontiac.
Christ, is that all you care about,
Frank? The fucking car you gave
us?

FRANK
Hey, calm down. It was just a
question.

She looks at the bruises starting to form on her arms and starts sobbing again.

FRANK (cont'd)
K, are you still, you know, dope-
free?

KATHY
Please don't talk to me like this,
Frank.

FRANK
Like what?

KATHY
Like I'm a fucked-up child.

FRANK

I didn't mean it that way. Lookit,
just come home. The hell with
Lazaro. Come back east, K.

KATHY

I can't.

FRANK (PHONE)

Why?

KATHY

I just can't.

FRANK (PHONE)

For fuck's sake K! It's always the
same story. What you need is...

(to someone else)

I'll be right there.

(back to Kathy)

Look, sorry, I gotta go, ok? Got a
customer.

KATHY

Yeah.

FRANK

(distracted)

Come stay with us. Ma and the
aunts will be there on the 18th.
They can help you pack. Bring you
back, straighten you out. Think
about it and I'll call you later.

KATHY

Wait. I'm going on a trip, so I
won't be there. Could you tell Mom
that? Apologize for me? Tell her-

FRANK (PHONE)

Yeah, yeah, I'll tell her. Chin
up, hon. Call me.

He hangs up. Kathy gingerly places the phone back into the
cradle.

142

EXT. PALOMINO MEADOWS DEVELOPMENT - DAY

142

Kathy drives past the mall, and into a nearby housing
development. The carved wood sign says: PALOMINO MEADOWS.

Kathy drives slowly through the maze of suburban streets, like a cop, checking out each house. Kids play on the lawns.

She drives past a TANNED BLONDE WOMAN unloading groceries from a car. Kathy stares at her. Is this Carol?

She rolls past a white Toyota station wagon, and almost stops. A MAN is working under its hood. Sensing her presence, he turns to look at her. It is not Lester.

Kathy speeds up and drives away.

143

INT. MALL, MEXICAN RESTAURANT - DAY

143

Kathy sits at a table, ordering from a menu. Mariachi music plays from the ceiling speakers. Her fingers tremble as she smokes. A WAITRESS takes her order.

KATHY

I'll have a guacamole salad and a Margarita. No salt.

WAITRESS

Blended or rocks?

KATHY

(faintest pause)

Rocks.

LATER - The food arrives. Kathy finishes her Margarita.

KATHY (cont'd)

Another, please. No salt.

The waitress takes away the empty glass. Kathy stares at the food, but doesn't eat.

LATER - Kathy sips the second Margarita. The food is still untouched. Kathy grabs a BUSBOY as he passes by. Lifts up her half-empty glass.

KATHY

Another? Thanks.

A FATHER strolls by the window with a baby in his arms. A LITTLE GIRL follows behind him - she trails her fingers across the glass as she walks.

LATER - Two empty Margarita glasses are on the table. Kathy draws deep on her cigarette, and watches people outside.

At a nearby table FATHER #2 kisses his wife. A baby sits in a highchair next to them. The happy couple.

WAITRESS

Everything ok?

Kathy looks up, startled, then glances down at her uneaten guacamole salad.

KATHY

(slurs just a little)

It's all, too... green... Just bring me another Margarita. Please.

The waitress stares at her. Then walks away..

Kathy resumes watching the family and their baby. The waitress returns with a Margarita... and the check.

KATHY (cont'd)

I wasn't... Never mind.

LATER - Kathy finishes her Margarita, and gets up from the table. She unsteadily walks out of the Mexican restaurant.

44

OMITTED

144

145

INT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

145

The sounds seem distant, disjointed. The whole mall is warped; the many lights leave trails as Kathy moves her head.

146

INT. MALL, SEARS - EVENING

146

Kathy limps through Sears into the housewares department. Before her is a plastic gas can display.

Kathy picks up a red gas can, and hefts it.

147

INT. MALL, SEARS FRONT COUNTER - EVENING

147

Kathy sets the gas can on the counter.

KID BEHIND THE COUNTER

You need a funnel with that?

KATHY

Nope. Just a book of matches.

148

INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - NIGHT

148

Kathy drives down the road. She glances at the gas can sitting on the passenger side like a well behaved dog. Pulls into a gas station/convenience store.

149

INT. TOP FUEL GAS STATION AND FOOD MART - NIGHT

149

Sergei is behind the counter, still doing a crossword puzzle.

Kathy unsteadily walks to a display of miniature bottles of liquor and grabs several of them. Goes to the counter.

KATHY

These and five on number three.

She slides a twenty across the table.

SERGEI

Wild night?

KATHY

Seems to be heading in that direction.

SERGEI

Know another name for "hurricane?" Starts with 'T', seven letters.

KATHY

(thinks a moment)

Typhoon.

She takes her bag of stuff, and limps out.

150

EXT. TOP FUEL GAS STATION AND FOOD MART - NIGHT

150

Kathy smokes as she pumps gas into the can. She overfills it, and spills the gas everywhere. She curses, puts the cap on the can, and carries it to the trunk.

SERGEI

(over the speaker)

Hey, lady! There is no smoking at the pumps.

KATHY

(yells)

Could be "tempest" too, you know.

She sets the can down, opens the trunk, and pauses. On the spare tire is Lester's GUN BELT.

Kathy takes the gun belt, slams the trunk, gets into the car, and screeches onto the busy street without a glance in either direction...

Leaving the gas can behind by the pumps.

151 INT. TOP FUEL GAS STATION AND FOOD MART - NIGHT 151

Sergei scratches "TEMPEST" over "TYPHOON" in the crossword.

152a INT. LESTER BURDON'S HOUSE - DAY 152a

Lester stands by the door. His wife Carol is at the kitchen counter, pouring coffee into a Sheriff's Department mug. She stirs milk into it. Neither of them speak for several long moments.

CAROL

Lester, I've got to be honest. I don't give a damn how you feel. The fact is, our nine year marriage contract is a contract we are both bound to because we have children, and now it has to be honored. For our children, Lester. What is a vow after all? What is a vow?

LESTER

I can't answer that. I don't know what a vow is anymore.

CAROL

You weak, self serving son of a bitch! And so's the fucking whore you're sleeping with!

Carol THROWS the cup of coffee at Lester. It misses and hits the wall, but doesn't break. They both stare at the cup.

She catches a hold of herself. Lester picks up the cup, and cradles it in his hands. Carol begins to cry.

CAROL (cont'd)

I apologize. That wasn't called for.

LESTER

I'm sorry too.

Lester takes Carol into his arms, and she sobs on his shoulder. He holds her like a porcelain doll, more afraid he'll hurt her than to cause any actual comfort.

