

LAST HOLIDAY

by

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Based on the screenplay
by J.B. Priestley

Producers: Laurence Mark
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FADE IN:

AS CREDITS ROLL

A GOSPEL version of "HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS" is emanating from...

EXT. SMALL BAPTIST CHURCH - SOUTH CENTRAL L.A. - NIGHT

On a slow MOVE IN...

LEAD SINGER

Have yourself a merry little
Christmas...

CHORUS (SINGING)

Let your heart be light...

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUING

It's choir practice, led by an energetic black REVEREND in his late sixties. He's losing the battle of conducting and trying to keep his thick glasses perched on his nose at the same time.

We PAN the faces of the WOMEN standing on the risers singing. They are all middle-aged church ladies. We are expecting the person belting out this song to be the character played by QUEEN LATIFAH. After all, her credit is on the screen. But it is NOT. It's some other older WOMAN.

LEAD SINGER

From now on our troubles will be
out of sight...

The CAMERA finally FINDS Latifah in the BACK ROW. She's GEORGIA BYRD. Early thirties, but not dressed like it. She's primly dressed like these other older women.

LEAD SINGER

(continuing)
Have yourself a merry little
Christmas...

The Chorus responds with gusto, except for Ms. Byrd...

GEORGIA

(singing, barely
audible)

...Make the yuletide gay...

LEAD SINGER

From now on, our troubles will be
miles away!

Suddenly the Reverend cocks an ear, walks closely to each of the Chorus member's singing mouths. He stops at Georgia.

REVEREND

(holds up his hands)
Hold it. Hold it. HOLD IT!

She tries to make herself invisible.

REVEREND

(continuing)

Miss Byrd, sister Abernathy here's singing three times louder than you...and she's recovering from throat cancer! How do you account for that?

GEORGIA

(quietly)

Sorry, Reverend. I thought I was.

He shakes his head.

REVEREND

(to the others)

All right, that'll be all for tonight. Now remember, this Sunday...

As the ladies step down from the risers...

REVEREND

(continuing)

...our guest will be our very own Senator Dillings. Those of you who are unattached might want to make a special sartorial effort for the brother.

The Rev puts a comforting arm around Georgia's shoulder.

REVEREND

(continuing)

I didn't mean to embarrass you, sister Byrd. I know you got it loaded in you. You just got to FIRE!

She nods meekly and heads out into the night.

EXT. SOUTH CENTRAL LA BUS STOP - NIGHT

Georgia sits on the bench in stark contrast to an advertisement looming behind her. It's of a beautiful, thin model. The copy reads: SQUINT, FROWN, LAUGH. LIVE WITHOUT THE WORRY OF WRINKLES. LANCOME. Georgia covers the wrinkle-free face with two large grocery bags she's hauling.

EXT. SOUTH CENTRAL - GEORGIA'S NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

She gets off the bus and walks across Crenshaw.

A chopped and low-slung sedan cruises down the street, RAP MUSIC POUNDING from its windows. The song is "WRATH OF MY MADNESS" by Queen Latifa.

She holds her ears protectively from the noise and the lewd content.

GEORGIA

Please turn that garbage down!

The YOUNG MEN inside the car just laugh at her as they pass. She quickens her pace to a three-story apartment building where she lives.

At the curb, a BOY of about sixteen sits next to a 1981 Buick Regal. Parked under a street light for maximum security, it's in museum-like shape.

She walks up to the boy and, in a time-honored routine, just hands him five bucks.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Any problems tonight, Darius?

DARIUS

Some gunshots. Nobody messing with the car though.

She nods, takes a vigilant look down the block.

DARIUS

(continuing)

Ma'am...how come a woman like you who's gotta nice car like this, takes the bus?

GEORGIA

(quietly)

Don't wanna give up that parking place. That sodium light's hooligan insurance. Been three robberies in my building alone!

She turns to the entrance-way of the building, gets out her keys. Over her shoulder.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

You hungry?

He nods.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

You come by in exactly seventy-five minutes. I'm gonna have something for ya.

INT. GEORGIA BYRD'S HOUSE - CONTINUING

She turns on the lights and immediately locks all the locks behind her. Peeks out the window to make sure her car is still all right.

Now she pops a TAPE in her VCR. A COOKING INSTRUCTIONAL with the famous French Chef, JACQUES PEPIN, comes on. He starts speaking in French.

Her chest heaves at the sight of him - someone who has obviously kept her company on lonely nights before. She lays her groceries out on the kitchen counter, and she and Chef Pepin get down to work.

A MONTAGE OF COOKING SHOTS AGAINST TONY BENNETT MUSIC

Georgia sure-handedly bones a whole shoulder of veal.

Chops vegetables with lightening speed.

Pops meat in the oven.

Tastes the sauce on the stove, seasons.

BING! The timer goes off. Seventy-five minutes.

Quickly and professionally, she plates the dish - first laying down a puddle of rich, buttery reduction. Then the meat, potatoes Lyonnaise, french beans and caramelized baby carrots. It's like a Miro made out of food.

CLOSE - GEORGIA

She looks at it with love and saliva glands in overdrive. Now she takes a little digital camera from her apron pocket and photographs it, downloads it to a little printer.

BING! The timer goes off.

Now she opens the door. Darius was just about to knock. We are observing a time-honored routine between the two of them.

ANGLE - DARIUS AT THE TABLE

He tucks a napkin under his chin and raises his fork to his mouth; stops out of politeness.

DARIUS

Don't suppose you're gonna have any.

GEORGIA

(laughs at the suggestion)

Lord, no.

She leans back with a "Weight Watchers" vanilla shake and pops the top. Gestures for him to continue and eat, then watches intently for his reaction.

DARIUS

Damn! This is even better than the short ribs! What is it?

Georgia, self-satisfied.

GEORGIA

Cocotte en terre de veau.

(takes a swig)

Veal stew, to you.

The printer has finished the picture. She gets up and slides it into an empty sleeve in a little album.

Darius is fascinated by this odd woman.

DARIUS
Whatcha doing, now?

She quickly puts it in her apron.

GEORGIA
(shyly)
Nothing.

DARIUS
Well, I know it's something. Every time you cook one of these meals you put the picture in there.
(she withholds it)
I guess you can't trust me with anything but that old car of yours.

She relents. No harm in showing him, I suppose. She tentatively hands it over to him.

CLOSE ALBUM - "POSSIBILITIES" IS EMBOSSED ON THE COVER

Darius opens it. The first page is a color picture of an incredibly picturesque HOTEL cut out of a magazine. Hotel Du Ciel. The next page has a picture of the famous French CHEF, Jacques Pepin. Then there's pictures of FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS, TABLE SETTINGS, etc.

Darius is confused by all this.

GEORGIA
It's my wedding planner. Everything's in here. The location...What my dress's gonna look like...the invitation ...what kinda flowers...and of course, what we're gonna eat...
(flips the pictures)
...chosen from one of these.

Darius looks at her, amazed.

DARIUS
Damn, Ms. Byrd! I never knew you even had a boyfriend! How come I never seen 'm 'round here?

GEORGIA
Well, I ain't gonna bring him around this neighborhood...

DARIUS
(laughs)
'Fraid somebody put a cap up his ass?

(more)

DARIUS (cont'd)
 (she cocks her head
 at his bad language)
 'Xcuse me. What's his name?

She doesn't want to let go of that.

GEORGIA
 None of your business.

DARIUS
 I'll tell you what his name is.
 His name is Lucky Motherfu...

GEORGIA
 (cuts him off)
 If you're gonna use that kind of
 language, you might as well leave
 my house right now.

DARIUS
 I'm sorry, but short of you
 telling me his name, I don't know
 a better thing to call him.

GEORGIA
 Sean. Sean Mathews. But you better
 not say anything to anybody.
 Understand?

EXT. LARGE DEPARTMENT STORE - MORNING

On the roof we see a crane and WORKMEN changing the name of
 the place. It's now a "KRAGEN SUPER-STORE".

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - CONTINUING

It is pre-opening. The EMPLOYEES are entering and getting to
 their departments. The place is DECORATED FOR CHRISTMAS.

There's an ELECTRONIC TONE over the store's PA system. Then:

FOREIGN-SOUNDING VOICE (OVER THE PA)
 The store will open in five
 minutes. All new sales staff
 members, remember - the deadline
 for your health forms is Friday!

ON AN ESCALATOR - AN EMPLOYEE'S NAME TAG - SEAN MATHEWS

The SHOT WIDENS to see the object of Georgia's affections on
 the DOWN escalator. He is a very big, good-looking man in his
 early thirties.

Every SALESWOMAN on the "UP" brightens as they pass him.

ASSORTED SALESGIRLS
 Hey, Sean...Good mornin, Sean.
 Havin coffee this mornin, Sean?

And he murmurs and mumbles a little crumb of something to each of them, but not much more. One might say he's the strong, silent type.

NEW ANGLE - AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS LINE OF ADMIRERS

Georgia sees Sean coming toward her. She nervously touches her hair, pulls at her blouse. Oddly, she seems to get more and more tense as her "fiancee" approaches.

The store's MUZAK comes on. It happens to be an obnoxious Britney Spears number which stands in stark contrast to Georgia's obdurate unsexiness.

Now they come face to face. We're expecting something big to happen, but instead it's...

SEAN
(respectfully)
Good morning, Ms. Byrd.

GEORGIA
(business-like)
...Mr. Mathews.

Wait a minute. What's just happened here? If this is the man she plans to marry, somebody better let him in on it.

And we're not the only ones who are thinking this. ROCHELLE, Georgia's "store friend", clocks in behind her. Long ago, Rochelle stopped battling with her weight.

ROCHELLE
What do you call that..."Power Flirting"?

We stay with them as they get off at the next floor: HOUSEWARES.

GEORGIA
I don't have to make a fool of myself.

ROCHELLE
How else is a man gonna know you're interested if you don't make a fool of yourself? That's what we do. ...We just make em pay for it later!

They come to Georgia's station in COOKWARE. She removes a pan and a butane burner from a cabinet, starts to heat it up.

GEORGIA
Rochelle, this ain't Club Med here. This is a corporation that's just changed hands. I've worked here for nine years. They're watching me. Do we keep her? Do we let her go?
(more)

GEORGIA (cont'd)

You want me to go chasing that man around here...You know what they call that? Sexual harassment. That's the last thing I need in my file!

Rochelle takes that all in, nods.

ROCHELLE

Bull...shit. They'd never fire you. You're the best salesperson they got in this whole damn place. You're just scared at the prospect of some man wanting to grab hold of that booty of yours!

She's right. Georgia's jaw drops as she struggles to defend herself. But before she can say anything...

WOMAN'S VOICE

(impatient)

Excuse me..?

Both women turn to regard...

REVEAL - CLOSE ELDERLY WOMAN'S FACE

It's FRAMED by a babushka not quite concealing a head full of curlers. Her lipstick has been applied with a shaky hand.

GEORGIA

Yes, ma'am.

Rochelle beats a hasty retreat to LINENS.

WOMAN

I bought this here. I want to exchange it.

She holds up an enameled orange juice squeezer that's so out-of-date, it looks like it could have been used as a medieval instrument of torture.

GEORGIA

(pleasantly)

I'm sorry, but it looks like it's pretty old.

WOMAN

I bought it here. Are you calling me a liar?

GEORGIA

No, that's not what I'm saying, ma'am.

WOMAN

I think that's what you're saying.
At least that's what I've
construed from the conversation
thus far.

GEORGIA

Well ma'am, I think you've
misconstrued.

WOMAN

Oh, now you're saying I'm stupid.

GEORGIA

No, ma'am, I'm not saying anything
of the sort. All I'm saying is
that the store's return policy
does not include items that are no
longer in production.

WOMAN

I think I should see the manager
of this store.

GEORGIA

(mumbles)

I think you should see the Curator
of the Smithsonian Institute.

WOMAN

What did you say?

GEORGIA

I said I'll call him right away.

Georgia picks up the phone at her station.

GEORGIA

(continuing; on mic)

Mr. Adamian...Cookware.

The woman and Georgia face off uncomfortably.

WOMAN

Why do you have it in for me?

GEORGIA

(pasted-on smile)

Ma'am, look at this face. Do I
look like I have it in for you?

Now a swarthy little nervous man swoops down on the scene.
His store I.D. says "MR. ADAMIAN, MANAGER." He speaks in a
heavy, SLAVIC ACCENT.

ADAMIAN

Is there a problem here?

WOMAN

She called me a liar.

Adamian turns on Georgia.

ADAMIAN

What!

GEORGIA

(quietly)

No sir, I definitely did not. I was just telling this lady that the store no longer stocks this item.

WOMAN

You advertise you can always return something you bought at the store. Well, I bought it here and now I'm returning it.

Georgia deadpans it to Adamian.

WOMAN

(continuing)

There's four lawyers in the family. Two more on the way.

ADAMIAN

(considers briefly)

Ms. Byrd, apologize to the lady.

Georgia is stunned by this defection.

GEORGIA

But, Mr. Adamian, I always thought we...

ADAMIAN

...Apologize when we make a mistake.

Georgia's lips tighten for a second then...

GEORGIA

I apologize, ma'am. I was mistaken.

The Woman sticks her nose up and goes with Adamian.

ADAMIAN

(to Woman)

If you'll come with me, I'll show you our new squeezers.

(hissed, to Georgia)

Get back to work.

Georgia just takes it.

INT. CAFETERIA - LUNCHTIME

Georgia is dissecting her chef's salad while Rochelle digs into a Salisbury steak, gravy-floating in a crater of mashed potatoes.

She looks over incredulously as Georgia removes each crouton out of her salad, then the cheese strips, egg slices, and finally the salami. Rochelle chews thoughtfully as Georgia lays each item out on the side of the plate.

ROCHELLE

I don't know what makes me think of this...but have you seen that new show "Autopsy?"

GEORGIA

(whispers)

Our food distributor irradiates the meat products. There were so many cases of diarrhea and food poisoning here last year.

But Rochelle's not listening to another one of Georgia's fear factors. She's watching Sean emerge from the food line.

ROCHELLE

Wonder if his meat's been irradiated?

Rochelle throws a look to the food line where Sean is bringing his tray in their direction.

GEORGIA

You know I don't like it when you talk like that.

ROCHELLE

Oh, loosen your girdle!

(studying him)

If it were me, I'd invite the man over for supper and then...

(lasciviously)

...get him on the couch.

Georgia shades her eyes with her hand, sneaks looks at Sean as he sits down at a table with a male friend, twenty-something MARLON.

ANGLE - TABLE WITH SEAN AND MARLON

They look over at the two women looking at them.

MARLON

(out of the corner of his mouth)

Act natural...they're checkin us out.

Sean wasn't doing anything but acting naturally. He carefully places his napkin so as not to get anything on his tie.

SEAN

How'm I doing so far, Marlon?

MARLON

The one on the left...Rochelle.
Invited me over for supper. Pinned
me on the couch. Sat on my chest!
Had to wear a neck brace for three
damn weeks.

Marlon expects Sean to appreciate his war story, but gets no
reaction.

MARLON

(continuing)

You know, conversation is a two-
way street.

Still nothing. Marlon looks off at the two women again.

MARLON

(continuing)

Lord have mercy! Look at the way
that other one is looking at you!
That's the good news and the bad
news.

That wakes up the sleeping giant. Sean turns to him with a
bad look in his eye.

SEAN

What do you mean by that..?

MARLON

(suddenly afraid for
his life)

Nothin...just that...she's one of
them "church ladies."

SEAN

So was my mama.

MARLON

Enough said, man. Relax. Didn't
mean nothing by it.

(bouncing back)

I could hook you up. No problem.

He starts to get out of his chair. Sean pushes him back down
with one big arm.

SEAN

Forget it. With my history...

He scratches at what looks like a gang TATTOO peaking out
from his shirt collar.

SEAN

(continuing)

...she wouldn't be seen dead with
a man like me.

MARLON
 What did you do, anyway?
 (off Sean's look)
 Nevermind.

NEW ANGLE - GEORGIA'S POV

She's looking at the same tattoo.

GEORGIA
 (almost to herself)
 ...never noticed that tattoo
 before. That's usually a sign of
 some kind of reckless
 behavior...Who knows what kind of
 sexual history he has?

Rochelle throws down her fork.

ROCHELLE
 Now you've done it! You've
 actually ruined my appetite!

She gets up from the table leaving Georgia all alone.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER

Georgia goes UP the escalator. She looks down on the LAWN & GARDEN department and scopes Sean working on a barbecue grill. She's mulling something over as she DISAPPEARS upstairs. The CAMERA stays put. Now she REAPPEARS coming down.

Timidly, tentatively, she meanders through his department; stands over him as he assembles a patio gas range. When he sees that it's her, he quickly gets to his feet.

SEAN
 Ms. Byrd.

GEORGIA
 (nervous)
 Uh, Georgia...

SEAN
 Georgia.

The sound of her name on his lips almost makes her swoon.

SEAN
 (continuing)
 Is there something I can do for
 you?

Georgia focuses her attention on the first thing she sees - a stainless steel grill that's the size of a Honda Accord. What follows is her idea of flirting and his idea of a tough guy selling lawn and garden.

GEORGIA
 That's quite a nice grill.

SEAN
From Italy.

GEORGIA
Stainless.

SEAN
Durable.

GEORGIA
Easy to clean?

SEAN
Just hose it down.

GEORGIA
Hose it down, huh?

SEAN
Uh-huh.

GEORGIA
With a hose?

SEAN
A regular garden hose.

They stand and look at each other for an awkward moment.

SEAN
(continuing)
Are you, uh, on your break...

GEORGIA
Yes.
(pause)
That's why I'm here. To ask you,
um...

SEAN
Ask me what?

GEORGIA
(can't ask him out)
Do I get my store discount if I
buy this thing?

SEAN
Well, of course. But...didn't I
just sell you a grill last week?

GEORGIA
That was a hibachi...for traveling.

SEAN
I see. You really need something
as big as this? Not that it's any
business of mine...

GEORGIA

I...uh...I...need the grill capacity.

SEAN

You must entertain a lot of people.

GEORGIA

I'm thinking of having the LA Philharmonic over...

(off his look of incredulity)

Just the woodwinds. I feel it's important to "give back" to the artistic community.

Sean is impressed and discouraged at the same time. This woman sets the bar pretty high.

SEAN

That's very admirable of you. I try to do something in my small way myself.

GEORGIA

Is that so?

SEAN

Been downstairs, yet?

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - BASEMENT

Sean and Georgia walk through double storeroom doors, come face to face with a dozen EMPLOYEES laying down on cots having their blood drawn by medical TECHNICIANS.

SEAN

(proudly)

I'm the organizer of the company Blood Drive! Everybody who donates gets a free screening for cholesterol, diabetes, the works!

Georgia blanches, sees the NEEDLES...BLOOD.

GEORGIA

Very nice. But I do have to get going.

SEAN

I thought you said you were on break? C'mon...I'd be honored if I could get you to make a contribution.

(off her reticence)

Tell you what...I'll even join you.

GEORGIA

It looks pretty crowded in here. Maybe I'll come back later.

But just as she says that, two people get up from their cots.

SEAN

How's that for luck? Table for two.

Dread and panic flashes across Georgia's face as he leads her to the cots. He lays down next to her.

NEW ANGLE - FROM ABOVE - SEAN AND GEORGIA

This is probably as close as she's been to laying down with a man in years. A NURSE attends to Sean as the SECOND NURSE attends to Georgia.

NURSE

Name, age and weight?

GEORGIA

Georgia Byrd, age 28.

(very, very quietly)

One fifty.

SEAN

(overhearing)

I got ya beat by a buck, twenty!

Georgia cringes.

NURSE #2

(to Sean)

Drink? Smoke?

SEAN

No, ma'am.

NURSE #2

When did you get the tattoo?

Georgia cocks an ear.

SEAN

Uh, a long time ago. I'm thinking of havin it removed.

NURSE #2

We'll test for hepatitis.