BETHANY
(at the front door)
Daddy?

Carol pushes Lester away, and quickly wipes her tears. She turns back with a forced smile and open arms for Bethany.

CAROL
Come here honey.

BETHANY
(quickly assesses)
It's not good, is it?

CAROL
No. But it's ok, honey. It's all
ok.
(to Lester)
Right?

The phone RINGS. Lester picks it up.

152b/153 LESTER BURDON'S HOUSE/ALVAREZ'S OFFICE

152b/153

Lieutenant Alvarez sits at his desk, looking over a file.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ
Deputy Lester Burdon?

LESTER
(warily)
Yes?

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ
This is Lieutenant Alvarez with
Internal Affairs. I'd like you to
dispatch yourself to my office
immediately.

LESTER
Can it wait until I'm back on duty,
sir?

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ
No, Deputy. It cannot. Be in my
office in forty five minutes or
less.

Alvarez hangs up the phone. Lester holds the phone to his ear for a long moment. His face is pale. Carol watches as he carefully puts the handset slowly back into the cradle.

CAROL

Say something, Lester.

LESTER

I've been called to work.

154

Lester picks up Bethany, and carries her up the stairs to her room. He gently lowers her on the bed.

154

LESTER (cont'd)

I can't talk now, but everything's okay, sweetie. Everything's fine. I've just got to go to work now. Don't worry about anything, honey pie, everything's fine.

He speaks faster and faster, sounding less and less convincing - even to himself. Bethany looks at him with dry eyes, then glances over his shoulder. Lester turns.

Nate stands in the doorway. His little hands are clenched into fists. His face is filled with hurt. Lester moves towards him. Nate whirls and runs back down the stairs.

Lester follows, and stops on the stairs, halfway between the two floors. Suddenly, a flood of tears distorts his face. After a while, he composes himself and continues down.

152c

Carol is sitting at the kitchen table, staring at her hands.

152c

Lester opens his mouth as if to say something.

CAROL

Go, Les. Please. Just go.

155

EXT. CITY STREETS - EVENING

155

Lester drives down the road. He comes to a stop on a hill. Down below to the RIGHT is the freeway, leading into the city. The road to the LEFT leads south, away from the lights and buildings, towards the fishing camp, where a thick fog is rising.

He turns to the LEFT - away from the city, and drives towards the cabin...

- 156 INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - NIGHT 156
- Kathy drives along, drinking from the little bottles of liquor.
- 157 EXT. FOG SHROUDED HIGHWAY - NIGHT 157
- Lester and Kathy's cars drive past each other in opposite directions, their cars stabbing yellow shafts of light through the thick fog.
- 158 INT. LESTER'S TOYOTA STATION WAGON - NIGHT 158
- Lester drives with a grave expression on his face, as if somewhere deep inside, he knows something terrible is happening. Rain begins to spatter on his windshield. He turns on the wipers, and peers through the blurry glass.
- 159 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT 159
- The Bonneville pulls into the driveway. The rain is coming down hard now. Kathy sits in the car, and watches the warm lights of the house, as she drinks the last tiny bottle of Bacardi. Tears stream down her face. Lightning flashes nearby. She drops the bottle with a clink into the other empties, and picks up the revolver from the passenger seat.
- 160 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 160
- Inside, Behrani kneels near the window, and uses a bottle of glue to repair the smashed tea table. From the next room, Nadi's music plays softly. Behrani keeps glancing at Nadi's closed door. He stands.
- 161 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - CONTINUOUS 161
- Behrani's silhouette is visible against the glass of the front window.
- 162 INSIDE THE BONNEVILLE 162
- Kathy slowly lifts the gun up. It hangs in the air, pointing in the direction of the house, at Behrani... then continues its path, turning to point towards Kathy's chest. Her thumb trembles on the trigger.

163

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

163

Behrani washes his hands in the sink. The legs to the table are glued back on and drying on the newspaper. He wipes his hands and walks to the window. Outside, the rain is coming down heavy. Behrani turns off the lights.

164

He unlocks the door, and walks out on the front porch. The rain and wind batter the dark trees of the woodland across the street, casting moving shadows on the house. He turns to go back inside, and stops. He hears sobbing.

164

Kathy's red Bonneville is PARKED IN HIS DRIVEWAY.

Behrani walks softly to the car. As he comes closer, Kathy's face becomes more apparent to him, through the rain on the windshield.

He stops at the open driver's side window. Inside, Kathy struggles with the gun, pulling the trigger again and again, unaware in her stupor that the safety is on.

Behrani MOVES like lightning.

He reaches inside and twists the gun from her grasp. Kathy opens her eyes to look up at him. Seeing Behrani with the gun, she begins to cry openly, wracked with loud sobbing, her hair falling across her face.

Behrani ejects the magazine, and pulls back the slide to clear the chamber of the gun. His hands tremble as he slides both gun and clip into his waistband, and then opens the door, lifting Kathy from the car.

He carries her across the lawn like a little child.

KATHY

(slurs through the sobs)

I don't want the house anymore. I
don't care about the house. I
really don't care about anything.

Behrani struggles with her weight, as he opens the door and carries Kathy inside.

165

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

165

He pushes the door closed behind him.

BEHRANI

NADI!!!! NADEREH!!!!

Behrani carries Kathy down the dark hall to Esmail's room, and gently sets her on the bed.

KATHY

I just... Can't we just... Nicky?

BEHRANI

Nakohn. You must sleep now. You must rest.

Kathy nods, and closes her eyes, drifting away. Behrani sits in a chair and looks at her for a long moment, then reaches out and gently moves the wet, matted hair from her face.

Nadi enters behind Behrani. A look of panic crosses her face. Behrani holds a finger to his lips. He gestures Nadi out of the room, and quietly follows.

166 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

166

The lights are off. Behrani puts the gun on the table. Nadi slumps into a chair. They look from the gun glistening in the moonlight to each other.

167 EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

167

Lester paces the cabin. Waits. Walks out to the river and looks at the dark moving water. A log floats by in the moonlight. It hits the shore and stops. Then slowly frees itself and floats spinning with the current.

He turns and quickly walks back up the trail towards his car.

168 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - NIGHT

168

Behrani sits staring at the gun lying on the table. Nearby, Nadi prepares a tray of tea.

NADI

This is your fault, Behrani. You have done this.

Nadi picks up the tray and carries it from the room.

169 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., ESMAIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

169

Nadi gingerly touches Kathy, waking her. She hands Kathy a hot cup of tea.

NADI

Please, you must for drink this.

Kathy tries to drink the tea, and then drops it, rushing into the bathroom, where she begins to dry heave into the toilet.

KATHY

Oh god.