SEAN

(embarrassed)

They already did. This is my *fifth* pint.

Sean cocks an ear as Nurse #1 asks Georgia something and then whispers back.

SEAN

(continuing; preempts next question)

I don't have any venereal diseases either.

Georgia would like to die of embarrassment, but before she can fully react, the Nurse inserts the NEEDLE in her arm. Georgia fixates on the bag as it starts to fill. Her eyelids start to flutter...

SEAN
(continuing)
You know what the best part of
this is?

GEORGIA'S POV - SEAN IS STARTING TO BLUR

He starts to reduce in size like looking through the wrong end of a telescope.

SEAN
(from far away)
When you're finished, they give
you a glass of orange juice and a
Twinkie!
(now concerned)
Ms. Byrd? Ms. Byrd?

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - COOKWARE

Sean has Georgia under one arm and Rochelle has Georgia under the other. Her feet are dragging behind. Taking her to her station, they unfortunately pass Mr. Adamian.

ADAMIAN
What's the problem here? Is she
drunk?

SEAN
No, she's not drunk, Mr. Adamian.
She gave a little blood.

ADAMIAN
Take her in the back! We can't
have customers see her like this!
(to a CUSTOMER)
She's not drunk. Only today, a set
of three Pyrex bowls, \$2.99.

BACK IN STORAGE - CONTINUING

They place her in a chair. Rochelle goes to get her a glass of water. She's starting to come around. Rochelle comes with a glass of water. She sips.

SEAN
Very good.

Now Adamian comes back there.

ADAMIAN
All right, that's enough!
Everybody get back to work.

One last shot, to Georgia.

ADAMIAN

Feel better from your drinking?

EXT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Georgia is pulling the HUGE STAINLESS STEEL BARBECUE past the long-emptied communal swimming pool, through another gate toward the elevator. Suddenly, the pulling gets a little easier. She stops and walks around the other side of the BBQ. Darius is there with his back against it.

GEORGIA

How'd you get in here?

DARIUS

You left the front gate opened.

Not quite satisfied with his answer, she resumes moving the barbecue to the elevator. But she's chagrined to find a red sign taped to it...OUT OF ORDER.

DARIUS

(continuing)

Now what?

GEORGIA

We'll just have to leave it here.

DARIUS

If you do, it'll be gone in five minutes.

Darius looks up at the stairs.

DARIUS

(continuing)

If we take it slow, I think the two of us could get this thing up the stairs.

Georgia looks up the stairwell, she almost swoons. It becomes a Hitchcock moment with "Vertigo" MUSIC.

GEORGIA

I don't know about that.

DARIUS

Don't be shy, ma'am. You're ten times stronger'n me, and I took a 32' Sony Wega TV all the way down the stairs by myself!

GEORGIA

When exactly did you do that?

Why'd he have to open his big mouth?

DARIUS

Uh...helping some folks move out.

GEORGIA
(staring into his
soul)

Uh huh...

Without asking, he starts to grunt the thing up the first flight. Georgia takes a deep breath and joins in.

NEW ANGLE - STAIRWAY AT THE TOP

They have almost made it. Georgia is soaked with perspiration, breathing with difficulty as she looks DOWN the stairwell...

GEORGIA'S POV - VERTIGO!!!

Darius gives it an extra push, and they finally arrive at her front door. Georgia looks sick.

DARIUS
So...I guess we're having barbecue
tonight?
(real concern)
Are you all right, ma'am? You
don't look so hot.

GEORGIA
Got a little problem with heights
is all. I'll...be...all...right.

She just opens the door and pulls the barbecue inside after her like a hermit crab pulls its shell.

INT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

She turns on the light. REVEAL what we didn't see before: A staggering inventory of LAWN and PATIO gear. All brand new. Wrought-iron tables, umbrellas, Tikki lamps, and a love seat swing with plastic floral cushions all crammed into the small living room. Each item is testimony to a failed attempt (for lack of courage) at asking Sean over for dinner.

GEORGIA

collapses into a redwood chaise. She picks up the tongs that came with the grill to lock the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Georgia, dressed in a chef hat and apron with "Wizard Chef" on it, stands behind a plywood counter. A small herd of LADIES with nothing better to do have gathered for a demonstration.

GEORGIA
Ladies, Magic Chef No-Stick
Cookware is here to put magic in
your menus. Here's an idea...
(more)

GEORGIA (cont'd)
 Take a Tater Tot, stuff it with an
 olive, dip it in some Cheez Whiz,
 flip it in the pan...

Georgia, robotically, drops the lump into a pan with some
 others already made. She looks down at the pan and is doing
 everything she can not to throw up.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 ...and voila! You've got Magic
 Chef Sombreros.

She slides them all out onto a tray and offers them out to
 the Ladies for sampling.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 Mmm...watch how fast they
 disappear!

None of the Ladies makes a move. She tries another lady. And
 another. Finally, one lady takes a bite...then puts the other
 half back.

LADY
 Do you think these are good?

Georgia wants to say "of course not," but doesn't. Now Sean
 reaches into frame and takes one.

SEAN
 I do.

Oh, be still my heart! Georgia gets very nervous with his
 arrival, but continues with her cookware demonstration.

GEORGIA
 Ladies, here's another idea for a
 quick, Magic Chef snack. Take a
 cup of maraschino cherries...

SEAN
 I feel terrible about what
 happened to you yesterday.

Georgia is embarrassed by what happened yesterday.

GEORGIA
 Please, don't be. Now if you don't
 mind, Mr. Mathews, I'm in the
 middle of something here.
 (to the Ladies)
 ...add a jar of Marshmallow
 Fluff...

She continues with the demonstration. But he's not leaving.

SEAN

I'd like to make it up to you if I could.

GEORGIA

Thank you, but that's completely unnecessary.

(to Ladies)

Got some old pretzels around the house?

SEAN

I got two pretzels...two tickets to the Lakers next home game.

That stops her cold. She hands the spoon to one of the old Ladies.

GEORGIA

Stir this.

(takes Sean aside)

What did you say?

He gets intimidated.

SEAN

Uh, don't take any offense...I just thought maybe we could see the game and have dinner.

GEORGIA

You're asking me out on a date?

SEAN

I know you're a busy woman and everything...

GEORGIA

If this is out of sympathy or something, you can just...

SEAN

No, ma'am. It's not.

She completely masks her excitement.

GEORGIA

Well then...I accept.

INT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She throws her MAIL and keys on the kitchen table and unpacks her shopping. She's been to the health food store. She's bought some powder mix called FAT BURNER and a bunch of magazines about basketball and the Lakers.

GEORGIA

(to herself)

People, we gotta lotta work to do!

She mixes up a glass of Fat Burner and casually goes through her mail. There's a letter from a "Blood Diagnostics Corp."

She opens it up. The expression on her face changes.

CLOSE LETTER

It is printed in bold red. DEAR MS. BYRD, YOU HAVE TESTED LAMPINGTON'S DISEASE - POSITIVE! - SEE APPROVED PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY. THIS COULD BE LIFE THREATENING!

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ADAMIAN'S OFFICE - MORNING

Here is the "brains" of the office - SECURITY CAMERAS...MUZAK MACHINE...Georgia stands in front of Mr. Adamian's desk. He's reading a Forbes magazine. On the cover is a tooth-bonded and tanned captain of industry holding a chain saw. The headline reads: "MICHAEL KRAGEN CUTS THE DEADWOOD FROM RETAIL EMPIRE".

GEORGIA

Mr. Adamian...I need to take a sick day.

He lowers the magazine, looks at her with a jaundiced eye.

ADAMIAN

You sick?

Adamian takes a CD of "The Best of Britney Spears" and slides it into the company sound system.

GEORGIA

I hope not. But I need to see the doctor.

Now that insufferable MUZAK comes on. Georgia closes her eyes for a long blink enduring it in silence.

ADAMIAN

What? You look strong enough to snap the neck of Ukranian goose!
(leans forward)
You ask me, you got hangover.

She goes to say something, but as usual, holds her tongue. He opens her employee file, looks down at it.

GEORGIA

I have never taken a sick day in almost ten years of working here.

ADAMIAN

(sighs)
All right. All right. Go.
(scribbles something)
But putting in employee record, "Reason...Dubious." Be back for 2:30 Magic Chef demonstration.

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Georgia races to the office door, has to jump back as two BURLY MOVERS carry a couch out the door.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Georgia huffs into the empty waiting room. Not just of patients, but of furniture, too. A RECEPTIONIST is just about to turn off her computer to leave. It's about all that's left behind the desk.

GEORGIA

Hi! I'm here. Georgia Byrd.

RECEPTIONIST

(not happy to see her)
Ms. Byrd, with a 'y', you said...
(she nods)

I can't seem to find you in the computer. Have you changed medical plans or something?

GEORGIA

Well, the store where I work was bought by another store.

RECEPTIONIST

Then you most likely have a new healthcare provider.

GEORGIA

Okay, then I have a new healthcare provider.

RECEPTIONIST

And Dr. Gupta's no longer on your approved healthcare provider list of physicians.

GEORGIA

But...but he's my doctor.
(holds up blood test)
I was supposed to see my doctor "immediately."

Before she can answer, a heavily-accented INDIAN VOICE interrupts.

DR. GUPTA (OS)

It's all right, Nancy.

ANGLE - DR. GUPTA

The little Indian man, looking a bit weary, comes forward to greet Georgia.

DR. GUPTA

Come in, Georgia. How are you?

They shake hands. Georgia feigns calm and good health.

GEORGIA

Me? I'm fine. Absolutely fine.
It's just this silly diagnosis
that came up from a blood donation
I gave.

DR. GUPTA

Let me see that.

Dr. Gupta puts on his reading glasses and scrutinizes it. His brow furrows when he sees the diagnosis. This moment of tension is interrupted by the Movers coming in again.

GEORGIA

Moving, huh?

DR. GUPTA

Our HMO went belly up. So...we
close our doors.

(sad shrug)

I am joining a big clinic in
Anaheim.

GEORGIA

Is that good?

DOCTOR GUPTA

Well, the drive is going to kill
me, but...

(winces at choice of
words, clears throat)

So...it says you have a virus. But
these big labs - they're always
giving out false positives.

GEORGIA

(brightens)

So it was just a false positive?

DR. GUPTA

(flips page)

Apparently not. This second lab
test confirmed it.

GEORGIA

(face falls)

So I have Lampington's Disease?

DR. GUPTA

(reassuring look)

A little virus. Very, very common.
Very harmless...in most cases.

GEORGIA

And in my case..?

DR. GUPTA

In extreme situations, it can
attack the brain. I wonder if Dr.
Hahn's still in the building...?

He now sees the Movers wheeling the disconnected MRI machine past his door.

DR. GUPTA
(continuing)
Gentleman, we are going to need
that please!

Disgruntled, they stop and wheel it back.

INT. ANOTHER DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATER

CLOSE GEORGIA'S MRI. Indecipherable shapes and forms. Now a finger appears.

DR. HAHN (OS)
You see this area here? This is
your mass.

Pull back to REVEAL a second doctor, DR. HAHN. He has joined Dr. Gupta over Georgia's diagnosis.

GEORGIA
My mass?

DR. GUPTA
(translates)
Your tumor.

DR. HAHN
And this...and this...and this.

Dr. Hahn points to three other 'masses', sighs sadly.

DR. HAHN
(continuing)
I'm sorry, Georgia, but I'm afraid
the virus has caused a very
advanced case of Lampington's
Lesions.

Georgia is reeling from the news.

GEORGIA
Exactly what does that mean...
Lampington's Lesions?

Hahn looks to Gupta to break it to her.

DR. HAHN
Without treatment, it's terminal.

GEORGIA
What? I'm going to die? No!!!

Georgia staggers back into the MRI machine, which is being carried thru the room by the movers like a coffin.

DR. GUPTA
I'm very, very sorry.

GEORGIA

(denial)

But I feel fine! I feel great...I carried a two hundred pound barbecue up three flights of stairs!

DR. GUPTA

You really shouldn't be eating too much barbecue, Georgia. It...

He catches himself and shuts up.

DR. HAHN

You didn't have shortness of breath? Dizziness?

Well, come to think of it...

GEORGIA

What does this all mean?

DR. HAHN

You'll experience some slight neuron necrosis. Other than that you'll be fine up to...let's say forty-eight hours before you...uh, well...the end.

GEORGIA

My God. And when is that?

DR. HAHN

Three weeks.

GEORGIA

I've got three weeks to live!?!

DR. HAHN

Okay, four weeks on the outside.

GEORGIA

(head in hands)

Oh dear Jesus...

She slumps into a chair, thwarting the Movers once again. Then a thought occurs to her.

GEORGIA

(continuing; to Hahn)

Wait a minute. You said 'without treatment'. You could give me an operation!

DR. HAHN

If there was one tumor, maybe we could try to remove it. But this many, riddling the inner cerebral cortex...It's a quality of life issue. How do you want to spend your remaining time? In a hospital?

DR. GUPTA
 (gently interrupts)
 The fact is, Georgia, Dr. Hahn
 couldn't do the operation anyway.
 He's leaving the HMO.

As a matter of fact, right now. Hahn picks up his boxes and
 gives Georgia an empathetic look.

DR. HAHN
 I wouldn't blame you if you wanted
 a second opinion. Anyway, good
 luck.

And Dr. Hahn EXITS. Georgia is agitated now.

GEORGIA
 Of course, I want a second
 opinion. Who's to say he hasn't
 made a mistake!? I just read that
 a surgeon cut the wrong leg off
 somebody!

DR. GUPTA
 (gently)
 Georgia, tomorrow you make an
 appointment with an approved neuro-
 surgeon from your new healthcare
 provider. In the meantime...

Dr. Gupta takes Georgia by the elbow, gently stands her up.
 The Movers immediately whisk the last chair away.

DR. GUPTA
 (continuing)
 Go home, spend time with people
 close to you.

INT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Georgia sits at her dining table, all alone, with her food
 album and a phone in front of her, crying.

Finally, she lifts her head up. Blows her nose mightily and
 dials the phone. A FEMALE VOICE answers.

GEORGIA (ON PHONE)
 Hello, honey. This is aunty
 Georgia...I'm fine, sweetie. How
 are you? Good...Could I speak to
 mommy, please? ...Hello, Tanya?

TANYA (ON PHONE)
 Georgia I was just gonna call
 you...?

GEORGIA (ON PHONE)
 That's good because I need to talk
 to you. I got some news today and
 uh, this is pretty hard for me to
 say but...

TANYA (ON PHONE)
(cutting her off)

There's this man I met who said he'd introduce me to some friends of his in Nashville... I just need you to take care of the kids for three days.

GEORGIA (ON PHONE)
What are you going to do in Nashville?

TANYA (ON PHONE)
I'm gonna be a country singer! Isn't that great!

GEORGIA
But Tanya...there's no such thing as a black country singer.

TANYA (ON PHONE)
I'm not asking you to comment on the validity of my dream! Are you gonna take these damn kids or not?

GEORGIA (ON PHONE)
Well, I can't. That's what I have to tell you. See, I...

TANYA (ON PHONE)
Ever since Mom and Poppa died, you've never done anything for me!

GEORGIA
That's not true!
(calms down)
Look, I don't want to go into all that. I just wanted to tell you I got some bad news...

CLICK. Her sister hangs up on her.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
...from the doctor today.
(sighs heavily puts the phone down)
...I'm hoping to get a better second opinion.

INT. HMO ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The HMO ADMINISTATOR, a grim-faced woman, is reviewing her file.

HMO WOMAN
(accusingly)
You have three tumors.

GEORGIA
That's what they told me.

HMO WOMAN

(attitude)

And you don't agree with the doctors? Or what?

GEORGIA

No, ma'am. I would just like a second opinion because...well, I don't want to die if it's at all possible. There's a ten percent chance that an operation...

The HMO woman, who has never once looked up from Georgia's files, holds up a hand.

HMO WOMAN

Let me save you some time here.

Finally, some help.

HMO WOMAN

(continuing)

We won't insure you for this operation.

GEORGIA

What do you mean you won't insure me? I'm covered with my HMO.

HMO WOMAN

I didn't say we wouldn't insure you. We'll insure you for everything but your Lampington's tumors.

GEORGIA

What good does that do me if I have Lampington's disease?

HMO WOMAN

Our policy prevents us from covering pre-existing conditions.

GEORGIA

Pre-existing? But I just found out about my condition last week!

HMO WOMAN

Yes, but these Lampington's Lesions pre-date your employment at the Kragen Store. You were technically covered by your old HMO at the time you contracted it. You should see them.

GEORGIA

But they went bankrupt!

She gives her a Kafka smile.

HMO WOMAN

Well, I guess you can see why we try to operate a sound business model here.

GEORGIA

But I need a life-saving operation!

HMO WOMAN

Nobody's saying you can't have the operation. All we're saying is that we won't pay for it.

GEORGIA

Okay, what if I paid for it? How much is it?

HMO WOMAN

(clicks away)

The cost of a median cranial debulking surgery is around 340 thousand dollars. That's without anaesthesia. You'll want that.

Georgia clicks over into a new phase. Anger.

GEORGIA

Don't be stupid!! I can't pay that! Nobody can pay that!

But it's the HMO Woman who takes offense and pushes a document across the desk at her.

HMO WOMAN

If you feel you are being unfairly treated, these are our Appeals Procedures, which you have every legal right to pursue...

Just looking at the 50 pages of small type procedures makes Georgia's shoulder's sag.

GEORGIA

I'll be dead before I even read through all this!

INT. BAR - DAY

Georgia, uncharacteristically, raises a tiny glass of dessert wine to her lips. She finishes it, places it down on the bar next to a half-dozen empties. With a curled finger, she summons the BARTENDER for a refill. He comes over to her with a bowl of nuts.

GEORGIA

(recoils in horror)

Oh no, no! Get em away from me!

BARTENDER

They're just...nuts.

GEORGIA

I was on an all-cashew diet for a month. I get sick at the sight of the curled-up things! I lost three whole pounds! Let's drink to those three damn pounds!

Georgia pushes her empty at the Bartender, LAUGHS giddily. Then abruptly starts SOBBING.

BARTENDER

Ma'am...it's my duty to inform you that we've broken through "binge levels" here.

GEORGIA

Lemme ask you somethin...I'm only twenty-nine years old. Why does everybody call me *ma'am*?

The Bartender, not wanting to rile her, weighs his answer carefully as he pours her another.

BARTENDER

Well, because you *look* like a ma'am. When you first walked in here I thought you were an ATF agent coming to check our license.

Georgia looks at her reflection in the bar mirror. Her hair. Her clothes. Depressingly, he's right. She looks like a ma'am.

GEORGIA

I'm not ugly though...am I?

BARTENDER

No...M'...
(stops himself from
saying ma'am)
No, you're not.

She just looks at herself in the mirror. Takes another gulp of her drink.

BARTENDER

(continuing)
Pardon me for saying so, but you don't usually come in here.
(she shakes head no)
Get some bad news today?

She nods sadly, yes. Bartender starts mopping the bar.

BARTENDER

(continuing)

Lose your boyfriend?

(shakes head no)

Your house?

(shakes head no)

Your job?

(shakes head no)

Your money?

(shakes head no)

Somebody close to you die?

She takes another drink.

GEORGIA

Yeah...me.

The Bartender doesn't know quite what to say.

The BUSINESSMAN who sits on the next barstool doesn't know what he's intruding on, though. His state-of-the-art PDA visionphone RINGS (The Death Scene from "Swan Lake") loudly enough to jolt Georgia out of her melancholic reverie.

BUSINESSMAN (ON PHONE)

Yeah, hey. We killed, killed.

Followed by a loud LAUGH. Georgia mock-talks along with guy bragging about his latest deal. He clicks OFF. Georgia returns to her brooding. Then, the phone SWAN LAKES again.

GEORGIA

Don't answer that.

BUSINESSMAN

What?

GEORGIA

Just turn it off.

The guy ignores her.