Kathy presses her face to the cool porcelain of the toilet. Nadi brushes Kathy's hair from her face and then starts the bath water running.

NADI

Please, have bath for to relax.
I'm for us cooking, perhaps you
will wish to eat.

170

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - NIGHT

170

Behrani sits at the table. Nadi works in the kitchen. Esmail comes into the house through the front door. He wears baggy army pants and a ragged Berkeley T-shirt. His hair is damp and dishevelled. He carries his skateboard and newspaper sacks.

NADI (FARSI)

Esmail! Take off your shoes and
come help in kitchen.

ESMAIL

The car in the driveway...Is it
that woman's?

Behrani points to the gun.

BEHRANI

The woman has come here and tried
to take her own life. We must help
her. She is a bird. A broken one.
Your grandfather used to say that a
bird which flies into your house is
an angel, and you must look at its
presence as a blessing.

Esmail stares at the gun, fascinated. Nadi comes into the room.

NADI

You must be gentleman, joon-am.
Very kind. Very polite. Very
quiet.

Esmail nods, excited by the dramatic events.

171

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - NIGHT

171

Kathy lies in the bathtub. She has sunk down so that only her nose is above the waterline. Her breath barely disturbs the surface of the water. She stares at the faucet, as droplets of water well up, hang for eternity, then fall.

PLIMP.... PLIMP...

Kathy's eyes slide from the ripples on the water, to the medicine cabinet above the sink.

THE CABINET

Kathy is up, swaying, staring at her reflection in the mirror. Bloodshot eyes, swollen face, makeup streaked with tear trails. She JERKS open the cabinet door. Inside are rows of medicine bottles.

Kathy sloshes back into the bath. A dozen orange plastic medicine bottles now stand lined up on the edge of the tub, like a firing squad.

Kathy picks one at random. With a wet hand, she DUMPS the contents into her mouth. Lowers her chin slightly and gulps the water she is lying in. Halcion cocktail. Bathwater chaser.

172

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., HALLWAY - NIGHT

172

Nadi knocks on the door to the bathroom.

NADI

Please, hello? Your food is to be eating soon. Hello?

Nadi knocks again. Silence.

173a

Nadi opens the door to the bathroom, and screams.

173a

174

INSIDE THE KITCHEN

174

Behrani leaps from the table, and runs to help.

173b

INSIDE THE BATHROOM

173b

Nadi moves naked Kathy to the toilet.

NADI (cont'd)
 Very good. Een bosheh. Beah.
 Very good. Yes, your mouth to
 open.

Nadi puts her finger into Kathy's mouth, pressing on the back
 of her throat. Kathy retches into the toilet.

NADI (cont'd)
 Very good.

ESMAIL
 (peers in)
 Is she okay?

NADI (FARSI)
 Get out! Both of you! Leave!

175

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - NIGHT

175

Behrani and Esmail sit at the table. Esmail eats rice. He
 is excited but determined not to show it. The gun is between
 them.

ESMAIL
 I feel sorry for her. We should
 have moved.

Behrani sighs. Tired.

BEHRANI
 Beekhore. Eat.
 (after a long moment)
 Yes, perhaps you are right. We
 should have.

He rises from the table and walks to check on the women.

176

EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT

176

At the intersection, a flashing yellow light bounces on the
 wire, so obscured by rain that it looks like a silent pulse.
 Lester turns up the hill and parks his car in front of the
 house. His headlights cut through the thick mist, which
 clings to the ground, shrouding the house like a cloud. He
 gets out of his car, and walks to Kathy's Bonneville.

On the seat - Kathy's open purse, some money sticking out.
 On top of it a HOLSTER. Lester lifts the empty holster from
 the passenger seat. His gun is MISSING. He looks up at the
 house...

KATHY (O.S.)
 (muffled)
please... don't... Please.

NADI (O.S.) (FARSI)
hush... hush...

Like a shadow, Lester MOVES to the side walkway of the house.

177a EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BACKYARD - NIGHT

177a

Through the kitchen window, Lester can see Esmail sitting at the table, the gun in front of him. Lester gently gives the handle to the back door a slow turn. Locked.

178a INSIDE THE KITCHEN

178a

Esmail listens as Nadi and Behrani in the next room argue about the hospital. In Farsi, their voices get louder, and there is a muffled thump.

177b IN THE BACKYARD

177b

178b

Lester reacts to the thump. He steps back and KICKS IN the window panes of the door. Esmail JUMPS from his seat, and stares at Lester's hand REACHING in through the shattered glass, unlocking the door.

178b

Esmail sprints down the hall.

Lester SHOVES the door open, and GRABS his gun from the table. He quickly loads the cartridge, chambers a round, and thumbs the safety off. Somewhere Nadi begins to SCREAM in Farsi.

Lester spins and AIMS the gun down the darkened hallway.

In the shadows, Lester sees Behrani holding a CROWBAR a few feet away, close enough to swing and hit Lester. Kathy lies at his feet, semi-conscious. The robe she wears has fallen open, and her naked body is visible beneath.

Nadi and Esmail huddle in the back of the hallway, behind Behrani. Nadi is still screaming non-stop.

LESTER
 (eyes wide, over Nadi's
 screaming)
 Drop it! Drop it!

There is a momentary standoff. Lester's finger SQUEEZES the trigger ever so slightly... and Behrani carefully sets the crowbar to the side.

LESTER (cont'd)

What did you do to her? Step back!
Pick her up- SHUT UP!

This last is to Nadi, who falls silent.

BEHRANI

Listen, listen-

Lester jumps, and SWIVELS so the gun is on Behrani again.

KATHY

(from the floor)

Les? Don't. Don't.

LESTER

MOVE!

Lester motions for the Behranis to back away, and then kneels next to Kathy. He carefully covers her breasts with the robe.

KATHY

You're here.

LESTER

Yes, I'm here. I'm here.

(to Behrani)

What did you do to her?

ESMAIL

(cutting in)

She took a whole bottle of my
mother's sleeping pills. Want to
see?

Esmail steps into the bathroom, and grabs the empty bottle.

LESTER

Bring it to me.

(looks at container)

How many? When?

NADI

(in Farsi, to Behrani)

The bottle was nearly full.
Perhaps forty tablets.

LESTER

English!

BEHRANI

My wife says forty tablets.
Perhaps a half an hour ago. My
wife made her lose her stomach.
She has vomited the pills.

Lester moves Kathy's hair from her face. She's gone again.
Passed out.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

She also attempted to shoot herself
with that pistol. I discovered her
with it in her automobile. She was
quite upset. She had been drinking
a great deal.

Lester freezes. His eyes twitch back and forth across their
faces.

LESTER

Bullshit. Bullshit.

(beat)

Pick her up, and carry her into
that room. Carefully.

179

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

179

Kathy lies on the bed. The Behranis stand aside. Lester
looks at Kathy's lips, and her eyes, then feels her pulse.

LESTER

She'll be okay.

He waves them away, not looking at them.

LESTER (cont'd)

Out. Everyone out of the room. Go
finish your meal.

180

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - LATER

180

The Behranis sit at the table eating quietly. Lester paces
the tiny kitchen. He steps on a piece of broken glass, which
cracks underneath his feet.

Lester puts the gun back into his waistband. Walks over to
the closet, and picks up a broom and dustpan, which he uses
to SWEEP up the mess.

NADI

(in Farsi, softly)

Massoud, invite him to eat.

Behrani slowly stands.

BEHRANI

Mr. Burdon-

Lester freezes by the trash when he hears his name. He very carefully empties the dustpan.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

My wife would like for you to eat with us.

LESTER

Sit back down.

Behrani does.

LESTER (cont'd)

Send the kid to his room.

Esmail looks over to Behrani. Behrani nods. Esmail goes to his room. Lester walks to the living room wall and looks at the picture of Behrani and the Shah.

LESTER (cont'd)

Who did you talk to in Redwood city, Colonel?

BEHRANI

A Lieutenant.

LESTER

What was his name?

BEHRANI

Alvarez. His name is Lieutenant Alvarez.

Lester's face grows red. He leans against the wall.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Certainly you would have done the same, Mr. Burdon.

Lester turns to contemplate Behrani. He slowly looks the man up and down, searching for some hint, some clue. His eyes freeze on Behrani's ruby ring, glittering in the lamp-light. Lester's face grows hard.

LESTER

When do you plan to give this house back, Colonel?

Behrani freezes. He becomes as implacable as Lester, as if he is above answering the question.

LESTER (cont'd)
Do you really need this tiny place?

BEHRANI
That is none of your business, sir.

Lester crosses the room in a flash. He DRAWS his gun and SHOVES it under Behrani's chin. Hard.

LESTER
That woman sleeping back there is my business. Everything about her is my business. Do you understand me? Now I want you to start thinking about how we're going to solve all this.

NADI
(sobbing)
Please, please, we have nothing. My husband is only good. Our son must go to university. That is all. Please, we are good people.

Lester's anger fades. He watches Nadi crying softly. He turns back to Behrani. Behrani's eyes are wet, his jaw clenched. Lester thumbs the hammer back to quarter lock, and lowers the pistol from Behrani's face.

NADI (cont'd)
Tell to him, Massoud. To him explain.

Behrani doesn't say a word. His face is pale. He glares at Lester. Something has snapped inside him, some line has been crossed. There is no going back. Both men realize this.

LESTER
Let's go see how the real owner of this house is doing.

181

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

181

Nadi and Behrani walk down the hall ahead of Lester. Behrani stops at Esmail's room. Esmail stands by the partially open window, in the process of escaping. His eyes are wide.

Behrani tries to block the door.

BEHRANI (FARSI)
Nakohn. Close it.

He coughs loudly, but Lester pushes past into the room, and grabs Esmail away from the window.

LESTER
This just isn't working out. It
just isn't. Come on.

He pushes them down the hall.

LESTER (cont'd)
Into the bathroom.

They crowd inside. Lester looks around. There is only one tiny window high in the ceiling. The tub is still full of water.

LESTER (cont'd)
I don't want to see this door move.

Lester closes the door.

182 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER 182

Lester ties the crowbar across the door frame and attaches it to the door handle with one of Behrani's ties.

183 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - LATER 183

Lester sits across from Kathy lying on the bed.

LESTER
Kathy? Kath?

She lets out a small sound- a whimper, then goes under again.

184 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - LATER 184

Lester walks through the kitchen. He looks at the broken glass of the door, at the glass in the trash can.

LESTER
Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck!

Lester kicks the trash can. He rubs his eyes.

He hears the Behranis talking in Farsi. Lester strides down the hall and kicks the door. They instantly grow silent.

LESTER (cont'd)

Get some rest in there, Colonel, because tomorrow you're selling this place back to the county. Do you understand me?

(no answer)

I asked you a question, Behrani. Tell me, Colonel, what are you going to do first thing tomorrow?

BEHRANI

I do not know. Perhaps you will tell to me what I must do tomorrow.

LESTER

Don't you patronize me. Tomorrow you're going to give this house back to the county. Understand?

No answer. Lester gently pats the door.

LESTER (cont'd)

Sleep on it Colonel. You hear me? Sleep on it.

85

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - NIGHT

185

The family is crammed together in the tiny bathroom. Behrani leans against the door, his thoughts far away. Nadi finishes cleaning out the bathtub, preparing it like a bed. Esmail sits between them on the floor, his eyes full of fear.

ESMAIL

Bawbaw-jahn?

BEHRANI

Yes?

ESMAIL

I have to go.

BEHRANI

Use the toilet. Your mother will not look.

Nadi looks away. Esmail sets the seat down, and sits to pee.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Esmail, tomorrow I want you to pretend to be afraid of this man. You must do whatever he says.

ESMAIL

Why?

BEHRANI

Because I want him to believe he has beaten us. We will remain lions in our hearts, and when his back is turned, we will defeat him.

186 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - NIGHT 186

Behrani's eyes close with exhaustion. Nadi reaches out for Esmail. He crawls in to the tub with her, and they bundle themselves with towels as blankets.

187 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 187

Kathy tosses in her sleep. Covers knotted around her. Her face is troubled. Dripping in sweat. She moans softly, trapped in her nightmares. Rain hammers the roof above her.

188 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 188

Wrapped in a blanket, Lester sits at the end of the hallway in a chair. Barely awake, he stares at the sliver of light under the bathroom door with red, tired eyes. The rain stops as suddenly as it began, plunging the house into unnatural silence.

The only remaining sound is of Lester - he holds the gun in his lap, flicking the safety on and off, again and again.

189 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - MORNING 189

Dawn breaks through the tiny window. The house is quiet. The Behranis sleep. Behrani snores lightly; his eyelids twitch and relax with his dreams.

190 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - MORNING 190

Lester quietly leaves the house. He urinates in the woods across the street. Zips up, and gets into his car. Lets it coast, engine off, down the hill. He starts the car well out of earshot and drives away.

191 INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT., ALVAREZ'S OFFICE - MORNING 191

Alvarez sits at his desk. Lester sits across from him.

LESTER

No sir. On Monday night I visited the Corona address on behalf of a friend, simply to suggest to Mr. Behrani that he do the right thing and move. I never threatened him in any way. I was simply trying to act as an intermediary in a dispute...