BUSINESSMAN (ON PHONE)

Hey. Oh yeah. Raped em and left em for dead! Talk to you tomorrow.

The Businessman clicks off, puts his phone on the bar. Sees that Georgia is staring at him.

BUSINESSMAN

You got a problem... ma'am?

There's that "ma'am" business again.

GEORGIA

Yes, I do.

Georgia casually slips off one of her sensible shoes. Then she suddenly and repeatedly BASHES the state-of-the-art phone with it into a hundred pieces on the bar. BAM, BAM, BAM...

She calmly puts her shoe back on. The Businessman is livid.

BUSINESSMAN

This damn well better be one of those TV shows!

She answers by knocking him off his barstool.

GEORGIA

Or what...Mr. Flat-assed Businessman?

He starts to get up, but freezes when she reaches into her purse. Georgia smiles, drains the rest of her drink and throws a C-note on the bar.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Think I'll go shopping.

INT. DESIGNER DRESS SHOP - LATER

Georgia is standing in front of a three-way mirror in a very chic and expensive gown. The SALESGIRL is thin, with black hair, black clothes, black eye makeup.

GEORGIA

(slurring her words)

I used to buy all my clothes at the store where I work. Cause of my discount.

(admiring herself)

But all that crap's made by poor slave girls in Indonesian sweatshops!

SALESGIRL

So's this stuff.

Georgia considers for a moment.

GEORGIA

Maybe...but this is a *fine* example of slave girl work!

She goes back to loving herself in the dress.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Answer me straight. You think anyone would ever call me "ma'am" in this dress?

SALESGIRL

I don't think so.

Meanwhile, the Salesgirl is a little nervous.

SALESGIRL

(continuing)

Uh, just so you know, not that you
can't afford it...but this dress
is twenty-five hundred dollars.

Georgia turns to her, both eyebrows raised.

GEORGIA

(unimpressed)

Did you see me blink?

She shakes her head.

GEORGIA

(continuing; pushes
her bosoms together
and up)

Now run along and find me
something that shows off these
bosoms for once in their damn
lives!

INT. KRAGEN'S DEPARTMENT STORE - NIGHT

Britney Spears on the muzak tells us that Adamian is on duty.

CLOSE - RED STILLETTO SHOES WALKING WITH PURPOSE

Pull back to see a tight red dress, an expensive handbag, and
some bosoms that are finally seeing the light of day.

Georgia is on the move. She stops in the MUSIC DEPARTMENT,
goes to a CD rack and rummages through it, tossing out what
she doesn't want until she finds it. Walks past the
shoplifting sensor which sets off the store ALARM.

With CD in hand, she takes the escalator UP, past LAWN AND
GARDEN, where Sean gets a quick peek at her.

But that couldn't be her. He looks away.

Now in COOKWARE, Georgia grabs a MEAT CLEAVER off the fine
cutlery display. Rochelle sees her and quickly comes to her
side.

ROCHELLE

Georgia! Are you all right?

GEORGIA

No!

ADAMIAN'S VOICE (ON P.A.)

WILL COOKWARE DEPARTMENT PLEASE
REPORT!

ROCHELLE

Adamian's been lookin for you.

GEORGIA

Well, I'm lookin for him.

ROCHELLE
(re: cleaver)
Whatcha gonna do with that?

GEORGIA
I'm gonna chop off Mr. Adamian's
little Magic Chef Sombrero.

ROCHELLE
Uh, maybe you should just go home.
I'll tell him you came down with
something.

GEORGIA
You got that right.

She gets to Adamian's office. That's as close as Rochelle goes.

Georgia just flings the door open without knocking. She catches Adamian eating his dinner - lowering a whole sardine into his mouth under a framed PHOTOGRAPH of their owner MICHAEL KRAGEN.

He looks up and GASPS at this women in the red dress with a meat cleaver in her hand.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
I heard you're looking for me.

Looks at the cleaver.

ADAMIAN
Suddenly it doesn't seem so
important.

GEORGIA
Good. I quit.

ADAMIAN
You what?

GEORGIA
You heard me.

ADAMIAN
You're going to work for Wal-mart,
eh? That's what I get for being
like brother to you! All right. I
match offer.

GEORGIA
What are you talking about?

ADAMIAN
Your department has highest profit
record in store. We can't afford
to lose you.

GEORGIA
 (shakes cleaver in
 his face)
 How come you never told me that
 before?

ADAMIAN
 Well, I didn't want you to do what
 you're doing to me now. Holding me
 up for more money - which I'm
 happy to pay as God is my witness!

GEORGIA
 Well, isn't that nice! I never
 took a damn day of my vacation -
 I was so afraid of being fired!

ADAMIAN
 Why would I fire you? You're
 wonderful person.

There's that damn Britney Spears muzak scoring his dialogue.
 She can't hear herself think.

GEORGIA
 WONDERFUL PERSON, MY ASS!!!

She comes around to his side of the desk with the cleaver.

ADAMIAN
 Oh my God! Oh my God! What are you
 going to do!?!?

She grabs his swivel chair and pushes him out of the way -
 gets her hands on the goddamn muzak machine, hits EJECT.

Out pops Britney Spears. She HACKS it cleanly in half. Puts
 in the CD we heard in her neighborhood. Queen Latifa's "Wrath
 of My Madness." She turns up the volume.

It immediately goes POUNDING OUT into the store. While her
 back was turned, Adamian got on the phone.

ADAMIAN
 (continuing)
 Help me! Security! This is...

Georgia wheels the cleaver around and CHOPS it into the wall
 by the door carrying all the phone lines. Leaves amid the
 BLARING MUSIC and ALARMS.

INT. BANK - DAY - CLOSE - BANK OFFICER

His face betrays a little surprise as Georgia sits down in
 his Christmas-decorated office. He's never seen Georgia
 dressed quite like this.

BANK OFFICER
 You're sure you want to liquidate
 the entire IRA? All \$63,422?

NEW ANGLE - GEORGIA

She sits across the desk from him, nods in the affirmative. There's a funny look on her face, like she's seen a ghost.

GEORGIA'S POV - THE WHITE-HAIRED BANKER

But from Georgia's POV, the white-haired Bank Officer - with two tinsel and styrofoam TRUMPETING ANGELS on either side of him and the BARS of the deposit box cage behind - is a dead ringer for St. Peter.

BANK OFFICER

You know that there's a severe penalty for early termination.

GEORGIA

Don't I though.

He clicks something into the computer, hesitates.

BANK OFFICER

I must say, I'm a little uncomfortable with this. You don't seem quite yourself today.

She helps herself to a candycane from a bowl on his desk.

GEORGIA

I'm not.

BANK OFFICER

Just out of curiosity, how was someone at your salary level able to save all this money in just ten years?

Georgia considers before answering.

GEORGIA

Well, first of all, you got to live in a small, cheap apartment. The ones I'm talking about are widely available in the city's sketchiest neighborhoods. Secondly, never, ever eat in restaurants. And when you buy groceries...

(pulls a wad of coupons from purse)

...always use these. Make your own clothes. Never see a movie that ain't on TV. And most importantly...download your music.

This bleak lifestyle has the Banker speechless.

BANK OFFICER

You are a very...disciplined woman. I'm sure you have a very useful purpose for this money.

GEORGIA
I'm gonna blow it.

BANK OFFICER
I, uh, don't suppose you'd like to keep a few thousand in the Christmas Club? It's getting a hefty one and a half percent...

She pulls the candycane out of her mouth.

GEORGIA
Fuck the Christmas Club.

INT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - LATER - ON HER COMPUTER

She's clicking away on "Travelocity", booking an airline ticket. She types in: GENEVA, BEST FARE, ONE-WAY. She clicks the box to CONFIRM. Bingo, it's done. Now the hotel.

The SHOT WIDENS to include a suitcase on the table, passport, money...She opens her "Book of Possibilities" to the front page. It's the picture of the Hotel Du Ciel.

Now a picture on her computer screen comes on that matches it. She clicks 21 DAYS. CONFIRM. That's done.

EXT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - SUNDAY MORNING

Georgia comes out to the curb lugging two sizeable suitcases. A CAB is waiting. And so is Darius.

DARIUS
Where you going, Ms. Georgia?

GEORGIA
I'm goin to church.

Darius looks at the cab.

DARIUS
Why don't I drive you in your car?

GEORGIA
I don't own it, anymore.
(hands him
registration)
You do.

DARIUS
You're shittin me. 'Xcuse the bad language.

GEORGIA
Let's not worry about the language, anymore. Darius, you gotta promise me something.

DARIUS
What's that?

GEORGIA

I'm givin you this car, but I don't want you to fret over it like I did. Will you promise me you ain't never gonna fret over any *non-living* thing?

He nods in agreement.

GEORGIA
(continuing)

Say it.

Darius looks around to see if anybody's watching him.

DARIUS

I ain't never gonna fret over no *non-living* thing.

GEORGIA

Prove it.

DARIUS

What do you want me to do?

GEORGIA

Kick the shit out of it. Like this.

She lifts her skirt up a little bit and puts her shoe into the side panel. Nice big dent.

He looks at her like she's crazy, but follows suit.

GEORGIA
(continuing)

I think it needs a good kick in the ass for being such a prissy ol' car, don't you think?

Darius starts to laugh. All right, then. He gives it a kick in the trunk.

The cab DRIVER comes over and gets her bags.

DARIUS

Where ya'll going with those bags, Ms. Byrd?

GEORGIA

Geneva, Switzerland. The Alps.

DARIUS

You want me pick you up when you come home?

GEORGIA

I'm not coming home.

She's about to get into the cab.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 One more thing...

She beckons him over. As soon as he gets close enough, she locks him in a bear hug and kisses him big-sisterly on the cheek; then fixes him with a stern look.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 You be nice to women.

He nods. He can't understand any of this, but he's never understood much about her, anyway.

EXT. SMALL BAPTIST CHURCH - SOUTH CENTRAL L.A.

Georgia's cab waits outside.

INT. SMALL BAPTIST CHURCH - SUNDAY MORNING

The CHOIR is in the middle of a traditional hymn. The camera PANS the faces of the Church Ladies. They are all singing - quite unaware of the fact that their fellow chorister, Georgia Byrd, is just standing there, not singing, numb.

When they are finished, the Reverend directs the CONGREGATION to the next passage.

REVEREND
 Ladies and gentlemen, I'm sad to say that Senator Dillings won't be with us as planned. Pressing business in our nation's capitol has kept him.

Opens his prayer book.

REVEREND
 (continuing)
 Let us take a moment of silent prayer...that the good Lord guides the Senator and gives him strength for his people.

Except for the occasional snuffle or cough, it is dead QUIET. People have their eyes closed, silently praying.

We are CLOSE GEORGIA'S FACE when, from the back of the choir...

GEORGIA
 Dear Lord, why me?

Her eyes pop open. Did I say that out loud? The Choir and the Congregation are looking at her. I guess I did. Normally, she would have gulped and slunk away. But not now. Instead, she begins to SING softly.

GEORGIA
(continuing)

Oh, dear Lord...why in heaven's me?

The Choir doesn't know what this is all about, but they back her up.

CHOIR SINGERS (SINGING)
Why in heaven's me?

GEORGIA (BELTING IT OUT)
I said LORD, DEAR LORD, DEAR LORD
DEAR LORD, DEAR LORD...

REACTION SHOTS

The Reverend as well as the rest of the Congregation are AGOG.

CHOIR SINGERS
WHY IN HEAVENS ME?

And thus begins Georgia's litany of everything she thought she'd done right with undeserving payback.

GEORGIA
I FOLLOWED YOUR COMMANDMENTS...

CHOIR SINGERS
LORD, OH LORD!

The IMPROMPTU GOSPEL gets everybody JOINING IN.

GEORGIA
WHY, IN HEAVENS, ME?

Now it takes a strange turn as she let's it all out.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
TOOK SHIT FROM MR. ADAMIAN...

CHOIR SINGERS
LORD, OH LORD!

GEORGIA
WHY, IN HEAVEN'S, ME?

Georgia comes down off the risers and works her way down the aisle of the Congregation to the door.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
NEVER SLEPT AROUND WITH MEN...

CHOIR SINGERS
LORD, OH LORD...

CONGREGATION
WHY, IN HEAVEN'S, ME?

At the door, she wraps up.

GEORGIA
OH DEAR LORD! DEAR LORD!
WHYEEEAYEEAY! WHYEEEAYEEAY!
WHYEEYAAAY...WHY, IN HEAVEN'S, ME?

And with that she goes out the door with a SLAM.

INT. PLANE - FLYING - DAY

On an overweight male PASSENGER straining to push his cramped tourist seat back. As his face reddens in frustration, WIDEN THE SHOT to see what the problem is: Georgia is seated behind her with her two knees pressed up against the back of the seat.

But she's oblivious to his struggle. She's got several little Vandemints chocolate liqueur bottles rolling around on her tray table, CRYING as she looks out her window at the fluffy, heavenly clouds streaming by.

The Passenger in front of her finally gives up, stops a STEWARDESS passing by. He communicates his frustration, jerking a thumb behind him at Georgia.

STEWARDESS
(to Georgia)
Ms., would you mind lowering your knees so the gentleman in front of you can put his seat back down?

Georgia wipes the tears from her face. She looks at her blankly for a moment, then, as if snapping out of it...

GEORGIA
Yes, I would very much mind! I don't think a man should be that close to a woman without first being married!

STEWARD
Ms., you're becoming a problem.

GEORGIA
The *problem* is that you people've put these seats too close together - probably to make more money - I can't imagine it's because you want us to get to know each other better! Whatever the reason, I'm not flying all the way to Geneva with Mr. Crisco in my lap!

Someone behind her starts to APPLAUD.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Now he's clapping. Just a moment ago, he was passing vile wind!

(turns around)

Yes, it's you! 23D. You're not fooling anyone.

(wags a finger)

You should be ashamed of yourself!

The Guy shifts uncomfortably as all eyes turn to him. Georgia nods to the Stewardess.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

It's him. Did you see his face? Go to the bathroom! It's UNOCCUPIED!

STEWARD

Ms., am I going to have to call the pilots?

INT. AIRPORT - FARGO, N.D. - DAY

Georgia is being escorted off the plane by two POLICE OFFICERS. She's unrepentant.

GEORGIA

Where am I, please?

COP

Fargo, North Dakota.

GEORGIA

Okay. When's the next flight to Geneva?

As the cops just look at each other and smirk...

EXT. FBO - FARGO, N.D. - DAY

Georgia, a cocktail in one hand, a pen in the other is signing travellers checks at the counter. Stacks of them.

GEORGIA

Tell me when I get to 20 thousand.

The FBO MANAGER is adding them all up.

FBO MANAGER

That should do it.

(bright smile)

Another cocktail, ma'am?

He holds up a large bottle of Vandemints chocolate liqueur.

GEORGIA

Well, if you're pouring...I guess I can take it on the plane with me, can't I?

FBO MANAGER

You can do anything you want on a private aircraft, ma'am.

EXT. RUNWAY - NIGHT - THE PRIVATE AIRCRAFT

Not just any aircraft. A jet. A Citation 10, in fact. All for Georgia. The engines are warming up as Georgia mounts the steps.

INT. CITATION - CONTINUOUS

Georgia enters the cabin, looks around at the incredible interior. A handsome STEWARD smiles a greeting.

GEORGIA

Is it just me?

STEWARD

(cheerfully)

It's just you.

Georgia nods approvingly. She sits down in the big, big chair. Feels the nice wood tray table, fiddles with the seat controls and suddenly the thing flattens out into a bed. She's startled, but chuckles to herself.

GEORGIA

Now this is more like it.

INT. PLANE - LATER - ON GEORGIA

She's sleeping like a baby, gently SNORING.

The Steward shakes her.

GEORGIA

(evidently dreaming)

Get your hands off my car!

(comes to)

Huh...what?

STEWARD

Sorry to bother you, Ms. Byrd, but we're 20 minutes from Geneva. The pilots want to know if they should arrange ground transportation...?

EXT. GENEVA AIRPORT - DAY - SEVERAL LIMOS

They wait side by side on the tarmac. In the b.g., we see a line of private jets parked. The LIMO DRIVERS are outside their cars, comparing their arrivals in FRENCH.

LIMO DRIVER #1 (SUBTITLED)

I've got the managing partner of Lazard Freres.

Proudly, he nods at a G-2 rolling to a stop.

LIMO DRIVER #2 (SUBTITLED)
They gave me the CEO of Stewart
Cable.

And a G-3 appears, one upping the first.

LIMO DRIVER #3 (SUBTITLED)
They just said mine's a woman by
the name of Georgia Byrd. That's
all.

And Georgia's Citation 10 pulls up, dwarfing the others.
Georgia's Driver's attitude changes in a flash of heavy metal.

LIMO DRIVER #3 (SUBTITLED)
(continuing)
Everybody knows who Georgia Byrd
is!

And as he scrambles into his limo...

EXT. CITATION - DAY - GEORGIA EMERGES

All eyes are on the famous Ms. Byrd with the biggest plane.
When she sees that everyone is looking at her, she realizes
that they must think she's somebody. She puts a little swagger
in her step as she descends the gangway.

She squints into the light, surveys what can be seen of
Geneva. A lot of snow. She wraps herself in her new fur coat.
The Pilot and Copilot are at the bottom to say goodbye.

PILOT
How did you enjoy the flight, Ms.
Byrd?

GEORGIA
Like everything I'm finding
lately...too damn short.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY - TWO LAKERS TICKETS

At least those are the cards that Sean is nervously holding
as he takes the escalator up to HOUSEWARES.

But when he gets there, he's confused to find another
SALESGIRL doing the cooking demonstration.

Rochelle sidles over to him.

ROCHELLE
Looking for Georgia..?

He nods.

ROCHELLE
(continuing)
She don't work here anymore. She
told Mr. Adamian to eff-off.

SEAN

That doesn't sound like Ms. Byrd.

ROCHELLE

Uh huh...well, that's what she did. No one's seen or heard from her since.

Hmmm. There's a troubled look on Sean's face.

SEAN

We had a date.

ROCHELLE

(looks in his hand,
smiles)

Those Laker tickets?

Guardedly, he puts them in his pocket.

EXT. SKY - GENEVA - DAY - MURKY CLOUDS ROLL BY

The CAMERA PANS DOWN thru the fog to two huge marble pillars hung with gates of gold. They guard a gravel drive which disappears into the mist. There's such a dreamlike feel, these could almost be the gates of, well... heaven.

INT. LIMO - DAY - ON GEORGIA

squinting out into the fog as the limo passes thru these gates, then winds up a steep hill. Finally, an elegant building materializes out of the fog -- L'Hotel du Ciel. It's a six story chalet complete with turrets topped with the Swiss flag against a pristine snowy background.

It seems detached from earth, floating in the clouds - just like the picture in her lap from her "Possibilities" book.

The limo stops in front and the Driver jumps out. He whispers the name of his VIP pick-up to an eager BELLBOY in red livery as he opens the door for Georgia.

BELLBOY

Bonjour, Mademoiselle Byrd!
Comment allez vous?

EXT. HOTEL - DAY - ON THE LIMO - GEORGIA

emerges suffering simultaneous cases of jet lag and culture shock. And, of course, Lampington's disease. She stares up at the snowy, picture-perfect Christmas scene - mind blown.

GEORGIA

(ignores the bellboy)
So this is what it's like.

BELLBOY

Pardon, mademoiselle?

GEORGIA

The snow. Most I've ever seen was
on a cone.

(off his blank look)

Sno-cone.

He still doesn't get what she's talking about.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I'm from L.A. We don't get the
snow.

BELLBOY

(practicing his
English)

Ah..! You are from Cali-fornia.
Your Senator Dillings, he stay
with us now!

That gets a raised eyebrow.

GEORGIA

Ooo...ain't he gonna be surprised
to see me!

(harrumphs)

Business in Washington, my ass.

The Bellboy smiles, not speaking enough English to quite understand her remark. Only that she obviously knows Senator Dillings and that she's slapped a considerable tip in his hand as she passes.