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

But you had your uniform on?

LESTER

Yes. I know that was highly inappropriate. I regret that error in judgement.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

He says you threatened to have him deported.

LESTER

(smiles)

I'm not INS.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

Why didn't you come last night when I called?

LESTER

I'm having... marital problems. My wife and I were in the middle of a... discussion. No. Let's call it what it was. It was a fight.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

Are you and your wife getting counseling.

LESTER

Yes.

Alvarez appears to decide the case.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

You're an FTO, Deputy. I shouldn't have to tell you squat about departmental code.

LESTER

Yes sir.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

Consider this an oral reprimand.
Next time I tell you to be in my
office, I don't care if there's a
death in the family, I want you in
that chair. Understood?

LESTER

Yes sir.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

You have a bright future here,
Burdon. I highly recommend you
don't shit where you eat. Good day.

192

AT THE ELEVATORS

192

Lester's face is reflected in the polished steel of the doors
- he can't believe he made it... The doors slide open,
splitting his reflection in two.

193

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - DAY

193

Kathy lies in bed. A shadow falls across her face. She
opens her eyes, and smiles.

KATHY

I didn't think you'd come back.

Lester sits next to her. Behrani begins to knock on the
bathroom door.

BEHRANI (O.S.)

Sir? Sir? Please let us out so my
family can eat.

KATHY

What's going on?

LESTER

I locked them in the bathroom.

KATHY

That's crazy, Les.

LESTER

What's crazy is trying to kill
yourself, Kathy. Why Kathy?
Why... all of this?

KATHY

You weren't back when you said. I waited, then I knew... I mean, I thought...

She can't finish. Lester looks pained.

LESTER

Tell me this: was it just too much booze on a really bad day, or do you really want to die?

KATHY

I just, I just want things to change.

Behrani begins to pound on the door.

BEHRANI (O.S.)

You must allow us food immediately.

LESTER

You'll eat when you call the goddamn county!

BEHRANI (O.S.)

Yes, sir. I will do as you say. We will sell.

Lester smiles at Kathy. She doesn't smile.

LESTER

This is all going to work out.

He lies beside her and buries his face in her hair. She gives him a half-hearted smile.

194 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., HALLWAY - DAY

194

Gun ready, Lester opens the door and lets the Behranis out.

195 IN NADI'S BEDROOM

195

Kathy stands up, her knees shaking. She leans on the door frame for support. She watches as the Behranis walk single-file past the doorway. At gunpoint.

Behrani walks slowly, his face held high, staring straight forward.

Nadi comes next. Her eyes are on the floor.

And then Esmail. He looks into the room as he passes, his dark eyes meeting Kathy's. They keep eye contact for a long moment... And then he is past.

Lester stops in the doorway. The gun is in his hand. He gives Kathy a reassuring look.

Kathy shivers, and looks away.

196

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., KITCHEN - DAY

196

Lester stands next to Behrani as he talks on the phone. Esmail and Nadi eat breakfast.

BEHRANI

... yes, we will be there this morning, and sign the papers.

Behrani hands the phone back to Lester, who hangs it up.

LESTER

Good.

KATHY

Lester, can I talk to you?

Lester comes into the bedroom, keeping one eye on the Behranis.

KATHY (cont'd)

We can't do this, Les.

LESTER

This will work.

KATHY

It won't. It's wrong. Wrong to do it this way. And also... that man will never let it happen. You haven't seen his temper.

Lester looks over at Behrani. Behrani glances up, and then quickly looks away.

LESTER

Fuck. This has got to work, Kathy, or I'm going to jail.

KATHY

Lets bail out, Les. Let's just go.

LESTER

And if he still goes to the authorities? I know he will. No...
Ok. You've got to trust me. We go through with the transfer of the house. He gets the check, we get him to sign it over to us, we take the money, and we run. He gets the house. No one gets hurt.

KATHY

Lets just go now.

LESTER

We're going to need that money, Kathy. To start new.

She searches his eyes, reading them. He kisses her.

LESTER (cont'd)

Just stay here, and think of someplace sunny we can go.

197 OMITTED

197

198 INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - DAY

198

The sky above is blue and cloudless. Behrani drives the car. Esmail sits in the passenger seat. Lester is in back - gun in his lap. They are silent, all deep in their thoughts. Lester's voice startles Behrani and Esmail.

LESTER

We need to talk, Colonel.

Behrani glances fearfully at Lester in the rear view mirror.

LESTER (cont'd)

Ms. Nicolo's not a well woman. You saw that last night, didn't you Colonel?

BEHRANI

Yes.

LESTER

What she really needs is rest. She's had a change of heart about the house.

BEHRANI

What does this mean?

LESTER

It means you can keep it.

Behrani's eyebrows go up.

199

EXT. COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

199

Behrani and Lester watch from inside the car as Esmail puts a quarter into the meter, and then climbs back into the car.

LESTER

You go in there and sign the house back to the county, they give you a check. You give that check to Ms. Nicolo, and she'll sign the house over to you. Are we agreed, Colonel?

BEHRANI

(thinks for moment)

Yes.

LESTER

But, your son stays here with me as collateral. If you're not back soon, Ishmail and I will be gone.

BEHRANI

But we have made an agreement.

They stare at each other. A battle of wills.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

No. I will go nowhere without my son. Nowhere.

Lester rubs his eyes, exhausted. He's losing his edge.

LESTER

Shit. Fine. Let's do this.

He gets out of the car, putting his gun into his belt.

200

ON THE STEPS OF THE COURTHOUSE

200

Blazing bright hot sun fills the Civic Plaza. They walk from the car towards the title office. Behrani walks with an erect, almost military posture. He has his arm around Esmail's shoulders.

Lester walks three steps behind them, his uniform shirt tail hanging out in the back, hiding the gun. He sees his former Deputy Trainee coming up the walk.

Lester gives Behrani the slightest shove, trying to move faster and not be seen.

LESTER (cont'd)
Move Colonel. Move.

Behrani's watches Lester out of the corner of his eye. Angry. Behrani speeds up. Lester struggles to keep up.

LESTER (cont'd)
(hisses)
Slow down.

DEPUTY TRAINEE (O.S.)
Deputy Sheriff Burdon? Sir?

Lester turns. The trainee has caught up with them.

DEPUTY TRAINEE (cont'd)
I know you're busy. I just wanted to tell you I appreciate everything you taught me. I just wanted to thank you...

The young man's eyes bounce to Lester's rumpled shirt. Lester cuts him off.

LESTER
I appreciate that. Good luck, Brian.

He nods at Brian, and they walk away. There's something different now. Lester nervously glances around him. Behrani seems to be speeding up even more. Lester rushes to keep up. He feels out of control. Brian watches from the street.

LESTER (cont'd)
Slow down.

Behrani ignores him.

LESTER (cont'd)
Stop.

Behrani continues on.

LESTER (cont'd)
(hisses through teeth)
I said stop.

As they approach the door, Lester grabs Behrani and pulls him to the side, where they're not as visible.

He puts two fingers hard into Behrani's sternum, and pushes him against the wall.

LESTER (cont'd)

Now you listen to me. I don't know
what game you and Ishmael here...

His jaw strains as he searches for a way to tell the Colonel he's still in control.

Suddenly, Esmail reaches in, RIPS the gun out of Lester's waistband, and awkwardly stumbles away, a frightened look on his face. Lester WHIRLS.

Esmail cocks the gun clumsily, and points it at Lester. Behrani JUMPS Lester from behind, putting his arms around his throat. SQUEEZING for dear life.

BEHRANI

Help! Help! Somebody help us!

A WOMAN lets out a SHRIEK, and a BUSINESSMAN backpedals away from them.

Esmail trembles as he holds the gun.

ESMAIL

(whispers)

My name is Esmail, not Ishmael.

His legs and arms quiver with fear. He searches his father's face for instruction, his dark eyes wet with fear and confusion. He looks like he wants to say something else, but cannot. Lester and Esmail lock eyes - an incredibly human moment. Both afraid.

BEHRANI

(to Esmail, in Farsi)

Joon-am, do not be afraid. Keep the
gun pointed at his heart.

(louder, in English)

Help! Somebody call the police!

Esmail quakes. The sound of running footsteps, jingling gun belts. POLICE arrive.

POLICE

DROP IT! NOW! DROP IT!

Esmail is distracted.

Suddenly, Lester STOMPS on Behrani's instep, and WRIGGLES free. Esmail RAISES the gun, points it towards Lester. A dark kid holding a police officer at gunpoint.

Lester sees the police raising their weapons to fire.

LESTER

Hold it! Wait!

Esmail's chest EXPLODES in a fountain of red. The blast JERKS him sideways, his arms swinging loose, the pistol clattering across the concrete.

A second shot buckles the boys legs, and he DROPS to the sidewalk, his legs bent and separated, one arm stretched out as if he were reaching for something.

Lester stands frozen above the boy. He cannot move or speak. His heartbeat caught in his throat.

THE WHOLE WORLD IMPLODES INTO SILENCE.

And then....

BEHRANI

(shrieking)

Nakheyr! Nakheyr! Nakheyr!

Behrani screams and claws past Lester. He lets out a long high pitched wail, as he kneels by Esmail. Behrani holds his son's face, cradling his head in his lap. He rocks back and forth with his face pressed against Esmail's.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Hospital! Call to hospital!

One of the deputies steps up, and nimbly kicks the gun away from the pool of blood spreading from under Esmail.

Another deputy pulls on protective gloves with care and deliberation. Another speaks into a radio, calling for an ambulance.

The one with the gloves ignores Esmail, and reaches for the gun. Lester shoves him away.

LESTER

Goddamn you! The kid is bleeding to death!

Lester DROPS to his knees in the spreading pool of blood next to Behrani, and PULLS his uniform shirt off. Esmail's femoral is pumping bright red blood onto the sidewalk at an alarming rate. Lester presses the shirt material into the bullet wound in Esmail's thigh.

The two men kneel by the boy - Behrani near the dying light in Esmail's eyes, Lester's hands washed with his blood.

CLOSE on one of Esmail's pant legs hiked up, revealing the faint black hairs that have just started growing on his shin.

Somewhere in the distance is the faint high-pitched whine of approaching sirens. Like angry mosquitoes.

BEHRANI (FARSI)

I want only my son. I want only my son. I want only my son...

Paramedics push through the crowd of onlookers to Esmail.

A TALL DEPUTY pulls Behrani away so that the men can work on the boy. As the paramedics crowd around Esmail, Behrani sees Lester as if for the first time.

He LUNGES for him.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

It is him! He has done this. It is him!

The police restrain Behrani, pulling him back as he struggles to reach Lester. They push Behrani to the ground, and HANDCUFF him.

Still, he STRAINS, the veins coming out of his forehead, trying to reach Lester.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

I will kill you! I will kill you!

As police carry him away, the Tall Deputy turns to look at shirtless Lester.

TALL DEPUTY

What is your name, sir?

LESTER

What?

TALL DEPUTY

Your name, sir. What is your name?

Lester doesn't answer, but watches as Esmail is being lifted into the ambulance. The boy's feet are splayed out on the stretcher, the soles of his sneakers dirty and worn smooth, bouncing slightly.

202

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - DAY

202

Kathy sits across from Nadi. They watch each other, quietly. A clock ticks. Kathy glances towards the kitchen door, and the jagged panes of glass still sticking from it.

KATHY

I'm sorry about all of this.

Nadi looks up at Kathy, and then back down. She places her hand on her forehead.

NADI

If you will to excuse. My head is aching.

Nadi goes into her dark room, and lies on the bed.

203

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT., OFFICE - DAY

203

Behrani sits in the center of the room in a small metal chair. Deputies crowd around, obscured and faceless, just hips and backs and guns. Behrani's hands are still covered in his son's blood.

A Deputy offers Behrani a paper towel to wipe the blood away with. Behrani shrugs away from it.

BEHRANI

Please, I must go to my son-

No one looks at him. They ignore him. Behrani watches as a Deputy sips his coffee and looks out the window.

Lieutenant Alvarez enters the room. The Lieutenant is the first man to meet Behrani's eyes.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

Burdon corroborates the whole deal.

(to Behrani)

Mr. Behrani, you are free to go.

This is your recourse. You can press charges against Deputy Burdon-

BEHRANI

Please! Where is the hospital!
Please?

Alvarez stands and points out the window to a large gray building several blocks away.

LIEUTENANT ALVAREZ

That's the hospital your son is in.
We can give you a police escort-

But Behrani is already through the door.

204 INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT., HALLWAY - DAY

204

Behrani runs down the hallway. At the far end, people come in and out of the doors, silhouetted by the brightness of the outside. Behrani bounces off a woman, who screams as blood smears onto her.

205 EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

205

Behrani runs down the sidewalk. His breath is labored. The world blurs around him. People scatter from Behrani's path, frightened by the blood on his shirt and hands. Two blocks over, the hospital rises above the surrounding buildings.

BEHRANI

...I want only my son. I want only
my son...

Behrani's panicked face repeats the mantra over and over again as if it will keep his son alive. And then the hospital is in front of him, across an intersection, the large red sign saying EMERGENCY.