INT. HOTEL - CONTINUOUS - GEORGIA

enters, then stops cold. Her jaw drops at the sight of the lobby. Marble floors, frescoes painted on the vaulted ceiling. Incredibly ornate...and imposing.

The Bellboy is whispering to a WOMAN IN BLACK TIE behind the counter. Her name tag says MARIE. Marie clicks her computer as she regards Georgia a little curiously - as she is pretty much standing out wearing the bright red dress.

MARIE

Welcome, Mademoiselle Byrd to the
Hotel du Ciel. One moment
please...

She clacks away at her computer. A little frown comes to her face.

MARIE

I am sorry, Ms. Byrd, but we did
not expect you so early. Your room
will not be ready for...two hours.

GEORGIA

What am I supposed to do in the
meantime?

MARIE

I don't know...walk around?

GEORGIA

I'm tired. I'm not walkin around
for two hours.

MARIE

I'm very sorry.

Georgia starts to walk away. Stops, goes back to the counter.

GEORGIA

Do you have any rooms that are
ready?

MARIE

Yes, but..it's the most expensive
room in the hotel.

GEORGIA

Money is no object.

A distinguished grey-haired man has come out of the office.
He's the hotel manager, GAMBINI, either pompous or unctuous,
depending on the guest. He likes the sound of this guest.

GEORGIA

(continuing; to
herself)

I can't believe I said that.

Marie whispers to Gambini. He turns to Georgia.

GAMBINI

I am Arturo Gambini, manager of
Hotel du Ciel.

(shakes hands)

We are so honored to have you
here! How long will you be with
us, Mademoiselle Byrd?

GEORGIA

Uh...I'm not really sure. Three
weeks, possibly...

Gambini's attention suddenly shifts to something which
obviously interests him more.

ANGLE - MICHAEL KRAGEN

We recognize his face from the framed picture in Adamian's
office. He sweeps thru the lobby with a young BEAUTIFUL
BLONDE WOMAN at his side. She looks very patrician - blonde
hair pulled back, conservative clothes. An Abercombrie
catalogue-type.

GAMBINI

(interrupting Georgia)

Ah, Monsieur! A moment, s'il vous
plait!

He doesn't slow his brisk stride to the elevators.

GEORGIA
 (finishing, even
 though no one's
 listening)
 ... possibly four.

GAMBINI
 (to Georgia, confused)
 Pardon?

GEORGIA
 Weeks. You asked how long I'd be...

GAMBINI
 (distracted)
 Oh, yes. Very good.
 (to Marie)
 Finish up here.

Georgia watches with annoyance as Gambini runs off to stick his nose up this guy's ass. But then Georgia recognizes him as the man who bought her company.

She covers her mouth and turns, trying to regain her composure.

GEORGIA
 (softly)
 That's the man who killed me.

GAMBINI
 Monsieur Kragen, we are so honored that, in all the world, you have chosen our hotel for your famous 'power retreat'. If there is anything, the slightest, smallest thing that is not to your satisfaction, promise you will let me know?

Kragen talks without looking at him. He's not worthy.

KRAGEN
 No, I won't. But my executive assistant will. Won't you, Ms. Burns?

Gambini turns with a bow to her. She's ice.

MS. BURNS
 Gambini, when I need to talk to you, I'll call you.

In other words, beat it. Gambini smiles a broken smile and does so.

GEORGIA'S POV - KRAGEN AND BURNS

They're standing at the elevator. He's issuing instructions to her. She seems to be mildly complaining about something as he gets on the elevator by himself.

It is then that Georgia notices his hand lightly touches her intimately - below her hip. He then leaves her there, a little flushed.

GEORGIA

(raises an eyebrow)

The world is suddenly revealing
itself to me.

Georgia gets her room key and walks to the elevator. The door opens, and the two women get in with Felipe.

INSIDE THE ELEVATOR - GOING UP

Georgia can't help notice a tiny, tiny tear forming in Ms. Burns' eye. She turns away and tries to sniff discreetly.

Georgia hands her a tissue.

GEORGIA

If it's any consolation,
girlfriend...he's gonna have a *bad*
fourth quarter.

Ms. Burns blinks dumbfounded, holding the tissue. Now the doors open, and they all get off at the same floor. Ms. Burns stops Felipe as he goes to follow Georgia with her bags.

MS. BURNS

You. Hold it.
(lowers voice)
Who is that?

Felipe is very proud that he knows.

FELIPE

Mademoiselle Byrd from California.
Very rich.

(reinterprets what
was said earlier)

She's here to...eh, *surprise*
Senator Dillings. She has, eh,
beeg business in Washington.

For some reason, this information is somewhat alarming to Ms. Burns.

INT. MEDICAL CLINIC - ANAHEIM - DAY

ECU on the MRI machine as it WHIRS and SHAKES. We see the brackets attaching it to the wall. There are several screws missing. As the PATIENT emerges from the tube...

CLOSE - DR. HAHN'S FACE - LATER

Brows knit in consternation, the neurosurgeon studies the results of the MRI. It looks just like Georgia's. He looks to his NURSE.

DR. HAHN

This can't be right. The third multiple tumor reading this morning...all in the same part of the brain?

(turns to MRI tube)

I wonder if the machine was damaged in the move..?

INT. GEORGIA'S ROOM - DAY

Georgia peruses her elegant surroundings, runs her hand appreciatively along the antique armoire, canopied bed, and other unfamiliar appointments.

Felipe now opens the curtains REVEALING a spectacular view of the lake with the mountains behind.

Felipe backs out silently, leaving Georgia all alone with the view. Now it's her turn to cry.

GEORGIA

(to herself)

What world was I living in?

Georgia sits down at the antique desk, suddenly at a loss for something to do. She opens the drawer and removes some stationary. Then begins to write a "To Whom It May Concern" note about her impending death. She tucks it in with her passport.

She looks around with a 'what now?' look. Then she lays her eyes on the luxurious four poster bed. She walks over to it, pulls the sheets back. Feels them. Ecstasy.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Oh my lord...silk sheets.

Little-girlishly, she quickly slips out of her dress and gets in the bed.

She slowly starts to slide around under the sheets - first on her back and then writhing on her stomach.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Oh, oh, oh, oh. Hmmm. This is goooooood!

Let's face it, people do a lot of odd things when they don't think they're being watched.

Unfortunately, she is being watched.

HER POV - A STERN TEUTONIC FIGURE

steps into frame. She's in her 60's, dressed in a starched white blouse and the uniform of the hotel. Her nostrils are permanently dilated as if in reaction to some odoriferous cosmic force.

TEUTONIC FIGURE

Are you all right, Mademoiselle Byrd?

GEORGIA

Uh, yes...

(sits up, embarrassed)

I was just takin these sheets for a little ride around the block.

That doesn't get even the slightest glimmer of a smile out of her. She carefully lays a terry-cloth robe on the bed.

TEUTONIC FIGURE

So I shouldn't send for the house doctor?

Georgia fixes her with a steely look.

GEORGIA

I don't think that will be necessary. Yet.

Georgia gets out of bed, lovingly straightens the sheets.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

By the way...who are you?

TEUTONIC FIGURE

I am Ms. Gunther. Floor Valet.

Gunther moves over to Georgia's suitcase and begins hanging up her clothes. It's not lost on Gunther that most of the clothes still have the tags on them. Very nouveau.

GEORGIA

Georgia Byrd.

MS. GUNTHER

(dismissing)

Yes, yes.

Gunther has gotten to the bottom of the suitcase. She vaporlocks at the sight of Georgia's mad money choice of underwear - a leopard skin patterned thong. She holds it up as if she found a dead hamster.

GEORGIA

Impulse. Haven't you ever bought anything that made absolutely no sense at all?

MS. GUNTHER

I cannot say that I have.

Gunther rolls her eyes. Who let this woman in here?

GEORGIA

So, tell me, Ms. Gunther, what do you do for fun around here?

MS. GUNTHER

What do I do for fun, Mademoiselle? I shine the guests' shoes when they leave them out in the hall.

(turns)

If that will be all..?

Georgia has no patience for the way she's being treated by this imperious heel clicker.

GEORGIA

No, that won't, Ms. Gunther.

Gunther turns to Georgia, arches an eyebrow. Georgia grabs the hotel brochure from the desk, starts flipping thru it.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I want to try some of these spa treatments. So tomorrow, get me the marine algae body wrap, the yoga meditation, and the pilates - whatever that is.

MS. GUNTHER

(tightly)

Will there be anything else?

Georgia studies the brochure.

GEORGIA

Yes. The "detoxifying colonic enema treatment."

(winks)

That's for you. I'll pop for it...as a sorta "let's-be-friends" gesture.

INT. DR. HAHN'S OFFICE - DAY

A harried Dr. Hahn is at his desk nervously shaking something in his closed hand. Looks up at his Nurse.

DR. HAHN

You contacted all of the patients we scanned since moving day?

NURSE

Yes, Doctor Hahn. I explained about the foreign objects in the machine casting false shadows. They've all agreed to come back in for another MRI.

DR. HAHN

That's a relief. For them as well, I imagine.

He opens his hand and onto the desk roll the four tiny screws like the dice of fate.

He exhales, looks out the window. Eyes fall on a hummingbird. Smiles. Then brows knit, a thought occurring.

DR. HAHN

(continuing)

What was the name of that last patient of Dr. Gupta's..? Byrd?

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT - REBECCA BURNS

Kragen's Assistant steps out of her room, looking ravishing in an evening gown. A door OPENS right across the hall from hers, and then Kragen emerges in a tuxedo. For the benefit of Ms. Gunther collecting shoes in the hall, they play the game.

KRAGEN

Well, Ms. Burns, there you are right across the hall. Is your room okay?

MS. BURNS

Very nice, thank you, Mr. Kragen. It's actually fortuitous I bumped into you. I don't know if it's worth mentioning, but I ran into a woman who just checked into the hotel. She seemed to have knowledge of Q4...

KRAGEN

(concerned)

Really..?

As they head toward the elevator, HOLD on another doorway.

The door OPENS and Georgia emerges. She looks fantastic, dressed in a stand-out designer gown. She holds out her red shoes, drops them outside her door for polishing - pointedly in front of Ms. Gunther.

AT THE ELEVATORS - KRAGEN AND BURNS

They get into the elevator. The doors start to close. Kragen immediately grabs Ms. Burns in an embrace and starts deeply kissing her.

Now a little Hermes handbag is jammed between the doors causing them to spring open. It's Georgia.

Kragen and Burns quickly assume formal postures. But not quick enough for Georgia not to see what's going on.

Ms. Burns smiles. Kragen smiles. Georgia looks from Ms. Burns bare ring finger to Kragen's. Her eyebrow raises with disapproval almost imperceptibly at the presence of his wedding ring. Ms. Burns squirms just a little.

As they get off the elevator...

MS. BURNS

(whispers to Kragen)

That's the woman I was telling you about.

INT. HOTEL DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A STRING QUARTET plays in the corner behind the ferns as a murmur ripples through the impossibly ornate room as Kragen and Rebecca Burns sweep in. She, stunningly beautiful; Kragen, master of this universe. The MAITRE D' is falling all over himself for them.

Across the room, SENATOR DILLINGS, a handsome black man in his late thirties, spots them and stands as does their other dinner partner, a businessman in his mid-fifties BOB STEWART. He's more of a homey-looking guy, not as slick as the others.

As Kragen and Ms. Burns approach their table, they hold frozen smiles while still talking business.

KRAGEN

What do you think she's up to?

MS. BURNS

I don't know. If she's working for Stewart, then she's trying to knock down our tender in the merger. If she's with some Federal watchdog group, she's here to blow this whole thing for us.

Now they arrive at the table.

KRAGEN

(now a big smile)

Senator Dillings...Mr. Stewart.
Anybody healthier yet?

AT THE DOORWAY - GEORGIA

As far as the Maitre D' is concerned, she's a nobody. So he promptly leads her off to a table by herself in dining room Siberia.

ANGLE - KRAGEN'S TABLE

Several white-gloved WAITERS attempt to serve him. Kragen waves away the one passing the salad dressings.

KRAGEN

Balsamic vinegar and oil.

As the Waiter works his way around the table, the others try to out-Spartan each other. No one wants to show any weakness...even for cave-ripened roquefort.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Balsamic vinegar. No oil.

The Waiter now turns to Stewart.

STEWART

Just a plain wedge of iceberg lettuce.

The Waiter starts to pour Kragen a glass of 40-year-old Bordeaux, but the anhedonic flips his glass over.

KRAGEN

Pepsi. Diet. And uh...
(makes the waiter
come closer)

We'd like to meet Chef Pepin. So have him come out here after the main course is served.

ANGLE - GEORGIA'S TABLE - GEORGIA

She regards the oversized menu as if discovering the Dead Sea Scrolls. At the top of the menu, she lightly touches the embossed name of her secret mentor...JACQUES PEPIN.

She looks up, hoping to catch the eye of a Waiter. She waves at several, but apparently she's invisible. All the Waiters in the room buzz around the Kragen table.

Finally, in exasperation, she sticks her foot out -- TRIPPING A WAITER as he goes by. He falls, clattering into a tray of silver platters with their covers. The Waiter slowly gets to his feet, looks at her suspiciously. Georgia feigns embarrassment.

GEORGIA

I'm sorry. I meant to do this.
(raises a finger,
waiter!)

But it came out like this...
(sticks out foot)

Anyway, I was wondering if you could tell me...Is Chef Pepin here tonight?

WAITER

Yes, yes.
(off her expectant
look to the kitchen)
He does not come out - ever.

GEORGIA

(disappointed)
May I order then?

The Waiter wants to get this over with as quickly as possible.

WAITER

For the specialites du maison...We
have a lobster salad, a crispy
quail in a nest of fried egg
noodles and foi gras. We have the
the fresh turbot, poached with a
buerre blanc sauce and capers...a
very nice standing rib roast with
new potatoes and the sweetbreads
en croute with local morels.

The Waiter waits for her decision, pen poised.

GEORGIA

Will you have the same
'specialites' tomorrow night?

WAITER

Ah, no, no. Never does Chef
Jacques create the same menu twice.

GEORGIA

Okay, I guess I better try them
all tonight.

WAITER

(eyebrow raised)
Toute...? All?

Georgia slaps the menu closed.

GEORGIA

Toute, baby.

The Waiter is befuddled, but his is not to question why. As
he bows and retreats...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - CHEF PEPIN

presides haughtily over a small army of betoqued ENTREMETIERS
and SAUCIERS. He has just received Krage's order. His face
turns crimson.

CHEF PEPIN

(mocking in English)
No but-ter, no creme, fat-free fat-
free! Merde! Why don't they just
eat vitamins!

(more)

CHEF PEPIN (cont'd)
(then in FRENCH)

Subtitle: Next time don't give me
Kragen's order, stick this in my
neck instead!

He brandishes a butcher knife. Kragen's Waiter shrugs off his histrionics. He's got bigger turbot to fry. Now Georgia's Waiter enters her order. The Chef looks at it...two pages worth.

CHEF PEPIN (IN FRENCH)

SUBTITLE: We have party of six
nobody told me about?

WAITER #2 (IN FRENCH)

SUBTITLE: A party of one. Ms.
Byrd. She is either a lunatic or
a food critic.

As Chef Jacques grabs the kind of order he's been waiting his entire career for...

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER - ON KRAGEN'S TABLE

Kragen is searching for a Waiter.

KRAGEN

What did they do with our goddamn
waiters?

Annoyed, he looks to Ms. Burns to do something about it. She, in turn, is annoyed to find...

POV - GEORGIA'S TABLE - ALL THE WAITERS

are currently occupied serving Georgia her dinner. Dinners. One after another spectacular dish is presented to her. Georgia takes a bite or two of each, savoring every one as if it were her last...and making NOISES like it.

GEORGIA

This beef is heaven...and
considering ya'll don't get very
good meat over here, either!

As the silver lid comes off the next platter...

BACK AT THE POWER TABLE

Stewart turns with an amused look to Kragen.

STEWART

Well, *she's* not counting her LDC.
Wish I could eat like that.

Now Chef Jacques Pepin flings open the doors to the kitchen. At the Kragen table, they all straighten with expectation. But he ignores them and walks right past to Georgia's table.

Mind-boggled, they watch as he bows and kisses her hand.

CHEF PEPIN

And how do you find everything,
Mademoiselle?

She dabs her mouth daintily with a napkin.

GEORGIA

The turbot is the bomb. The
sweetbreads...I'm tasting some
rendered lardons of pork belly
there. Am I right?

CHEF PEPIN

That is very perceptive of you.
Half clarified butter, half pork
fat. The idea was suggested to me
by a woman in America many years
ago. We became 'pen pals'.

She raises an eyebrow.

GEORGIA

Is that right? She ever tell you
how they make bacon-cheese
biscuits in her family?

CHEF PEPIN

She would never do that. It was a
closely-guarded family secret.
(insight!)

No! I can't believe it is you!

Overcome by emotion. He grabs her joyously out of her seat
embraces her and kisses her on both cheeks.

CHEF PEPIN

(continuing)

Georgia, you are more beautiful
than I ever imagined!

Georgia stifles a shy laugh, blushes.

GEORGIA

You're just sayin' that cause I
made "all gone."

ANGLE - KRAGEN TABLE

STEWART

Who the hell is she?

Kragen has no clue. He glances over to Ms. Burns.

MS. BURNS

Well, actually we were going to
ask you that, Bob.

STEWART

I don't know her.

Kragen and Burns don't believe him.

MS. BURNS

But you know her, don't you,
Senator?

SENATOR DILLINGS

Just for your information, I don't
know everyone who's black.

That gets a snicker from Stewart.

KRAGEN

Well, she knows you...from
California. And she has a business
in Washington.

They watch as Georgia is escorted to the kitchen like a
visiting dignitary.

STEWART

Well, she's somebody.

The Senator takes another look at her.

SENATOR DILLINGS

It just hit me. We met at last
year's "Entrepreneurs of
Diversity."

Kragen shoots a look to Ms. Burns as if to say, "fetch".
Reluctantly, she gets up from the table.

INT. HOTEL KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Georgia is wearing an apron and is rolling out some dough.

GEORGIA

This is what I'd serve with the
lobster salad or a bouillabaisse.

CHEF PEPIN

But Georgia, why are you sharing
your family's secret recipe with
me now?

GEORGIA

I don't know...a little going away
present.

CHEF PEPIN

But you just got here.

GEORGIA

Ain't that the truth.

(hesitates)

Look, if I'm gonna show you how to
do this, I expect to be getting
some dessert...little demitasse.

Chef Jacque snaps his fingers for one of his assistants to
get it. Now Ms. Burns opens the kitchen door.

MS. BURNS
Uh...excuse me...

CHEF PEPIN
(brusque)
Get out! We're very busy!

MS. BURNS
(holds her ground)
So is Mr. Kragen. But he's taken
the time to wonder if Ms. Byrd
here would join our party for an
after-dinner brandy.

Chef Pepin definitely has an attitude about them, speaks
protectively of her.

CHEF PEPIN
Absolutely not! Please go. We have
important business here!

He ushers her out.

GEORGIA
I don't know what these people
want from me.

CHEF PEPIN
They are all alike.
(he scowls out the
door at them)
They seek Life Everlasting in a
tablespoon of extra virgin olive
oil!!!
(fervently to Georgia)
It is up to you and I to tell them
the TRUTH!

He holds up a three pound slab, unsalted.

CHEF PEPIN
(continuing)
And the truth is BUTTER!

ANGLE - THE KRAGEN TABLE

Ms. Burns has returned. She's leaning in to Kragen.

MS. BURNS
I think you got the gist of that,
right?

KRAGEN
(ponders)
Georgia Byrd...

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY - CLOSE ON ADAMIAN

He's just heard something that's not Muzak to his ears.

ADAMIAN

Byrd? Byrd? I never want to hear
that name again!