Automobiles screech to a halt as Behrani weaves through the cross traffic. A symphony of horns fill the air. Behrani continues unwavering and relentless.

Then the door is in front of him, and he pushes through it-

206 INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

206

The inside of the hospital is quiet. A NURSE at the front desk looks up calmly as he runs to her.

BEHRANI

Emergency! Emergency!

She points down a hall. Behrani SPRINTS past people in wheelchairs and gurneys.

An older NURSE stands at the check-in counter.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

I must see my son. My son, he is here. He has been shot.

NURSE

The Arab boy? He's in Trauma.
Wash the blood from your hands.
I'll bring you to the waiting room.

She points him to a sink. He turns on the scalding hot water, and shoves his hands beneath it. Steam billows across his face. His hollow eyes full of panic, his throat - dust.

207

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU/TRAUMA WAITING ROOM - LATER

207

Behrani is alone in the tiny waiting room. He kneels on the carpet, and bows towards a narrow dingy window, pressing his head against the carpet, praying softly but fervently.

BEHRANI

Please my God don't take my joon-
am. I make my nazr. My nazr, hear
me.

He rises, the pale light of the window across his face, and then presses his face against the ash-colored carpet again, repeating the process with each plea to God.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

Please to hear me, I will give every-thing to one who is less fortunate... Yes... Mendez, the Mexican with a scar, from the road crew... No. I will make it for the beggar whore. Please my God, I am making nazr to this woman, to Kathy Nicolo. And I to You promise if You heal my son... I will return her father's house. I will also give to her all the money I have. Please, my God, Khoda, I make nazr only for my son. Please, I want only for my son.

The door opens, and a DOCTOR comes into the room, an Indian or a Pakistani, accompanied by a nurse. He wears a green surgeon's uniform, the blue paper mask hangs at his neck. There is bright red blood on his scrubs.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Sir?

Behrani continues to pray, his mouth moving faster and faster, the words to his prayers now only faintly audible.

BEHRANI

I beg You. I will do whatever is
Your will. I will purchase ten
kilos of the finest seed and I will
find an American mosque and I will
feed them to all the birds outside.

DOCTOR (O.S.)

Sir?

BEHRANI

I will go to other holy places as
well. I will feed the birds in
front of the temples of Christians,
of Jews. I will let the birds
cover me and peck out my eyes.

Behrani closes his eyes tightly against the hot tears, and bows his head to the carpet again. When he comes back up, the doctor puts his hand on Behrani's shoulder, stopping him.

DOCTOR

Mr. Behrani?

BEHRANI

(whispers his final plea)

Please God, my nazr is in Your
hands.

Behrani rises slowly. He faces the doctor - a man awaiting sentence. The doctor's face is drawn tight. This is very difficult. The doctor takes Behrani's hand and DOES NOT RELEASE IT.

DOCTOR

Mr. Behrani?. I'm very sorry.

Behrani pushes away. There is no air. No light. No sound. Only God's closed door, his "no" to the nazr.

BEHRANI

No.

208

INT. HOSPITAL, OPERATING ROOM - DAY

208

Nurses wrap up the instruments, disconnect the machines. In the middle of the quiet room - Esmail's body under a sheet.

AN EVIL ROSE OF RED blooms on the white cloth over his chest.

Behrani walks in, crosses the room, oblivious to the protests of the nurses. He pulls the sheet from his son's body.

Esmail's eyes are closed, and his lips parted.

Behrani leans and kisses Esmail's forehead, his eyes, and his lips. Runs his hand over the dark delicate hairs on Esmail's cheek - the beginnings of a beard.

Then he rises, and RUNS from the room.

209

INT. KATHY'S BONNEVILLE - SUNSET

209

Behrani drives the Bonneville down the highway. Fast. The sun is low on the horizon, the sky crimson. The empty miniature bottles of Bacardi roll back and forth across the floor. The broken white lines on the highway blur into one.

As he nears the ocean, the car disappears into the fog.

210

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., LIVING ROOM - EVENING

210

Kathy watches from the window, worried. Nadi's still form is visible through the open door of the bedroom, sleeping.

The front door SLAMS open. Behrani stands alone in the doorway. His face is haunted. His shirt bloody.

Kathy raises her hand to her mouth.

Behrani STORMS across the room, and WRAPS his fingers around her neck, SQUEEZING with all his might.

His iron fingers squeeze the air from her lungs. Her mouth moves silently, her tongue frothing and rolling in the pit of her mouth. She claws helplessly at the flesh of his arms, gouging deep furrows of red.

Behrani LIFTS her from the floor, and SHAKES her in the air. Her feet kick uselessly and slowly grow still.

He releases her. She COLLAPSES to the floor like a broken marionette. Silence.

Behrani turns and slowly walks to the doorway of Nadi's room.

211

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

211

The room is dark. Nadi sleeps peacefully, untroubled. Behrani stands and watches her. His face is a mask of hidden emotion - terrible truths beneath the surface.

212 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 212

Behrani opens the medicine cabinet. His eyes scan the rows of tiny orange plastic bottles. He takes one from the back, almost gently, and closes the cabinet.

213 INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - LATER 213

Behrani sets down a tray with a steaming pot of tea on Nadi's bedside stand. He sits in a chair next to the bed, and gently caresses her face. She smiles ever so softly.

BEHRANI

(whispers)

Naderah.

She moans, and then opens her eyes. Smiles at him sleepily.

NADI (FARSI)

Massoud, I dreamt of a bird.
Trapped in our empty house. It was
trying to find a way out. It
fluttered around, hitting the
walls, and I could feel the air
from its wings on my face. I
opened the window and it flew away.

She squints in the dark room, trying to see the blood stains on Behrani's shirt. Her smile fades.

BEHRANI

Hush. Drink this. Some tea.

He places the cup beneath her lips. Her face begins to quiver. She takes the cup from his hands, looks intently into Behrani's eyes, then back at the tea.

She DRINKS.

214 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST., WIDOW'S WALK - SUNSET 214

Nadi and Behrani sit, side-by-side, watching the sunset. A blanket is wrapped around her. A gentle breeze from the ocean moves Nadi's hair. She struggles to stay awake.

The tea cup is almost empty. Behrani takes the pot, and fills it again. She drinks more.

NADI

I am tired.

BEHRANI

Soon we will join our son, and
return to the flowers of Isfahan
and the mosques of Qom and the fine
hotels of old Tehran.

Tears well in Behrani's eyes.

BEHRANI (cont'd)

(whispers)

I have taken us so far off course,
but now it is time to return. It
is time for us to go home. To our
destiny.

As he speaks, his voice becomes softer and softer - as if
lulling a baby to sleep.

She is in a world of her own, and then in an instant -
quietly, imperceptibly - she's in the next one.