REVERSE ANGLE - DR. GUPTA

Behind them, we can see the outburst has attracted the
attention of Sean. He approaches tentatively.

DR. GUPTA

So you don't know where Ms... uh,
she is?

ADAMIAN

I have no idea where she is. She
could be dead for all I know!

Adamian stalks off, leaving Doctor Gupta in his wake.

DR. GUPTA

For all she knows as well.

As he turns to go, he runs into a wall. It's Sean.

SEAN

Uh... excuse me, but did I
overhear you say you were looking
for Georgia Byrd?

DR. GUPTA

Yes. Are you a friend of hers?

SEAN

Well, sort of, I suppose. Uh, we
were all kind of wondering what
had happened to her...She's not
the irresponsible type...you know,
to just go off.

DR. GUPTA

I informed Ms. Byrd that she had
three weeks to live...

Sean catches his breath. Grabs Dr. Gupta by the lapels.

SEAN

Tell me that's not true!

DR. GUPTA

(meekly)
It's not true.

Gingerly pries Sean's hands away from his coat.

SEAN

Are you just sayin that?

DR. GUPTA

No, no. It was all a mistake. Just a misdiagnosis from some blood bank work-up. Now we have to find Georgia to tell her the good news.

Sean considers for a moment.

SEAN

Wait a minute...You told Georgia she was going to die and now she's not? After she got herself fired and...who knows what she's going to do!

DR. GUPTA

Now, sir, don't get overly emotional about this. Consider the worst scenario.

(self-convincing)

In three weeks, when she's still alive, she'll realize something's wrong and come back as if nothing has ever happened!

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ms. Burns comes out of her room, checks the hall and then quickly crosses over to Michael Kragen's door. She gives a soft KNOCK. Just as the door opens and Kragen's eager face appears...

GEORGIA (OS)

Goodnight, Ms. Burns.

She wheels around to see Georgia, dressed in a bathrobe, just back from the spa. Little cotton balls between her toes, wearing a white mud mask as she pads non-nonchalantly past her to her room.

GEORGIA

Sleep tight.

She has that frozen busted look as Kragen pulls her inside.

KRAGEN

Who the hell is she?!

EXT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - LA - DAY

Sean is outside the building with the APARTMENT MANAGER.

APARTMENT MANAGER

I'm sorry, unless you're with the cops or the coroner, I can't let you in.

He walks away. Sean hopes the latter isn't necessary. He regards the locked gate to the elevator, frustrated. Then...

DARIUS'S VOICE

Hey, mista. I heard you talking
about Georgia Byrd. Who are you?

Sean turns around to see a kid leaning against Georgia's car.

SEAN

I'm a friend of hers. Sean Mathews.

Darius immediately recognizes the name, breezes past him to the gate, possibly a little jealous of the man who won Ms. Byrd's heart.

DARIUS

Follow me, loverman.

Darius flips open a set of LOCK PICKS. As if we didn't know already, Darius is the neighborhood cat burglar. He looks up at the large man and laughs at his uneasiness.

DARIUS

(continuing)

Ain't you even gonna try to look
inconspicuous?

The gate pops OPEN, and they quickly go up the stairs to the apartment.

EXT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUING

With great facility, Darius gets that door open. Turns accusingly to Sean and grabs his shirt. The little guy isn't afraid of him.

DARIUS

I'm real worried about her.
(a little teary)
I better not find out you did
anything to make her leave!

SEAN

Easy, killer.

Sean nods good-naturedly and eases past him...

INT. GEORGIA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUING - SEAN'S POV

PAN the grills, reels of hose, the lounge chairs, teak picnic tables, the croquet sets, the wrought iron table with Cinzano umbrella, the weed wackers, the riding lawn mower, the battery-powered Japanese lawn lanterns ...

SEAN

Oh, my lord...

DARIUS

Ain't this something? I mean, why
in the world would she buy all
this lawn stuff when she don't
even have a lawn?

The answer dawns on Sean.

SEAN
(to himself)
I think she...liked me.

DARIUS
Well, no shit. You were getting married!

SEAN
We were getting married?

DARIUS
(incensed)
So that's it! You were tryin to back out of it!

SEAN
Calm down. Calm down. I wasn't backing out of anything. Did she ever say anything to you about where she was going?

DARIUS
Of course, she did. We ~~confided~~. We were tight.

Sean leans down into the kid's face. Very intent.

SEAN
What did she tell you? It's very important.

DARIUS
I knew it, but now you asked me I can't remember it. It would help if you didn't stare at me with that big ugly face of yours!

Sean's shoulders slump. He places Darius in a swinging patio bench and turns his back to him. Darius squeakily rocks back and forth, thinking.

DARIUS
(continuing; light bulb)
Geneva...She was goin to a hotel! way up in the...Alps!

When he turns triumphantly, Sean's already out the door.

INT. ADAMIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Sean is sitting in front of Adamian's desk. Britney Spears is back on the air.

ADAMIAN
But, as I explained to you, you don't have vacation days to take, Mr. Mathews. You've used them all.

SEAN

Well, I need to borrow some from next year, then.

ADAMIAN

You can't do that.

SEAN

Well, I'm going anyway, Mr. Adamian.

ADAMIAN

Don't be stupid idiot. I'll have to fire you.

SEAN

Then fire me.

He turns to go, but decides to trash the CD player first. As he leaves, he runs into Rochelle.

ROCHELLE

What is going on here?

SEAN

I'm going to look for Georgia. She's been told some very bad news - that was wrong. And I feel that someone has to get to her before she does something that she might regret.

ROCHELLE

Honey, believe me, that girl will never do anything she regrets.

EXT. ALPS - SKI MOUNTAIN - DAY

ANGLE ON - GEORGIA'S REAR END

Crashing down on camera with an accompanying painful GRUNT.

Widen the SHOT to reveal she is having her first snowboard lesson, high up the mountain. The Hotel Du Ciel can be made out as a tiny speck below.

SKI INSTRUCTOR

Zats all right, Ms. Byrd. Zere ees a very, uh, steep learning curve!

(helps her up)

Shall we gets you more padding?

GEORGIA

Naw, I got enough of that.

Suddenly, she falls forward doing a face plant.

SKI INSTRUCTOR

Lean back into ze mountain!

Staggered, he helps her upright.

SKI INSTRUCTOR

(continuing)

I'm sorry. Maybe zees is a bad idea. Perhaps we go to ze bunny hill and try ze short skis?

GEORGIA

No, no. I waited my whole life to do something like this. I ain't quitting on it now.

EXT. ON A SKI LIFT - SAME TIME

Ms. Burns is wedged in between Kragen and Senator Dillings. As they approach their destination, we can see that Ms. Burns is the novice. Kragen gets nervous, she has her skis crossed on top of his.

KRAGEN

Okay Rebecca, would you PLEASE keep your skis off of mine? We're going RIGHT, everybody got that?

They put the bar up. Their chair comes in for a touch down. Everyone edges off the seat, puts their skis on the snow and starts to glide RIGHT. Ms. Burns, for some reason, starts to move LEFT.

KRAGEN

(continuing)

Rebecca, the OTHER right!

But she's already out of control. Flailing, she tries to use one of her poles to stop herself. But all she does is trip Kragen. He pops OUT OF HIS BINDINGS, slides under a "DANGER - NO TRESPASSING" backcountry rope. It's supposed to keep people off of a steep cornice that disappears ominously from sight.

Kragen rolls to the end of the cornice. Ms. Burns SCREAMS.

KRAGEN

(continuing; looking behind him)

Oh God.

MS. BURNS

Michael!

KRAGEN

(not believing himself)

I'm all right. I'm all right.

Carefully, he starts to climb up, inches at a time. Meanwhile...

EXT. UP ABOVE - SAME TIME - THE SNOWBOARDING LESSON

For the umpteenth time, Georgia gets her butt off the snow and tries for it again.

She starts to creep along, jiggles, gets her balance. Hey, she's finally doing it!

SKI INSTRUCTOR
Very good, Mademoiselle Byrd! Lean
back into ze mountain!

Tentative, she leans back. Finally enjoying herself, she turns up the sound on her I-Pod. The music in her helmet is LOUD as she picks up a little speed.

SKI INSTRUCTOR
(continuing)
All right, zen. Zats enough. Now
vee zits down!

Georgia starts to sit down as instructed, but as she does she hits a tiny little bump sending her airborne.

The result is MORE SPEED on a direct line DOWNHILL.

SKI INSTRUCTOR
(continuing; panicked)
Zit down, Ms. Byrd. ZIT DOOOOWN!
Oh no!

She must be doing eighty miles an hour. And now she's gone.

NEW ANGLE - GEORGIA'S POV

She's racing through all the other SKIERS. Not knowing how to turn, she's just going faster and faster downhill.

At the end of this run, it goes left. But she just goes STRAIGHT and UP. Way up. She's got AIR. She looks down below, instinctively making "a grab" at her board.

EXT. HOTEL DU CIEL - SUN DECK

People are having lunch and drinks. A GUEST turns from the telescope aimed at the mountain and points.

HOTEL GUEST
Everybody, look!

People look up to see this wild-assed boarder, shredding her way down the mountain as if she didn't care whether she lived or died.

BACK TO KRAGEN - HE'S CLAWING AT A ROPE

They've thrown it down to him and hold their breath as Kragen gets to his feet, almost gets his hands on the rope when suddenly...

Everyone looks up, a snowboard flies overhead and in a split second SCOOPS UP Kragen!

ON THE BOARD - KRAGEN AND GEORGIA

Standing, legs inter-locked. Two on the board. They stare into each other's helmets. He grabs onto her tight as he can.

BOTH

You!

And over the cornice they go.

VARIOUS ANGLES - INADVERTENT EXTREME BOARDING

Georgia and Kragen, he SCREAMING like a woman (no knock on women), go down the most impossibly rocky and narrow chute, through the trees, and over a dead drop - where they flip end over end - only to then land on flat snow...and gently come to a stop below the deck of the hotel.

Kragen falls to his knees. Rips the helmet off his head to gulp air.

KRAGEN

Do you realize you almost got us...

But the CHEERS from the hotel deck drown him out. By now the whole hotel, staff included, has emptied out to see this remarkable feat.

Georgia suddenly finds herself swarmed by people.

NEWSMAN

Pierre Boudreau, Euro Ski Magazine. Do you realize you are the first person to survive the Austerlitz coulee? Where did you learn to board?

GEORGIA

Right here in Switzerland...about ten minutes ago.

Everybody laughs. They think she's kidding.

NEWSMAN

Who's the gentleman?

GEORGIA

Someone I just picked up.

Everyone looks back at Kragen. He stands shyly. Magnanimously, Georgia brings him into the spotlight. Puts a friendly arm around him.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

You'll have to forgive, Mr. Kragen. He just saw his life flash before his very eyes...and it wasn't good!

Everyone laughs at his expense, then Kragen relents and joins them; looks at Georgia admiringly as if to say, Who is this woman? Now Felipe, equally admiring, is at her side with a tray.

FELIPE
Chocolate liqueur, Mademoiselle
Byrd?

GEORGIA
Merci!

She drains it calmly. Against this bravado...

INT. GEORGIA'S ROOM - BATHROOM - LATER

Hands SHAKING, she tries to get some pill bottles open. She swallows a few of them, braces herself against the sink while she downs them with water. She looks in the mirror and pulls her eyelids down, examines. Sticks out her hands. They're shaking.

GEORGIA
Oh no. Slight neuron necrosis!
Someone behind her clears their throat.

MS. GUNTHER
(creepy)
Not feeling well, Ms. Byrd?
Perhaps you're indulging too much.

Georgia quickly puts her pills away.

GEORGIA
What do you want?

MS. GUNTHER
(coldly)
You have a spa appointment.

INT. HOTEL SPA - LATER - A MONTAGE

To the music of the "Adagio for Strings", the body of Georgia, wrapped in white robes and towels like a priestess being prepared for sacrifice. She is now given the most heavenly treatment by a succession of attractive, soft-spoken women PHYSICAL THERAPISTS.

We follow her as she's transported from the MASSAGE TABLE...

To the SALT SEA WRAP table...

To the REFLEXOLOGY ROOM where they work on her feet...

And finally to the FACIAL TABLE...

THERAPIST
You have beautiful skin, Ms. Byrd.
Do you use the niacin night
moisturizer?

GEORGIA

Oh, dear no. That's too expensive.
I...

(hesitates before
saying, but what the
hell)

...I use a little Hellman's
mayonnaise before going to bed.

The Therapists look at each other.

THERAPISTS

Ahh...

They nod at each other. Now *that's* something they're going to remember.

THERAPIST

We're going to leave you now to relax and meditate. There's no hurry getting up.

The Therapist lightly touches the top of Georgia's head then a place in the middle of her forehead. The expression on her face is pure bliss. She's just about to drift off when...

MS. BURNS (OC)

Stop that, you moron!

Now Georgia opens her eyes on the table. Blinks.

GEORGIA

(irritated)

Damn!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROOM PARTITION

Ms. Burns is getting a deep tissue massage.

MS. BURNS

What the hell are you trying to do to me? I bruise!

THERAPIST

You have tension in your neck. Do you do something at work where you hold your head in an odd position?

MS. BURNS

How dare you talk to me like that!
You incompetent!

Now Georgia, while staying on her therapy table, pulls back the curtain REVEALING Ms. Burns on her table.

GEORGIA

Hey! I don't like the way you're speaking to that woman.

Ms. Burns is horrified to have mouthed off in front of her.

MS. BURNS

I'm sorry I disturbed you, Ms. Byrd, but she...

GEORGIA

I don't care. You don't talk to working people like that. It's plain to see what the problem is here. You have tension in your neck cause you're sleeping with Mr. Kragen, and he's a married man and you know it's not going to end right, so you're taking it out on this poor girl!

A small smile comes to the Therapist's face.

MS. BURNS

(mortally embarrassed)

I'm so sorry, Ms. Byrd.

GEORGIA

Don't apologize to me, blondie. Apologize to her.

MS. BURNS

I'm... sorry...

(looks at nametag)

...Brigitta.

The Therapist bows, accepting graciously, while glancing at her new hero Georgia with shining eyes. Ms. Burns would like to run away. But that's not going to be so easy.

SECOND THERAPIST

The steam cabinets are ready now.

The Therapists wheel Georgia and Ms. Burns into the steam room where they are helped into side-by-side steam cabinets. They are now trapped with each other. Only their heads are visible. Georgia, with her towel wrapped around her head, looks like Queen Nefertiti. They sit in silence.

MS. BURNS

(wild-eyed)

Everybody knows I'm sleeping with him, don't they?

GEORGIA

I really don't know. If you don't mind I...

MS. BURNS

None of the other women back at the company will talk to me. I'm marked by this.

Georgia turns to look at her. At first meeting, she seemed pretty together, but now she seems like she has a screw loose - no pun intended.

GEORGIA
I wouldn't lose any sleep over
what other people think.

Then, Ms. Burns bursts out CRYING.

GEORGIA
(continuing;
perturbed)
Now, come on now, girl! Really!
We're supposed to be meditating!

MS. BURNS
I have no one in my life that I
can talk to about this.

And Georgia wishes that it weren't her. But she can't help
but soften to the girl.

GEORGIA
All right, that's enough of that.
You don't want to dehydrate
yourself. Bring it on, I'm a
captive audience.

MS. BURNS
I've been at the company 6 years.
I've worked so hard...

GEORGIA
If it's any consolation, you ain't
the first.

MS. BURNS
He started inviting me to
important meetings. Asking my
opinion. He said that he was
grooming me for Vice President of
Public Relations.

GEORGIA
He was grooming you, all right.

MS. BURNS
He started calling me at night.
Sending flowers to my office.

GEORGIA
Dogging you.

MS. BURNS
Yes, dogging me. What was I
supposed to do?

GEORGIA
Leave. Or sue his ass-grabbing
ass.

Long silence as Ms. Burns considers it all. Then...

MS. BURNS
I'm not a bad person.

Georgia turns and smiles at her. What a nut.

GEORGIA
Your nose is running.

INT. HOTEL CIEL - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

For some reason, Kragen's party has been moved to a new table. He's at the head of it, retelling today's snowboarding adventure to Burns, Dillings and Stewart. He's expanded his role in the feat to a laughable degree.

KRAGEN
So now we're in a narrow chute no bigger than this table. Can't go left, can't go right. What to do? We make a quick decision. Go UP.

Burns, Dillings and Stewart all know he's full of shit. Only Stewart calls him on it.

STEWART
What did you have...like a ~~board~~ meeting or something?

He smiles at Ms. Burns with that corny joke, but for some reason (we know why) she's not giving him any.

Now everyone in the dining room goes quiet. There's why:

ANGLE - GEORGIA SWEEPS INTO THE ROOM

She's wearing another attention-getting evening dress. The Maitre D' quickly appears at her side. What a difference a day makes.

MAITRE D'
Good evening, Mademoiselle Byrd!
We have a very nice table for you!
If you'll follow me...

Now the String Quartet breaks into the "Theme for Winter Olympics" to accompany her walk-thru.

Everyone in the dining room is watching her as she's led to a private booth past the Kragen group. Booth #1.

Kragen lifts his glass of mineral water to toast her, but Georgia just sticks her nose in the air.

KRAGEN
For some reason, she hates me.

AT GEORGIA'S TABLE - A FOLDED NEWSPAPER

She opens it to see herself on the front page. There is a PHOTO taken of her and Kragen coming down the slope. The headline reads...FEARLESS!

Someone from the kitchen brings out a bottle of Dom being chilled in a ski boot.

MAITRE D'

With compliments from Mr. Kragen.

Now Chef Pepin slides in beside her with a menu.

CHEF PEPIN

I have prepared a special menu just for you tonight.

She looks it over with great interest.

GEORGIA

I'll just put myself in your hands.

CHEF PEPIN

(aroused)

I hope you really mean that.

Damn, if he doesn't have a crush on her.

GEORGIA

Why...you're a little Pepe LePew, ain't you?

CHEF PEPIN

Don't tease me.

He slides away as Ms. Burns interrupts from the booth next door. Takes a deep breath.

MS. BURNS

Hi. It's me again. It's killing him that you won't have dinner with us.

GEORGIA

(sips some champagne)

Have him ask me himself.

Ms. Burns smiles mischievously and then disappears. There's some WHISPERING and then Kragen appears.

KRAGEN

Hey, partner, uh, how about joining us?

GEORGIA

Why don't you join me? I've got the better table.

Kragen slides into the booth, cosies up to her.

KRAGEN

Well, if the mountain won't...

(stops from shooting himself in foot)

I'd be honored.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sean is packing while his friend Marlon looks on ruefully.

MARLON

Lemme get this straight. You quit your job and you're gonna go halfway around the world to find a woman who you haven't even slept with yet?

Sean fixes him with a look.

SEAN

I'm *responsible*. Can't you get with that? If it hadn't been for me, she'd never given blood and taken that stupid test in the first place!

(checks his wallet)

How much extra cash you got? I spent all mine on the plane ticket. C'mon now...

Marlon reluctantly gets out his wallet.

MARLON

Here's 75 bucks and a tab of ecstasy. Just in case you find her.

Sean takes the money only.

MARLON

(continuing)

By the way, how are you gonna find her?

SEAN

I downloaded over 250 hotels and spas around Geneva on the internet.
(ponders)

Who knows where she is? Probably in some little room...feeling all sad and alone...Damn!

(chokes up)

I don't even wanna think about it!

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL - DINING ROOM - AGAIN

Georgia, of course, is not alone. She's the center of attention. And now her new admirer is Ms. Burns.

Chef Pepin is serving Georgia the meal of a lifetime.

KRAGEN

I feel like I know you from somewhere. If I may ask, what line of work are you in?

GEORGIA

Well, I spent most of my career sorta in retail. Now I'm taking some time to smell the roses.

KRAGEN

I'm "sorta in retail" myself.

GEORGIA

I know.

KRAGEN

I think I know you know. But, uh, I want to branch out a little bit into the media business. I'm thinking of buying Mr. Stewart's publishing and cable company. It would make me the third largest company in America.

GEORGIA

Yeah, I saw somethin about that on the TV.

Ah hah. Everybody laughs at what they gather is her aw shucks information gathering.

KRAGEN

Oh, I'm sure.

(shooting a look to Stewart)

So what are your impressions of a deal like that?

GEORGIA

Impressions?

KRAGEN

What do you think?

GEORGIA

What's it matter what I think?

Georgia's mind is focused more across the room. A MOTHER and FATHER with two cute little KIDS, a boy and girl, are giggling and hugging. It's obvious Georgia's wistful about that missed opportunity.

KRAGEN

Let's not be coy. You know very well why it matters.

Georgia turns back to the conversation, everybody hangs on her words.

GEORGIA

May I ask Mr. Stewart something?

STEWART

What would you like to know, Georgia?

GEORGIA

Don't you have a son or a daughter
you could leave your business to?
I mean, it's pretty hard to get a
good job these days.

Laughter around the table.

KRAGEN

But if Stewart sells his company
to me, his kids won't have to work.

GEORGIA

Hmmm, I don't know 'bout that. The
way you run a business, I'd say
Mr. Stewart's cable company's
gonna be just like that cable of
his...buried in the ground.

Kragen's face drops. Ms. Burns and Senator Dillings almost
blow the food through their noses, they laugh so hard.

KRAGEN

Georgia, why on earth would you
say something like that?

GEORGIA

Any business's only as good as the
people who work for it, Mr.
Kragen. And from what I know about
yours, you don't give a damn
whether your people live or die.

She looks over to Mr. Stewart, pats his hand.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

But that's just my opinion. You do
what you gotta do, Matlock.

Kragen is just staring at her incredulously.

MS. BURNS

(change of subject)

What's everybody think of this
white asparagus? I hear they're
famous for it up here.

GEORGIA

Well, I wouldn't tell this to
Jacque, but it kinda makes my pee
stink.

Everyone, except Kragen has a big laugh at this.

Senator Dillings taps her on the leg under the table and
hands her his card. She looks down at it, her eyes widen.
Under his senatorial letterhead it says, "Meet me later -
jacuzzi?"

EXT. HOTEL DU CIEL - NIGHT

The steam from the large jacuzzi rises up into the cold black night. The sky is clear and starry.

REVEAL - GEORGIA

She's soaking in the tub, looking up in the sky.

GEORGIA

(to herself)

Hey, will you look at those stars?

Now another voice joins her.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Don't they have stars in Los Angeles?

Georgia looks around to see the handsome Senator in a terry cloth robe, a bottle of champagne and two glasses.

GEORGIA

Not that I ever saw.

Dillings pops the bottle and pours. Georgia is watching him intently. He's more Town and Country than Jet.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I bet your mama must be real proud of you...

(beat)

...hangin with all these rich white people.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Don't confuse me with Kragen.

He hands her a glass of champagne. Takes off his robe.

GEORGIA

I ain't the one who's confused.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Look, I'm helping him with some some de-regulation hurdles.

He's about to get into the hot tub with her.

GEORGIA

Seems like you should be helping your own people over some hurdles.

Well, that's a buzz killer. He didn't think she'd shoot him in the ass. He takes his champagne to the railing of the deck and turns his back on her, sulking.

SENATOR DILLINGS

My term is up next year. I need Kragen to support my campaign if I want to get re-elected.

GEORGIA

What about the people who voted for ya? Aren't they good enough to get you re-elected?

SENATOR DILLINGS

C'mon, you understand how this works.

GEORGIA

You know something, Clarence? I believe that you're a little uncomfortable in your own skin.

She gets out of the hot tub. There is a QUICK FLASH of flesh from behind. She's naked.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Believe me, until very recently I was the same myself.

She stands next to him at the rail in a tight two shot. He never looks over to see that she's not wearing a bathing suit.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

My advice - loosen your girdle, man. Embrace your black self for who you are.

SENATOR DILLINGS

You're being pretty hard on me.

GEORGIA

No harder than on myself.

He finally turns to her.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Georgia, you are an...

(eyes widen)

Oh, my God.

GEORGIA

You were saying?

FELIPE

(with camera)

Ms. Byrd, photograph?

GEORGIA

Merci!

FLASH. Polaroid cranks out the picture. Felipe hands it to her.

Senator Dillings is more than uncomfortable with that as she slips back into the jacuzzi.

GEORGIA

(continuing; laughs)

I'd like to always remember this moment.

(stops laughing)

And I'm sure the ladies down at the Crenshaw First Baptist church will, too. They were awfully disappointed you didn't show up for church last Sunday.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(re:photo)

I'd very much appreciate you giving me that.

GEORGIA

And I'd very much appreciate you building that Youth Center in South Central like you promised you'd do.

(sips champagne)

I even know a young man who could help run it for you.

There's a sick look on Dillings' face - almost like he has cramps. She winks at him.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I'll write his name down on that card you gave me.

Meanwhile...

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kragen is escorting Ms. Burns to her room. She unlocks the door and goes in. Kragen confidently follows. But she turns and stops him.

MS. BURNS

I don't think so, Michael. Not tonight.

KRAGEN

What do you mean?

MS. BURNS

I'm a little uncomfortable with my role here.

KRAGEN

I told you this is a bad time for me to be asking Linda for a divorce.

MS. BURNS

You're never going to do that, so stop demeaning me with that nonsense.

KRAGEN

I thought we were happy.

MS. BURNS

No, you're the one who's happy, Michael. I do all the heavy lifting on the merger, you pay me as an assistant and you get to screw me. What's not to be happy about?

His jaw drops. He's having a bad night.

KRAGEN

Why do I feel that this change in barometric pressure has something to do with that Byrd woman?

She pushes him out the door.

MS. BURNS

Don't say another word about her. She's my friend.

KRAGEN

(deadpan)

She's your friend.

She closes the door on him.

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL - EARLY THE NEXT MORNING

Kragen picks up the morning papers and walks into the dining room. The first person he sees having breakfast is Bob Stewart on the phone. Kragen goes to join him, but Stewart indicates he'd like privacy.

STEWART (ON PHONE)

The Hispanic market...I don't know...we've never done anything like that before. Are you sure about this, son?

Kragen goes off to sit off by himself.

STEWART (ON PHONE)

(continuing)

No, I haven't signed anything.

(looks at Kragen)

We'll talk later.

Kragen brightens when he sees Ms. Burns at a table all by herself. He heads her way, but when she sees him, she SNAPS a newspaper up defensively.

That stops him in his tracks. He turns to see Senator Dillings sitting by himself. He now goes over to that table.

He's surprised to see that the Senator is reading an old BIBLE. Dillings looks up at him and smiles.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Good morning, Michael.
 (off Kragen's look)
 This was my great, great
 grandfather's bible.

KRAGEN

That's nice.

SENATOR DILLINGS

He was a slave. And here I am in
 the U.S. Senate.

Kragen sighs.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(continuing)

I was just reading something he
 had underlined with a charcoal
 pencil about the return of the
 Prodigal Son...do you know it?

KRAGEN

Please don't do this to me.
 (clears his throat)
 Everybody, if I could have your
 attention?

They all look up at their separate tables.

KRAGEN

(continuing)

I don't know what the hell is
 happening here, but I think we're
 all getting a little stir-crazy.
 As it happens, I have the solution.

Now Georgia enters the dining room. Nobody is paying
 attention to him anymore. Felipe already has her order ready.

FELIPE

Chicken liver omelette with
 caramelized onions, bacon, a
 baguette and orange juice.

GEORGIA

Merci.

She sits and digs in, paying the rest of them no mind.

KRAGEN

(lowers his voice)

As luck would have it, Prince Albert has invited us to be his guests at his Benefit Ball. I'm told Tony Bennett will be performing, and I've taken the liberty of accepting.

There is silence.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Will you be joining us, Ms. Byrd?

GEORGIA

(likes her omelette)

Where you going?

KRAGEN

(monotone)

Monte Carlo.

STEWART

Yes, please join us.

GEORGIA

Monte Carlo, huh..?

She doesn't jump to answer. Her coffee needs more sugar. Takes a sip, considers.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

No, thanks.

STEWART

Oh come on. Kragen's got his jet...
(she shrugs, big deal)
...and Tony Bennett is singing.

For the first time, something peaks her interest.

GEORGIA

Tony Bennett?

Kragen's shoulder's slump. He was trying to get away from her.

EXT. AIRPORT - GENEVA - DAY

A COMMERCIAL AIRLINER has just landed. HOLD on the PASSENGERS wearily descending the stairs after a long flight.

Finally Sean appears, squints into the light of the Swiss day. He's herded toward the terminal with the rest of the bedraggled passengers and passes by a PRIVATE JET. Now, that's the way to fly.

NEW ANGLE - THE KRAGEN LIMO

It pulls up and disgorges its passengers. Kragen, Ms. Burns, Stewart...By now Sean has turned and gone into the terminal - just missing Georgia getting out of the car.

EXT. AIRPORT - LATER - CAB - SEAN

He throws a carry-on into the back seat, gets in and consults a small notebook where he has meticulously copied every phrase he'll need in his quest.

SEAN
(excruciating)
Bon jour...je cher...chez un
femme...

Sean holds up Georgia's picture from her department store ID. The CAB DRIVER does a take in the rearview mirror.

SEAN
(continuing)
Elle...est...frucale...timide...

CAB DRIVER
(can't take anymore)
Non!

Sean sighs and takes a look at his list.

SEAN
All right, then. Nous uh...go a
"L'Alpenhaus."

As the cab heads off...

A MONTAGE - SEAN'S CAB

Pulling up to one hotel after the next.

Sean showing the ID to the FRONT DESK MANAGERS. Gives his French spiel. Them shaking their heads, "No."

Sean crossing each hotel off the list.

EXT. HOTEL DU CIEL - SEAN'S BIG SHOES

He tries to slog up the snowy hill to the front entrance, but his LA shoes don't get any purchase, and he slides down. Finally, Felipe comes to his rescue. Sean uses the smaller man like a crutch.

At the front door, Sean catches his breath, checks his list.

CLOSE - LIST

The whole list has been crossed out, leaving just one hotel remaining... L'Hotel du Ciel.

Sean looks up from his list to the majestic hotel. This is last place Georgia would stay. But he gives a "what's to lose" shrug and heads inside.

INT. HOTEL - MOMENTS LATER - AT THE FRONT DESK

Sean waits and waits for Gambini to look his way. Glancing around at the grandeur which surrounds him, he recites his lines by rote.

SEAN
Bonjour...avez vous une
Mademoiselle Byrd ici?

GAMBINI
Oui.

SEAN
Merci.

Sean turns for the door by rote, not hearing what Gambini has said. Then, he stops, turns.

SEAN
(continuing; eyes
popping)
Did you say, 'oui'?

GAMBINI
Yes, oui.

SEAN
Georgia Byrd is here?

GAMBINI
Non. She has just left.

SEAN
(excited)
Where did she go? I have to talk
to her! I'm a friend of hers.

Gambini scrutinizes him with his gauche Lakers cap, the tattoo on his neck. He raises a dubious eyebrow.

GAMBINI
You really know Mademoiselle Byrd?

SEAN
Yes! Please. It's...life and death!

Gambini sorts through a stack of mail, ignores him.

GAMBINI
I'm sorry. I am not at liberty to
give this kind of information
about our guests.

SEAN
Hey man, look at me for a moment.

Gambini glances up and is immediately riveted by Sean's look. It is the promise of imminent violence.

SEAN
(continuing)
Think carefully before you answer
my next question. WHERE...
DID...SHE...GO?

Gambini is afraid to look away.

GAMBINI
(not losing eye
contact)
She went gambling in Monte Carlo.

SEAN
That's impossible. She's never
even bought a lottery ticket.

He reaches into his pocket for Georgia's ID; Gambini flinches.

SEAN
(continuing)
You sure this is the Georgia Byrd
we're talking 'bout?

Gambini looks at it. Nods.

SEAN
(continuing)
Now, here's my next question and
you better not give me any
indication that I'm stupid. IS
MONTE CARLO CLOSE TO SWITZERLAND?

GAMBINI
Only 40 minutes by private jet.

SEAN
Private jet?
(considers)
How long by public train?

EXT. MONTE CARLO - AERIAL SHOT - NIGHT

As the CAMERA drifts down on this glamorous and storied principality we HEAR a roulette ball bouncing into a slot, then a CHEER.

STEWART (OVER)
I don't believe it! You've won
again!

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Georgia's at the roulette table, surrounded by others from her group. Stewart, the Senator, Ms. Burns, they're all excited. But even as the CROUPIER pushes a stack of chips her way, Georgia's subdued. Another way to describe her emotional zone is SELF-PITY.

Stewart takes Georgia's hand, rubs his face with it.

STEWART

Whatever you've got, gimme some!

GEORGIA

Believe me, you don't want it.

Georgia takes the towering stack the Croupier slides her way and pushes it onto "black." Ms. Burns leans in, puts her hand on Georgia's to stop her.

MS. BURNS

That's several thousand dollars there.

GEORGIA

Like I care.

Georgia makes no move to take any chips away. Stewart matches Georgia's bet on black. So does Dillings.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Always bet on black, baby.

Now even Ms. Burns pushes a few chips out. Kragen pointedly makes a bet the opposite way -- red.

THE CROUPIER

drops the ball onto the wheel...around and round it goes. Senator Dillings leans in to Georgia.

SENATOR DILLINGS

You got my head straight. And I wanna thank you. I'm gonna do something that you'd be proud of. Do I have your vote this November?

GEORGIA

I ain't gonna be around.

SENATOR DILLINGS

In case you haven't heard, they do have absentee ballots.

GEORGIA

Not where I'm going.

They all watch as the ball finally settles.

CROUPIER

Seventeen... black.

Stewart erupts, kisses Georgia. Kragen turns away in disgust as the Croupier scoops up his chips and pushes large stacks back at Stewart, Dillings, Ms. Burns and Georgia.

STEWART

Where now, Lucky?

Georgia looks neither happy nor surprised that she won.

GEORGIA
What was that last number?

CROUPIER
Seventeen, Mademoiselle.

Georgia slides both her stacks onto the box marked '17'. This gets a reaction around the table.

MS. BURNS
Georgia, that was the number that just won.

GEORGIA
I know.

SENATOR DILLINGS
Isn't that a bit...reckless?

GEORGIA
That's why they call it gambling and not crocheting.

The Senator looks at her deadpan and slides his pile next to Georgia's.

KRAGEN
That's a lunatic bet.

Ms. Burns and Stewart put their money with Georgia's, too. Kragen shakes his head, peer pressure. He lays his money down.

KRAGEN
(continuing)
This is insane.

OVERHEAD SHOT - ROULETTE WHEEL

as it spins. The ball drops and bounces madly from slot to slot until it settles.

CROUPIER
Black seventeen.

ANGLE ON FACES

around the table as they scream in amazement. Everyone, but Georgia.

MS. BURNS
Georgia, isn't this exciting?

GEORGIA
(underwhelmed)
Yeah, it's exciting.
(to Croupier)
Can I get a cocktail?

The Croupier claps his hands and a Waitress appears with a tray of champagne cocktails. Georgia takes one.

KRAGEN
(inspired)
I'll have one of those, too.

STEWART
(jaw dropped)
But, Michael, you don't drink.

Kragen and Georgia's eyes meet. He looks like he has finally given into her.

KRAGEN
I do now.

To Ms. Burns' chagrin, he and Georgia CLINK glasses.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - SAME TIME - A WEARY SEAN

He approaches the cab, no longer needing his cheat sheet.

SEAN
(practically fluent)
Je cherche une femme. Allons à la
Casino.

And off they go...

INT. CASINO - AGAIN

The Crowd's packed in around Georgia and the roulette table.

CROUPIER
Mesdames et messieurs, place your
bets.

All eyes turn to Georgia. Everyone is hushed in anticipation of her bet. Georgia takes all of her chips and moves them onto the number 17. The Crowd goes wild.

SENATOR DILLINGS
Georgia, you can't go there a
third time.

GEORGIA
Why not? It worked pretty well the
last two times.

STEWART
Three in a row? The odds are
probably ten million to one.

GEORGIA
You'd be surprised what can happen.

Then just as the Croupier spins the wheel and drops the ball...

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 Well, maybe I am pushing it. I'll
 bet 15.

Georgia suddenly moves all the chips to 15. All her
 followers quickly switch their bets, too.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 I was born on the fifteenth.

The ball is spinning, about to drop. Georgia looks perplexed.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 'Course I was nine when my momma
 sent me to ballet class.

Georgia moves all the chips to nine. Everybody frantically
 copies. Georgia's brows furrows.

GEORGIA
 (continuing)
 Maybe I was... ten.

Georgia moves all the chips to ten. Panic, the ball's about
 to drop.

STEWART
 (mopping sweat)
 Any other touching moments in
 your life you'd like to try?

MS. BURNS
 (making sure Kragen
 hears)
 When did you lose your first
 boyfriend?

GEORGIA
 (thinks)
 Hmm. That would put us back to
 ...seventeen.

KRAGEN
 (maudlin tipsy)
 That's when I lost my first
 girlfriend...

Georgia moves all the chips back to the original 17. Everyone
 is in a rush to follow. The ball drops and bounces around.
 Then...

CROUPIER
 Black seventeen!

THE CROWD SCREAMS

then packs even closer to Georgia as if they feel some of her
 could rub off on them. But Georgia remains unmoved.

SENATOR DILLINGS

I gonna make sure you get a DNC
Pledge Card!

Kragen looks at his pile of chips, looks at Georgia. He's giddy with it. Ms. Burns is burning a hole in him.

MS. BURNS

(tries to get his
attention)

Excuse me, Michael...Michael..?

He finally looks up, a little looped.

MS. BURNS

(continuing)

Isn't there a Royal *Command*
Performance we're supposed to be
at at 10? I'd hate to keep Prince
Albert waiting.

KRAGEN

Prince schmintz...

He scoops up his winnings. As Senator Dillings leads him away, Georgia pushes back from the table, unsteady herself.

The Croupier stops Georgia, indicates the mountain of chips she'd already forgotten about.

CROUPIER

Mademoiselle. May we buy your
chips back, please?

GEORGIA

(ho-hum)

Oh, yeah...right.

He starts counting out a huge stack of bills, presents it to her on a silver tray. Georgia glumly takes the useless money and tries to stuff it in her purse. Kragen, drunk and giddy, puts a sloppy arm around her shoulder and wiggle wags his money in front of her.

KRAGEN

We did it, godammit!

Georgia looks over at Ms. Burns. Sensitive to her relationship with Kragen, she takes Kragen's arm off her shoulder. Kragen, oblivious, staggers off. Leaving the two women facing each other. Georgia, at a loss for words, offers Ms. Burns a handful of money as if they were potato chips.

GEORGIA

Want some of this?

Burns just looks at her, blinks back tears. Very schizie. Georgia tries to comfort her, but she stomps off.

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL KITCHEN - NIGHT

While the Chefs are preparing dinner, and the Waiters bustling in and out, the rest of the hotel staff is having their dinner.

FELIPE

(in French, subtitled)

She's the most amazing woman who's ever stayed here.

CHEF PEPIN

(in French, subtitled)

She lives on the edge. She says what she wants. Most importantly, she eats what he wants. A true existentialist!

MARIE

(in French, subtitled)

There's something about her. I don't know what it is. But she is different from the other guests.

MS. GUNTHER

(in French, subtitled)

She is different from the other guests because she is a phoney in clothes with the price tags still on!

FELIPE

(in French, subtitled)

You're the phoney. A valet who thinks she's better than everyone else!

Gunther stands up and throws her napkin down disgustedly.

MS. GUNTHER

(in French, subtitled)

You will all see I'm right. She does not belong in a hotel like this, and I'll find out what she's up to.

Chef Pepin steps in for the final word.