Her head slowly, gently comes to rest on Behrani's shoulder.

Behrani carefully takes the cup from her slack hand and sets
it to the side.

215

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - DUSK

215

Behrani lays Nadi's body across her bed. Her forehead is free
of wrinkles. He leans in, kisses her, and closes her eyes.

BEHRANI

Sleep Nadereh. Rest for our safar.

216

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., BEHRANI'S BEDROOM - DUSK

216

Behrani stands in front of a mirror, and slowly dresses in
his old Colonel's uniform. He carefully places on the gold
cuffs and ties his necktie into a full Windsor knot.

He stands at attention in front of the mirror, and then picks
up the thick cleaner's plastic his uniform had been wrapped
in and carries it from the room.

217a

INT. 34 BISGROVE ST., NADI'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

217a

Behrani stands in the darkness above the corpse of his wife.
In one hand he holds the plastic dry cleaner's bag, and in
the other, a roll of duct tape.

He sits on the bed beside Nadi, and kisses her again. The muscles of his face writhe like snakes beneath his flesh, filled with intense emotions.

Behrani PULLS the clear plastic over his head. From inside the plastic, the whole world becomes blurry and distorted. Almost immediately his breath fogs the inside, then, on his inhale, sucks into his mouth.

Behrani begins to quickly WRAP the duct tape around his neck, sealing the plastic in place. He winds the tape several times, and then rips it free.

For a moment, he sits completely still.

And then lies down next to Nadi.

Inside the plastic, the whole world becomes dim.

Behrani's body begins to twitch.

His fingers tighten into fists. His arms become rigid. Fighting the urge to rip the plastic free.

Lungs begin to spasm. Trying to force a breath.

To suck in air.

Behrani's eyes stare towards the ceiling from beneath the condensation on the plastic. Seeing something far away.

218a *The sound of waves. Pine branches twirl through the air. Waves lap at the feet of Nadi and little Esmail, standing on a beach... laughing...* 218a

217b Behrani's each ragged, desperate breath matches the hiss of the waves on the sand. 217b

SUDDENLY, his hand reaches frantically. Among the covers. Searching. Missing Nadi's hand. Desperation. Then fingers connect to arm, and hand entwines with hand. Together.

The other hand CLAWS at his throat. At the tape. Trying to win freedom. The body's primal instincts take over.

Too late.

218b *In the distance, the pine branches blow in the Caspian wind and wave goodbye. Nadi and Esmail turn from the water and smile at Behrani...* 218b

17c And he is still. 217c

Silence. The whole house is silence.

219

IN THE LIVING ROOM

219

Kathy's body.

At the far side of the room. Sprawled. Still.

Somewhere a clock ticks.

A car passes outside.

Suddenly, Kathy's body SPASMS. Comes to life. Her hand goes to her bruised throat. Her breathing is loud, whistling through her crushed throat.

She crawls to her feet, using the doorframe to support herself. Stands at the entrance to Nadi's room, and sees the dark, quiet forms inside. She takes a tentative step towards the bed.

220

Tears begin to pour down her face.

220

She sees Nadi's beautiful face. Not breathing. Behrani's face, ghastly staring eyes beneath the wet plastic.

Kathy climbs across the bed to Nadi, and begins to administer CPR. Long breath. One, two, three, four- Compressing the chest.

A long breath. Again. One, two, three, four- Compressing the chest.

KATHY

(hoarse)

Please...

A long breath. One, two, three, four- Nadi's eyes are dead. Lifeless. Hopeless. Kathy stops.

Turns to Behrani. Claws at the tape, unable to remove it, and then tears the plastic from his face. Pale. Ashen.

She begins to administer CPR.

One, two, three, four. A breath. One, two, three, four. A breath.

Tears stream down her face, as she CRIES with the futility of the effort, but goes on... and on... and on... as we

MOVE UP, leaving Kathy below, sprawled on the two corpses, a frozen letter "H", and we pass through the ceiling into...

221

THE ATTIC

221

Stopping on an ancient REDWOOD ROOF BEAM, supporting the entire house. It is infested with TERMITES. They crawl across the riddled surface, swarming over each other, wings chattering, mandibles chewing...

The sound of them devouring the heart of the house grows louder, and LOUDER, until we

CUT TO:

222

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPT., INTAKE WALL PHONE - NIGHT

222

A hand, the fingernails still stained with dried blood, dials the worn metal numeric keypad of the prison's phone. Lester, wearing an orange jumpsuit, holds the receiver to his face.

The phone rings. Once. Twice. Three times.

He closes his eyes. Lets his head slump forwards to rest against the cinderblock wall.

Click. The answering machine picks up. Carol's voice.

ANSWERING MACHINE

Hi! You've reached the Burdon
Family. We're not here right now
but if you leave a message,
(the kids chime in)
we'll call you right back.

Beep. He opens his mouth to speak, but nothing comes out.

The din of the cellblock is almost deafening: screams, swearing, hollow clang of metal on metal. As Lester turns away from the phone, two DEPUTIES immediately start shackling him with handcuffs and leg restraints.

GUARD #1

Let's go BurdOne.

LESTER

It's Burdon. Deputy Sheriff Lester
Burdon.

GUARD #2

You'll want to keep that to
yourself in here. Now move.

The guards lead Lester down a long narrow hallway, yellow lines converging into the distance. As they walk away, he grows smaller and smaller.

223 EXT. 34 BISGROVE ST. - NIGHT

223

From high above, circling the house. Emergency vehicles litter the street, blue and red flashers spinning silently. Helicopter searchlight cuts through the fog.

224 ON THE WIDOW'S WALK

224

Kathy watches as the police roll out the bodies of Nadi and Behrani in body bags on stretchers. She takes a drag on her cigarette.

A breeze blows across her, and she looks up at the pine trees across the street, bending in the wind, projecting a mad dance of shadows cast by the circling helicopter searchlight.

An OFFICER climbs up the steps to the widow's walk.

OFFICER

Are you Kathy Nicolo?

She glances at him, and then nods.

OFFICER (cont'd)

Is this your house?

KATHY

(through bruised throat)

No. This is not my house.

She turns away from him, looking off into the night at the disappearing fog. The moon over the ocean is visible now.

The officer stands, not sure how to proceed, and they fall into a moment of stillness, like a frozen picture, or an instant in time.

Close on Kathy's hand. She FLICKS her cigarette away, and we follow the blaze of glowing ember...through the blackness...down through the night... till the half-smoked cigarette explodes in a shower of orange sparks on wet pavement. The sparks briefly glow a dull red and then fade away.

All becomes BLACK.

The whirring sounds of the helicopter slowly ...

FADE OUT.