CHEF PEPIN

(in French, subtitled)

Sauerkraut eater! Georgia Byrd is a saint!

INT. TENT - PALACE - MONACO - NIGHT

A GLAMOROUS CROWD, including PRINCE ALBERT and the Kragen group, watch a Cirque du Soleil-type performance.

Georgia is seated between Ms. Burns and Kragen. Kragen is cozying up to Georgia, who turns to Ms. Burns. Ice.

Now Senator Dillings turns around from the seat in front of them, interrupting. He pats his jacket padded with his winnings.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(whispers)

Hey, do you think I have a moral responsibility to claim this as personal income?

Georgia just looks at him sang froid as the evening begins to swirl around her.

On stage, there's a crescendo of acrobatics. The Crowd breaks into APPLAUSE.

INT. CASINO - SAME TIME

Sean is holding Georgia's picture badge in front of the Croupier, so amazed he's barely able to speak.

SEAN

This is the woman who won \$100,000 at roulette?

CROUPIER

Nothing but win, win, win! We were happy to see her go.

SEAN

Go where?

CROUPIER

To the palace, as a guest of Prince Albert, of course.

SEAN

Of course.

INT. CIRCUS TENT - SAME TIME - PRINCE ALBERT

He steps into the spotlight. The Crowd quiets.

PRINCE ALBERT

I am very pleased to introduce our special guest who's come all the way from America to sing for us tonight... Monsieur Tony Bennett!

Big CHEERS from the crowd as Tony Bennett comes onto the stage and takes center spotlight.

PRINCE ALBERT

(continuing)

You may not know this, but Tony is a pretty shy fellow and would like to have a volunteer from the audience to sing with. I think you know where I'm going with this.

(more)

PRINCE ALBERT (cont'd)
 I'm opening up the bidding at 5000 francs for someone with the courage to perform with the master. Remember, the proceeds all go the World Children's Health Fund.

There's a flurry of tuxedoed hands, bids SHOUTED out.

One by one they drop out, the final two bidders being Kragen and Stewart. Kragen's ego keeps him in the bidding - he'd love to get up there. As they go from 10 to 20 to 30,000 francs...

ANGLE - PRINCE ALBERT

He's about to gavel the bidding. Stewart has dropped out.

PRINCE ALBERT
 (continuing)
 Michael Kragen has bid 50,000 francs! Fantastic!
 (Crowd "oohs")
 Going un, deux...
 (bangs the gavel)
 Sold to Michael Kragen!

APPLAUSE. The spotlight is on Kragen. He gets to his feet, wobbly.

PRINCE ALBERT
 (continuing)
 We have our volunteer! Come on up!

KRAGEN
 No, I'm volunteering Georgia Byrd!

He gestures to her seated beside him. The spotlight practically blinds her.

GEORGIA
 Oh no, I...

PRINCE ALBERT
 Well then, let's hear it for Bennett and Byrd, ladies and gentlemen!

Pardon the old saw, but Georgia is like a deer caught in the headlights. Her new friends get her up on her feet. Her knees practically buckle at the sight of Tony waiting on stage for her. Wild APPLAUSE as she reaches the stage.

INT. GEORGIA'S HOTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

Gunther is rifling through Georgia's things. Although she doesn't know what she's looking for, she's obviously not finding it.

INT. CIRCUS TENT - ON STAGE - GEORGIA

She is warmly greeted by Tony Bennett. She can't believe she's standing next to him. He takes her trembling hand and steadies it. But there's not much he can do for her quivering bottom lip.

INT. GEORGIA'S HOTEL ROOM - AGAIN

Gunther is now frisking her coat pockets in the armoire. Finally, she comes up with Georgia's passport billfold. It's got a bunch of papers inside and is held together by a rubber band. Gunther sniffs at the gaucheness of the rubber band. Coupons. Then a passport. She opens it.

CLOSE - PASSPORT

The personal data includes the category "Occupation." Under it is typed: "Salesgirl."

MS. GUNTHER
Salesgirl!

She shuffles through to the back pages where there are no visa stamps.

MS. GUNTHER
(continuing)
...And not a very well-traveled one.

A victorious smile spreads over Gunther's face.

MS. GUNTHER
(continuing)
I wonder if your new friends would be so impressed if they knew the truth.

INT. CIRQUE TENT - AGAIN - THE ORCHESTRA STRIKES UP

Tony turns to Georgia, hands her a microphone.

TONY BENNETT
Do you know, "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas?"

Oh Jesus. All Georgia can do is swallow and meekly nod, yes.

TONY BENNETT (SINGING)
Have yourself a merry little Christmas...

He nods to Georgia.

GEORGIA (SINGING)
(softly)
Let your heart be light...

TONY BENNETT (SINGING)
 From now on our troubles will be
 out of sight...

PAN the Crowd...Dilling's, Stewart...Kragen...Ms. Burns
 looking at Kragen with tears in her eyes.

GEORGIA (SINGING)
 Have yourself a merry little
 Christmas...

TONY BENNETT (SINGING)
 Make the yuletide gay...

Now it's time for Georgia to get a little teary. It's those
 damn lyrics.

GEORGIA (SINGING)
 From now on our troubles will be
 miles away.

INT. GEORGIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

As Ms. Gunther starts to put the stuff back, an envelope
 drops out and falls to the floor. Gunther stoops to pick it
 up. It's the letter Georgia wrote (concerning the disposal of
 her remains) addressed "To Whom It May Concern." Gunther's
 curiosity is not yet satisfied. She opens it and starts to
 read. Gradually, the supercilious expression on her face
 dissolves into pity.

MS. GUNTHER
 Mademoiselle Byrd..!

INT. CIRQUE TENT - AGAIN

Tony hands the finale off to Georgia, who now rises above
 herself. Unlike the first time we heard her sing this song,
 she belts it out gospel-fashion.

GEORGIA (SINGING)
 Through the years we all will be
 together...If the Fates allow.
 Hang a shining star upon the
 highest bough!

She turns to Tony.

TOGETHER (SINGING)
 And have yourself a merry...little
 Christmas...now.

The Crowd erupts in BRAVOS. Tony Bennett bows to her. She
 bows to Tony Bennett. Prince Albert kisses her on both
 cheeks. PHOTO FLASHES are going off. She blows a final kiss
 to the audience.

PRINCE ALBERT
 Georgia, this is a night I shall
 never forget.

GEORGIA

I'm not going to forget it either.
Merci beaucoup.

(opens her purse)

Would you do me the favor of
accepting this for the Childrens'
Fund?

She proceeds to give him stacks of money.

PRINCE ALBERT

Do you the favor?

(to Crowd)

100 thousand dollars, ladies and
gentlemen!

Everyone gets to their feet CHEERING - the loudest is Kragen,
clearly smitten. Ms. Burns looks at him sadly. She's lost him.

Amid the cheers, Georgia gives a little wave, walks off stage.

IN THE WINGS - TONY BENNETT

He follows Georgia out.

TONY BENNETT

Hey, that was really great.

(takes her hand)

I know this is gonna sound crazy,
cause we just met, but my
manager's got me doing a Christmas
album. And well, I'd really like
you to do this song with me.

Georgia just looks at him, incredulous.

GEORGIA

Mr. Bennett, I can't tell you how
much that means to me.

TONY BENNETT

Then, it's settled. You'll do it.

Georgia sadly shakes her head "no."

GEORGIA

Sorry. I can't.

(off his confused
look)

My Manager has other plans for me.

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE THE TENT - POOR SEAN

Now everyone is leaving. He tries to fight his way through
the crowd, but it's no use. People are leaving with tears in
their eyes.

SEAN

What's happened?

MAN

Didn't you hear her?

SEAN

Hear who?

MAN

Mademoiselle Byrd! She sang! She entertained! She gave 100,000 American dollars to the children!

Sean is, of course, speechless. Then...way off, ahead of the crowd, he SEES her. He blinks.

SEAN POV - GEORGIA

Tony Bennett is sadly kissing her hand goodbye.

Sean pushes his way towards her. He shouts out her name.

SEAN

Georgia! GEORGIA!

But his cries are drowned out by a descending HELICOPTER. Sean's stopped by the local POLICE and can only watch helplessly, and in amazement, as Kragen and his party whisk Georgia away like a diva.

Sean just can't believe his eyes. Georgia is acting like she's had helicopters waiting for her all her life. (And she's the only one who doesn't stoop down fearfully under the whirling blades).

INT. KRAGEN'S JET - BACK TO GENEVA - NIGHT

The camera PANS over the seats, quick takes on the divergent moods in the plane: Kragen has his tray table down and has gleefully laid out his French winnings in stacks like monopoly money. Ms. Burns, sitting by herself, is brooding. Georgia has taken her little book of "Possibilities" out of her purse and has added the Tony Bennett program. A tear drops on it as Stewart slides in beside her.

Georgia quickly straightens, puts the book away.

STEWART

Georgia, I just want say you are a winner! Not just at the tables, but in life. I could see that about you right away.

Stewart looks to see if Kragen is listening.

STEWART

(continuing; sotto voce)

You're right about this merger. It was an ego thing. Don't tell him, but I'm not gonna do it. I've decided to keep the company in the family.

He stops to consider what he's about to say before saying it.

STEWART
(continuing)
And I consider you, family.

Georgia blinks. What's this now? She goes to say something, but he waves her off.

STEWART
(continuing)
I realize you got your own business to run, but I'd like you to come and join my son and daughter. Keep us honest.

She's mind-blown and further depressed by the offer. She starts to respond.

STEWART
(continuing)
Don't say no. Just think about it.

He gets up from his seat, she puts her head in her hands. First Tony Bennett, now this. Suddenly, someone else sits down in his place. It's Kragen.

KRAGEN
May I talk to you for a moment?

GEORGIA
What do you want?

KRAGEN
(laughs)
You're the only person I know who abuses me. And I love it.

He looks around to see if anybody is listening.

KRAGEN
(continuing)
I don't know where you came from, but in three days you've got everyone eating out of your hand. There's a talent in that. That's why I'm offering you Vice President of Public Relations, Kragen Corp.

NEW ANGLE - MS. BURNS

She's in the seat in front, ostensibly sleeping. But when she HEARS her hoped-for job be given away, she sits upright - eyes popping out of her head.

Meanwhile, Georgia can't believe it herself. Kragen pats her hand.

KRAGEN

I need you to pinch Stewart's ass a little bit on this merger thing. He listens to you. You come in now, options on our stock could be worth millions. Sleep on it. And if you want some help with that, give me a call.

He winks, slides out of the seat, leaving Georgia speechless.

ANGLE - MS. BURNS

She heard that, too. Looks like she's been stabbed thru the heart.

Senator Dillings passes her now on the way to the vacated seat next to Georgia.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(leans close)

Georgia, don't be disapproving of me. I'm cutting Krage loose. I'm goin back to the 'hood.

GEORGIA

Stop talking like that. Everybody knows you grew up in Encino.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Okay, but give me some points for trying. What if I told you I was going to get that Youth Center built?

GEORGIA

We've heard that before.

SENATOR DILLINGS

This time I'm not lying.

Georgia just looks at him. Again, incredulous.

GEORGIA

You mean it?

SENATOR DILLINGS

I'll even put your friend in for administrator. What's his name?

GEORGIA

Darius Williams.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Here's what you gotta do for me, though. Come to Washington and work with me.

GEORGIA

Washington?

SENATOR DILLINGS

You've got your own ideas, strong opinions, and you can't be bought. Obviously, you've proven yourself in the private sector. We need the best and brightest helping run the government. Your time is now.

GEORGIA

(morose)

You're right about that.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Promise me you'll at least think about it.

The irony of all of this has taken on diabolical proportions for Georgia. She'd like to run, but there's no place to go.

She gets out of her seat and goes astern. No longer able to endure this, she finds herself at the EMERGENCY DOOR with her hand on the handle. A good yank and she could end it in a blink of an eye.

Suddenly the plane starts bucking wildly. The plane drops in altitude and cants to the right. Glasses and dishes go flying.

PILOT (OVER SPEAKER)

(calm)

Sorry about that, ladies and gentlemen. We're just having a little technical problem. I'd suggest you buckle in if you haven't already done so.

The STEWARDESS appears from the cockpit. And as the door closes, Georgia HEARS a snippet of conversation in there.

PILOT

(not so calm)

Get that goddam starboard engine restarted!

Georgia looks around at all the people in the plane, everyone of them tense, confronting the possibility that maybe...just maybe...they might die. Huh. She's not scared at all, but then again, she's been there.

GEORGIA

Oh come on. You aren't scared, are ya?

(they're petrified)

All you gotta do is check out the Stewardess' face. If she looks worried, then you get worried.

She takes a confident look to the young Stewardess. Her lips are pressed together so tightly, they're white. She's practically paralyzed.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Tell you what, everybody look at me instead.

She gives them the first big smile of the night. What me worry? Then Georgia coolly helps the Stewardess into her seat, tightens the straps on her jump seat harness as the plane BUCKS WILDLY. Everyone is SCREAMING, PRAYING, etc.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Georgia, I have to get something off my chest..!

GEORGIA

(cuts him off)

Oh, no you don't. Cause I don't wanna hear it!

(to all of them)

Y'all know how this works. You start blabbing out all your little confessions, about how you slept with your best friend's wife or wore ladies underwear or blew all the company money on some damn private jet when it coulda been in the health plan..!

That last one's for Kragen.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

...So keep the Jerry Springer mess to yourself. You're gonna be embarrassed when this plane lands, and we're all right!

STEWARDESS

(interjects, scared)

I...think...you...should sit down.

Georgia pats the Stewardess on the hand, and offers a parting shot seriously.

GEORGIA

Just remember the regrets flying through your mind right now and do something about em, okay?

Georgia calmly takes her seat, looks out the window.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

God, you don't have to take all these people with me, do ya?

Suddenly, out her window, in the night sky...the engine FLARES ON. The plane immediately rights itself. Chalk another one up. Georgia, not surprised, winks at the Stewardess.

As the plane comes down for a steady landing...

INT. HOTEL DU CIEL - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - WEE HOURS

Georgia physically and emotionally drained heads to her room. But before she gets there, Ms. Gunther comes her way. And when she sees Georgia, she gets a big smile on her face and starts HUMMING. Georgia registers this radical personality shift.

MS. GUNTHER

(cheerful)

Mademoiselle Byrd! Welcome back!
Did you have a good time?

GEORGIA

Too good, probably.

Ms. Gunther follows Georgia into her room.

MS. GUNTHER

There is no such thing as too good
a time is there, mademoiselle?

GEORGIA

How would you know?

MS. GUNTHER

(stung)

You are right. Forgive me for
presuming...

GEORGIA

Hey, I'm sorry. You were trying to
be nice, why I don't know.

MS. GUNTHER

Well, I don't know, either. I'm a
bitch. At least, that's what
people tell me.

GEORGIA

Ms. Gunther, you're just like a
lot of women who've had to work
too hard.

Ms. Gunther nods her head in agreement, tries not to get emotional. Georgia sits in a chair, takes off her high heels and rubs her sore feet. Mulls over the events of the evening.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Tonight that Kragen offered me Ms.
Burns' job and made a pass at me.

MS. GUNTHER

(trying to console
her)

Tcch! I happen to know he's a bed
wetter.

GEORGIA

And I was asked to consider a career in Washington, help run the government.

MS. GUNTHER

Politics? It's all lying and kissing babies. Who needs it?

GEORGIA

Mr. Stewart wants me to help run his cable business. I'm family.

(shakes her head)

Hey, did I mention Tony Bennett wants to record a song with me?

MS. GUNTHER

(struggling)

Why not? Why shouldn't these things happen to you? You are a woman of distinction and cour-age!

She pronounces it like the French. Makes a fist.

GEORGIA

Yeah, well my cour-age came a little too late.

Georgia looks out the window at the mountain. Gunther suddenly throws her arms around her. Georgia blinks in frightened deadpan.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I hope you're not making a pass at me, too, Ms. Gunther. Cause right now, I don't think I could handle it.

MS. GUNTHER

Please don't die, Mademoiselle Byrd!

CLOSEUP - GEORGIA

She's shocked. She pushes away from Gunther.

GEORGIA

What?

MS. GUNTHER

I read the note.

GEORGIA

You went through my stuff?

MS. GUNTHER

I went through your stuff. I'm so sorry.

GEORGIA
Who else knows?

MS. GUNTHER
Nobody, Mademoiselle. It's our
secret. I swear. I apologize.

GEORGIA
It's okay, Ms. Gunther. Truth is,
it's a relief to have someone to
share it with.

(sighs)
I was so angry when I came over
here. But that didn't make me feel
any better. Now I'm not mad at
anybody, except maybe me. I could
have lived a whole lot differently.

Gunther nods with understanding.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
Well, thanks for listening. I've
been dealing with this thing all
alone.

Gunther gets control of her emotions. Straightens.

MS. GUNTHER
You will not be alone,
Mademoiselle. I will not leave you
alone!

And she perches ramrod straight right next to Georgia on the
bed. They sit in silence for a moment.

GEORGIA
I appreciate that, Ms. Gunther.
But I'd actually kind of like to
be alone right now.

Ms. Gunther rises dutifully and leaves, fighting back tears.

Georgia lays down on her bed, looks at her "Book of
Possibilities." Turns the pages: The hotel, food
pictures...then Sean. She sighs, closes the book with a shaky
hand.

Restless, she grabs her coat.

EXT. MONACO STREET - SAME TIME - SEAN

Deliriously tired, he's on a pay phone at a bus station.

SEAN (ON PHONE)
Yeah, hey. Uh, I'm that friend of
Georgia Byrd's...Is she back there
by any chance?

INT. HOTEL - SAME TIME - FRONT DESK

Marie is on the other end of the line.

MARIE (ON PHONE)

Oui. One moment. I'll connect you.

INT. GEORGIA'S ROOM - THE PHONE

It rings and rings. No one is picking up.

INT. HOTEL - SAME TIME - MARIE

MARIE (ON PHONE)

I am sorry, she does not answer.
May I take a message?

EXT. ALPS VILLAGE - DAWN

Georgia, who couldn't sleep, is walking through the streets of the quaint, small village at the base of the hotel. She comes to a CHURCH CEMETERY. Opens the gate and walks inside.

It's very peaceful and beautiful with the sun rising just above the town.

PRIEST (O.S.)

May I help you, mademoiselle?

Georgia turns to see a very pleasant man of the cloth.

GEORGIA

Just curious. Any of these plots available...looking up at the hotel?

EXT. ALPS VILLAGE - A LITTLE LATER

Georgia is wandering through the streets. Stops at the window of a small bistro. The PROPRIETOR, a stout man in his 80's wearing a white chef's apron, is doing the morning prep rolling his pastry dough.

She comes inside, past a French "FOR SALE" sign, and stands there watching him. It's a nice little place.

GEORGIA

Can I make a suggestion?

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

A suggestion? About what?

GEORGIA

You're working that dough too hard. If you want it nice and flaky, you've got to rest it.

He throws the rolling pin down in disgust.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

I bake for 65 years, but you walk
in my shop and tell me how to do
it!?

Georgia winces.

GEORGIA

Pardone. I guess I have been
gettin a little fat-headed lately.

She turns to go. Stops. Turns back around.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

Lemme make it up to you, will you?
Why don't you sit down, and I'm
gonna make you a frittata.

Georgia grabs the old man's shoulders and gently guides him
to a table.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

A quoi...?

ANGLE - STOVE TOP - GEORGIA

With expert efficiency, she's sauteeing three different pans
of vegetables, combines it, adds eggs, gruyere cheese, pops
it in the oven.

Now the rolls are ready. She pulls those out. Plates the
frittata, brings them to the Proprietor who's sitting
luxuriously at one of his own tables.

He tries the rolls. He nods his approval. The frittata,
thumbs up.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

You're right about the dough. It
needs to rest. And it's not the
only one. You are the first to
ever offer to cook for me in all
these years. It is good to rest.

GEORGIA

Cute little place you've got here.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

I do a nice business. But...

(sighs)

I always dreamed of living by the
ocean. And now it's too late.

GEORGIA

Why?

BISTRO PROPRIETOR

I've tried to sell this place. No
takers.

(more)

BISTRO PROPRIETOR (cont'd)
 Young people these days...they
 don't want to work.
 (takes another bite)
 You're a good cook. Where did you
 school?

GEORGIA
 At my mama's knee.

He lights up a Gauloise, studies her.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR
 May I say, there's something very
 special about you...

Uh oh. Here we go again.

GEORGIA
 ...And you want to give me this
 place.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR
 Why, yes. How did you know I was
 going to say that?

GEORGIA
 I've been getting a lot of that
 lately.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR
 I believe there was a reason why
 you came in here this morning.

GEORGIA
 I'm with you on that.
 (he looks encouraged)
 If I don't get a cup of coffee
 first thing in the morning, I'm
 constipated the rest of the day.

She gets up from the table and leaves, shaking her head.

BISTRO PROPRIETOR
 I will even carry the loan!
 Please, take my restaurant!

EXT. HOTEL PATIO - MORNING

The Senator and a dishevelled Kragen are talking.

SENATOR DILLINGS
 Look, Michael, I want you to hear
 it from me. I've been doing a
 little thinking...I'm not going to
 be working on the de-regulation
 legislation for your merger.

KRAGEN

And guess what? I'm not going to be working on your re-election committee.

SENATOR DILLINGS

Resignation accepted.

He gives Kragen a quick hand-shake, turns to Felipe.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(continuing)

Will you get Mademoiselle Byrd's room on the phone for me?

ANGLE - KRAGEN

Reeling from the latest setback, he staggers angrily off around the corner. Stops like he'd been Tasered.

POV - AT THE FRONT DESK - STEWART

He's checking out.

CLOSE - KRAGEN

His knees almost buckle.

KRAGEN

Bob...What's going on?

Stewart turns around. Would rather have not seen him.

KRAGEN

(continuing)

We're supposed to have a work session this afternoon.

STEWART

I know, but I've been doing some thinking...

KRAGEN

Everyone's been doing some thinking!

STEWART

I don't think this merger's right for us right now. I'd rather see my kids have the business.

KRAGEN

(sarcastic)

Well, that's sweet of you.

STEWART

But uh, thanks for the...holiday.

Kragen nods, steamed. A bell boy comes to take Stewart's bags. Kragen is having a meltdown. He steps outside to gulp some air. Then he sees his tormenter.

ANGLE - GEORGIA

Walking up the driveway, fresh from her baking. She gives him a wave, which he returns with a curt nod.

ANGLE - FRONT ENTRANCE

A limousine with two little American flags on the hood is being loaded with bags. Gambini is shaking hands with Senator Dillings.

GAMBINI

It's been a great, great pleasure having you here, Senator. Shall I send the bill to Monsieur Kragen?

SENATOR DILLINGS

No, give it to me this time.

Now he spots something above.

SENATOR DILLINGS

(continuing; looking
up)

Say...is that a woman up there?

INT. MS. BURNS ROOM - SAME TIME

Ms. Gunther is cleaning by the open window. Something catches her eye on the narrow ledge. It is a pair of WOMAN'S LEGS. She SCREAMS.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gambini, Gunther, Dillings, Stewart et al, are present. Gambini has his head out the window, doing some serious hand-wringing.

GAMBINI

Ms. Burns, please come back in!

EXT. WINDOW - ANGLE - MS. BURNS

She's about ten feet away, standing on a narrow stone ledge, her back against the dome.

GAMBINI

It is not at all safe out there!

MS. BURNS

(snorts)

That's the point, you idiot.

INT. ROOM AGAIN - GEORGIA AND KRAGEN

arrive on the scene. Kragen pushes Gambini out of the way.

KRAGEN

Rebecca! What are you doing?

MS. BURNS
Ending a worthless life.

Kragen sticks his head back in.

KRAGEN
Somebody do something!

Georgia takes off her coat and kicks off her shoes.

SENATOR DILLINGS
Georgia, you're not thinking of
going out there, are you?

GEORGIA
It seems like it.

STEWART
Wait for the fire department. Let
them handle this.

GEORGIA
If the fire department is anything
like the one in my neighborhood,
they ain't coming till we set fire
to some Korean businesses.

Georgia pushes past everybody and climbs out the window.
Dillings grabs her arm.

SENATOR DILLINGS
Don't do it. You could get killed
out there.

She removes his hand.

GEORGIA
In a couple of days I'm gonna be
dead anyway.

KRAGEN
What?

STEWART
What are you talking about?

GEORGIA
I've got a terminal disease. They
gave me three weeks to live. My
three weeks are up. See ya.

Georgia eases herself out on the ledge and leaves the rest of
the stunned group trying to digest this.

SENATOR DILLINGS
I don't believe it.

MS. GUNTHER
It's true. She came here to die...
and have one last holiday.

EXT. WINDOW - GEORGIA

with her toes pointing east and west, she gets her balance on the ledge. She looks down, completely unfazed.

GEORGIA'S POV

It's a dizzyingly long way. By now, a huge crowd has gathered, and what looks like a tiny, tiny Tinker-Toy-sized fire truck arrives. A tiny cab has been forced to pull over to the side of the road.

EXT. CAB - SAME TIME - SEAN

He jumps out of the cab. He hustles up the drive to the hotel, joins the crowd, all looking upward.

SEAN

Hey, what's happening? Is that a woman up there?

Nobody speaks English except Felipe doing crowd control.

FELIPE

Not just a woman...une femme
incroyable! Georgia Byrd!

Sean just slowly shakes his head.

SEAN

I don't believe *this* shit...

SEAN'S POV - IT'S GEORGIA - ON THE LEDGE.

Frantically, Sean pushes past Felipe, through the crowd, racing for the hotel entrance.

EXT. LEDGE - AGAIN

Georgia inches her way toward Ms. Burns, who's around the corner of the building. She gets to a place where they can just see each other's faces.

GEORGIA

(brightly)
Hey...what's up?

MS. BURNS

What do you want?

GEORGIA

Well, I'm *not* out here to borrow a tampon. Quit all this nonsense and come back inside with me.

MS. BURNS

You come any closer, and I'll pull you down with me.

GEORGIA

Okay, okay.

Ms. Burns moves closer to the edge.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
Hey, hey, hey...Why're you doing this?

MS. BURNS
You know why.

GEORGIA
Why don't you remind me?

MS. BURNS
I trusted you. I opened my heart up to you. You knew how important that job was to me. And what did you do? You go right after it yourself!...And Michael, too.

She closes her eyes, gets ready to jump.

MS. BURNS
(continuing)
Well, enjoy being Vice President. I'm going to present you with your first public relations problem.

GEORGIA
Wait a minute. I'm not taking that job.

MS. BURNS
Sure.

GEORGIA
I mean it, Tinkerbelle. I don't know know anything about public relations. Until a few weeks ago I was a salesgirl in one of Kragen's stores!
(laughs)
...That's how come I know what a damn fool he is.

INT. THE ROOM AGAIN - SAME TIME

Gunther's telling of Georgia's backstory parallels what's happening on the ledge. All the faces react with more shock about this than the news that Georgia was going to die. Even Chef Pepin has joined the concerned group.

SENATOR DILLINGS
She was what?

MS. GUNTHER
You heard me correctly. Cookwares, she said.

CHEF PEPIN
Georgia just sold pots and pans?

MS. GUNTHER

(nods)

No-Stick.

EXT. ON THE LEDGE AGAIN - GEORGIA AND MS. BURNS

As Ms. Burns processes this development, Georgia uses the distraction to move closer to her.

GEORGIA

So don't waste your time being
jealous of me.

(inches over)

I'm supposed to die any day now.

Burns turns to her. Her first impulse is empathy. But is she trying to trick her?

GEORGIA

(continuing)

I took a blood test that didn't
turn out so great. Needed an
operation, but Krage's company
HMO wouldn't pay for it.

Ms. Burns shakes her head - sounds like him.

MS. BURNS

Isn't there anything...

GEORGIA

It's too late. So don't do this
cause of me. You'll just end up
competing with me to get through
the pearly gates.

Georgia forces a brave smile. Ms. Burns is now crying.

MS. BURNS

I've been so stupid.

GEORGIA

Oh, so what. You got your whole
life ahead of you. There's still
time for you to be all that you
can be.

(catches herself)

I'm not suggesting you join the
Army. That just came out of me for
some reason.

Ms. Burns smiles slightly.

GEORGIA

(continuing)

What I am suggesting is that you
find yourself a regular guy. These
men who got their own jets...
...something's always gotta to be
wrong with 'em.

MS. BURNS
Have you got a boyfriend?

GEORGIA
Well, I don't know if you could call it that. I did have a crush on someone in Lawn and Garden...Sean's his name.
(shudders)
You mind if we talk about Sean over a cup of cocoa? I'm getting a little chilled out here.

Georgia reaches a hand out to her. After a moment of thinking about it, Ms. Burns takes it.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
That's right. C'mon...

Georgia eases Ms. Burns past her to outstretched arms from the window.

But Ms. Burns won't let Kragen touch her. As she goes thru the window to safety...

CLOSE - THE WINDOW - SEAN

His big head suddenly appears.

SEAN
Georgia!

CLOSE - GEORGIA

hearing his VOICE, turns. She does a take when she sees him hanging out the window.

GEORGIA
Sean? What're you doing here?!

SEAN
What in God's green acres are you doing out there is the question!

GEORGIA
My last good deed as a dying woman.

SEAN
That's what I came here to tell you. You don't have Lampington's Disease! They made a mistake with your test. You're going to live!

GEORGIA
(pondering)
I'm going to live?

The meaning of those words sinks in. Georgia's eyes widen. It's the look of a woman suddenly awakened from a sleepwalk.

She tries to take her first step, loses her balance. Her arms wheel crazily and just when it looks like she's going over the edge, she grabs onto a downspout.

She starts hyperventilating, knees shaking, acrophobia back.

SEAN

Georgia! Look at me!

(she does)

Now take it real slow and easy this way.

Amazingly, Georgia catches her breath, settles down.

GEORGIA

Hey whaddaya know, Sean? I'm not afraid of heights anymore!

She takes a little skip down the ledge to prove it. Sean can hardly look.

SEAN

Good for you. Why don't you come on in now?

She starts to. Then stops on the ledge:

GEORGIA

Hey...how come you're not at work?

SEAN

I quit that damn job.

GEORGIA

Why'd you wanna go and do something like that?

He looks around at the other people in the room. He's too embarrassed to let loose of his feelings in front of them.

SEAN

(shyly)

I don't know. I just did.

GEORGIA

C'mon. There had to be a reason.

SEAN

I didn't feel I had a future. Someone I knew back home had already bought all the merchandise in my department.

A beat and Georgia realizes what he's talking about. Shock.

GEORGIA

You've been in my apartment!

SEAN

(teasing)

That's right...Me and the whole damn woodwind section!

GEORGIA

We don't know each other well enough for you to come up to my apartment.

SEAN

I don't think I know you at all with what I've been seeing lately.

GEORGIA

Well, if you don't like what you've been seeing, you can just go home. Break into someone else's apartment. This is who I am.

SEAN

I didn't say I didn't like what I've been seeing. I just said I ain't used to it...yet.

GEORGIA

Well, you better be sure about that cause I'm not wasting one minute of the life I got left to me with a...with a...chicken.

SEAN

Who you calling a chicken?

And with that, Sean climbs out of the window onto the ledge. Georgia is suddenly alarmed.

GEORGIA

Sean, what're you doing! Get back in there! You big dummy, the ledge won't hold us both!

He doesn't stop. He crawls out to her on his hands and knees.

SEAN

I'll show you who's chicken!

He looks down. He wants to throw up, but he keeps going.

GEORGIA

You're crazy.

SEAN

I must be.

He stands slowly. They look at each other face to face.

GEORGIA

Now what?

SEAN
 (shrugs, shy)
 I don't know.

Suddenly a hunk of ledge between them CRUMBLES and falls away. Sean quickly grabs Georgia, pulls her close. They find themselves in each others arms.

SEAN
 (continuing)
 Well, for one thing. I'm gonna listen to you more often.

They kiss.

EXT. HOTEL - SAME TIME - THE CROWD CHEERS

As the fire truck extends its ladder to them...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOTEL - THE FRONT DESK - DAY

Gambini is going through receipts, mulling over the day's events with Marie.

GAMBINI
 Imagine, in all the world she came to my hotel...

MARIE
 It's so romantic. She used all her life savings...

GAMBINI
 Yes...all her life savings.

But this thought darkens Gambini's face.

GAMBINI
 (continuing)
 Marie... pull Mademoiselle Byrd's bill, will you?

EXT. HOTEL - SAME TIME

The Senator is once again trying to leave. The limo is waiting as he descends the stairs.

SENATOR DILLINGS (ON PHONE)
 You know that woman I was telling you about? Well, forget about trying to find her office space. No, I'll tell you about it when I get back.

EXT. HOTEL - ENTRANCE - SAME TIME

Ms. Burns and Stewart walk out the door together.

STEWART

Are you going to be all right?

MS. BURNS

If I can ever get over making such a fool of myself.

STEWART

Going back to work for Kragen?

MS. BURNS

No, I quit.

STEWART

I guess we're not going to forget about this trip for a while.

He looks back up at the hotel.

STEWART

(continuing)

I felt that it was only fair that I still offered Georgia a job - phone sales of course - but she turned me down.

MS. BURNS

Something tells me she's got bigger plans than that.

STEWART

Imagine having your whole life given back to you.

MS. BURNS

I think I know.

STEWART

Sorry.

They get to the limo.

STEWART

(continuing)

So what are you going to do?

She shrugs, then offers her hand to shake with a smile.

MS. BURNS

Anyway, it was nice meeting you. I think you did the right thing keeping your business.

As he gets into the limo, he stops and turns around.

STEWART

Say...would you be willing to relocate to Ohio?

She's kind of surprised by this.

MS. BURNS
Any "regular" guys live there?

STEWART
My thirty year-old son Robert's an Explorer Scout leader. How regular is that?

MS. BURNS
Okay. Why not?

As he waves her into limo...

INT. THE KRAGEN'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Michael is sitting on the bed, talking like a little boy on the phone. But, despite the way it sounds, it's not his mommy he's speaking with. It's his wife.

KRAGEN (ON PHONE)
Hi, honey...it's me...How's it going? ...Terrible.
(choking up)
I miss you...

INT. GEORGIA'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Sean is laying on her bed, propped up on one elbow - taking in the luxury of his surroundings.

Georgia is at the window. Looks out at a new world while unwrapping the foil from a bottle of Dom Perignon. Something is troubling her, and she is going to say it.

GEORGIA
Sean, I appreciate you coming all this way to find me and everything, but I think I better warn you about something...

She turns to him.

GEORGIA
(continuing)
That person who's apartment you went in?... she doesn't live there anymore. You understand what I'm saying?

SEAN
Yeah, I understand what you're saying.

GEORGIA
Don't think you got me over a barrel just because you know that I'm already...fond of you.

SEAN
(chuckles)
I won't overplay my power.

GEORGIA

You don't even know who I am.

SEAN

I got a rough idea. The rest...
we've got plenty of time for you
to teach me.

GEORGIA

Okay, here's something. I don't
like people putting their feet up
on my bed with their shoes on.

He quickly pulls them off. They both start laughing as
there's a KNOCK at the DOOR. Georgia crosses to open it.

ANGLE - IT'S MS. GUNTHER

She steps in, carrying a silver tray with an envelope the
size of a phone book on it.

MS. GUNTHER

(brightly)

Bon jour, Mademoiselle. Monsieur.

GEORGIA

Hey, Ms. Gunther, come on in. You
know, I never did learn your first
name.

MS. GUNTHER

Hugula.

Georgia deadpans.

GEORGIA

Oh. What's that you got there?

MS. GUNTHER

It's from the front desk.

Georgia takes the envelope off the tray. She opens it and
reads an attached note. Chuckles, ironically.

GEORGIA

They want me to pay now.

(looks at bill)

Only 18,570 bucks. Worth every
penny.

(hands Gunther the
bottle)

If you'll do this, I'll go get the
money.

MS. GUNTHER

Certainly, Mademoiselle..

Georgia opens her suitcase. Gets out all of her remaining
money and traveller's checks. Starts counting it out.

MS. GUNTHER

(continuing; to Sean)

You know, monsieur, I always considered myself to be an astute judge of character...

Georgia's stack of bills is getting smaller and smaller. Now she piles her remaining traveller's checks on the silver tray, too. From the look on her face, she's still short.

MS. GUNTHER

(continuing)

... but Mademoiselle Byrd has taught me that no one has the right to stand in judgment of another...

SEAN

Ain't that the truth.

Georgia is now searching through all the rest of her coat pockets, then behind the cushions of the couch. She manages to find a few more bucks. Paid in full, but Tap City.

Gunther has now unwrapped the wire and is working on the cork.

MS. GUNTHER

...and for that lesson, I am eternally grateful.

Georgia looks up in horror to see Gunther about to pop the cork on a bottle of Dom Perignon.

GEORGIA

No! Don't open that!

POP! The CORK BLOWS off.

SEAN

What's wrong, baby?

GEORGIA

I'm completely broke! Sean, see if you can get the cork back in the bottle.

SEAN

(checks wallet)

I got about 45 dollars here.

MS. GUNTHER

(calmly)

Monsieur, mademoiselle...this one is on me.

GEORGIA

I gave away a hundred thousand dollars in Monte Carlo the other night.

SEAN

Yeah, but that was to charity.
Think of it this way. We got some
big deductions coming our way.

GEORGIA

(lovebirds)

You're right.

(grim reality dawns)

Only problem is, you gotta have a
job to take a deduction. Neither
one of us has one of those. Or a
car, a home, or a plane ticket
back.

MS. GUNTHER

That may be, Mademoiselle...but
you do have your life.

GEORGIA

I do, don't I?

As they toast.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. VILLAGE BELOW THE HOTEL - DAY

Georgia and Sean are carrying their luggage. Up ahead is the
bus stop. The BUS pulls up.

This is a long way from the manner in which she's been
traveling. But with a light-hearted attitude, they prepare to
get on board with the rest of the LOCALS.

INT. BUS - CONTINUING

They get situated in a seat. Georgia takes one last lingering
look out the window: the hotel, the mountain, the cemetery.

Sean puts his big hand over hers.

SEAN

Any idea where we're going?

GEORGIA

No baby, I don't. Does it matter?

SEAN

As you already know...I'll follow
you anywhere.

The bus driver finishes his smoke outside the bus and climbs
aboard. Just then, something catches her eye through the
window on the other side of the bus.

It's the small bistro. The aged Proprietor is sitting
forlornly at his own sidewalk table having an espresso.

GEORGIA

Sean, what do you know about rolling dough?

SEAN

Just if you want your biscuits flaky, you can't overwork it.

Off her confused look, he pulls down his shirt collar to REVEAL his tattoo depicting TWO FRYING PANS CROSSED.

SEAN

(continuing)

I was a cook in the army.

Georgia can hardly contain her excitement. She kisses him, bolts out of the seat and gets off the bus. Sean follows her awkwardly with the luggage.

We stay on the bus and watch the situation unfold as Georgia runs up to the Bistro Proprietor and speaks with him animatedly, Sean standing nearby.

We see out the back window that he is shaking her hand. Then he hands her his apron and chef's hat. Georgia immediately puts them on.

Now, like clockwork, Chef Jacque Pepin comes around the corner. Does a take when he sees her. Then nods approvingly and hugs her warmly - all is right with the world.

AS THE BUS PULLS AWAY, we watch through the window as Georgia ushers in her first customer, Chef Pepin. Sean puts on an apron of his own, even though the strings don't tie. And the Old Proprietor takes the FOR SALE sign out of the bistro window, tears it in half.

The last offer...on the last holiday...made good.

FADE OUT

THE END