

MADE IN AMERICA

by

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HEAR: African music. It's wild. Exotic drums and chanting, it's filled with energy as we FADE UP ON:

1 EXT. BERKELEY - CALIFORNIA - DAY

ON THE SATHER GATES...where Telegraph Avenue hits the University campus. It's morning. And already this place is moving. There are people everywhere, students, vendors, tourists.

ON A LONG LENS...looking through a cornucopia of street funk...to find a BICYCLE. And it's coming RIGHT AT US as it sails through the gates and onto Telegraph Avenue.

CLOSER ON THE BICYCLE...it IGNORES the rules of the road, up and down curbs, through crosswalks, red lights mean nothing.

ON THE STREET...it's a MULTI-RACIAL sidewalk shopping bazaar. Everywhere vendors are hawking tie-dyed shirts, knock-off sunglasses, trendy jewelry.

PASSING...Cody's books, the bicycle comes closer. We see the RIDER. Not a hot shot kid, but a WOMAN... SARAH MATHEWS.

Sarah is African American with fiery eyes, great legs, and a fearless smile. Enormous Nigerian bottle cap earrings sway from her earlobes. Beaded bracelets are in layers from her wrists to her elbows. She wears a bright dashiki and buba pants.

PASSING...the People's Park.

ON SARAH... near College Avenue, her BICYCLE charges into an intersection, slides in between a car and a truck. She rings a tin BELL on her handlebars. It's hardly much warning.

The truck SLAMS on his brakes. The driver curses out the window at Sarah:

TRUCK DRIVER
You asshole!! What're you
crazy?!!!!

ON SARAH... with great dignity. She raises her right hand, gives him the finger, keeps on pedalling to COLLEGE AVENUE... The bicycle finally stops in front of a storefront....

2 EXT. THE AFRICAN QUEEN - SAME

Sarah takes off a WALKMAN. The music stops. She removes a Fila (African crown) from her backpack, pulls it over her head as an elderly Black WOMAN walks by.

OLD WOMAN
Good morning, Sarah.

SARAH
(her voice eloquent)
Good morning, sister.

3 INT. THE AFRICAN QUEEN - SAME

It's floor to ceiling merchandise and it's not arranged like in the Broadway. It's in stacks, old cartons, in makeshift shelving. And all of it is focused on AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE.

There are books, beads, masks, posters, t-shirts, folk art...all to raise Black consciousness.

Banners swirl from the ceiling: "Did you know Garret Morgan invented the traffic light? George Washington Carver developed peanut products which led to the manufacture of linoleum?"

Slouched behind the counter eating a muffin is JAMES. He's in his thirties, an African American. On the front of his t-shirt is written: Silence is Death.

JAMES

'Morning.

SARAH

You're getting crumbs on the counter.

Sarah elbows him out of the way, sticks a tape into a player. HEAR: The Music of the Maasai Warriors. It's loud drum beating punctuated with wild whooping.

JAMES

Do we hafta listen to that?

SARAH

(all the high tone gone
from her voice)

Do you hafta work here? Is
someone forcing you?

JAMES

You are. It would be bad luck if
at least one day a week you didn't
have a real African queen on the
premises.

SARAH

Get outta here!

JAMES

I still say I should wear the
crown.

SARAH

Git your ass back there before I
bite it off!

Two Black WOMEN enter the store. Sarah adjusts her fila, smiles graciously as she intones:

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

SARAH (CONT'D)
Good morning, sisters....

CUT TO:

4 INT. OAKLAND TECH HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

Inside an advanced placement BIOLOGY class. It's a sea of ethnically diverse teenagers. The class is split into partners who work in pairs at the lab tables.

MOVING IN...to find ZORA MATHEWS. She's 17, has caramel colored skin, beautiful eyes, and the kind of teenage body which occurs in the four year window of opportunity when a female can have developed anatomy with zero cellulite.

At Zora's side is T.C. (TEA CAKE) Walters. Tea Cake is 18, thin, all arms and legs. Brainy wire glasses rest on his nose. He shuts his eyes, wrinkles up his face.

TEA CAKE
Do it. I can't.

ZORA
You are unreal. Gimme your finger. (X)
(he rolls up his whole sleeve)
Your FINGER.

At the front of the room the teacher, MR. ALDEN, picks up a print out, reads to the classroom:

MR. ALDEN
"Cap and Gown fitting is on the fourth. Mr. Jackson wants everyone to know how pleased he is with the turnout for the condom demonstration and dispersal, but conversely how disappointed he is with the poor turnout for the "Just Say No to Drugs" rally.
(he tosses the print-out on the table.)
Go figure. After you've finished your blood typing turn to page 158 of the text.

ON ZORA AND TEA CAKE... Tea Cake places his blood on the blood (X) typing card. It changes color.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

TEA CAKE
Bing-O. Your turn.

Zora pokes herself in the finger, smears her blood onto a card. (X)
They watch.

TEA CAKE (CONT'D)
AB. (X)

Zora looks back at the papers in front of her. She retrieves (X)
another card out of the kit.

ZORA
Let's do it again. (X)

TEA CAKE
Why? (X)

ZORA
Something's wrong. (X)

Zora squeezes a drop of blood onto another card. (X)

ON THE CARD...changing color. No mistake. (X)

ZORA
I'm...AB.

ON ZORA...as this sinks in. She gathers up her things.

TEA CAKE
Zora, what're doing?

Clearly upset, she starts for the door.

ON MR. ALDEN...as Zora passes by.

MR. ALDEN
What's up?

She keeps on going. Alden follows her into

5 INT HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - SAME - DAY

MR. ALDEN
Zora? What is it?

She stops, turns back to him.

ZORA
My Mom's A. My Dad was O. And I
just came out AB.

ON ALDEN...this is every biology teacher's nightmare.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED:

MR. ALDEN
Hey, forget the assignment. Do
your Senior project.
(She starts to go again,
he stops her)
Zora, n ten years of teaching
you're the most gifted student
I've ever had. Forget this stuff.
It doesn't mean anything.

ON ZORA...she looks him right in the eye.

ZORA
Of course it means something.

She starts off down the hall as Tea Cake appears behind Mr.
Alden.

TEA CAKE
Zora...

HOLD ON TEA CAKE AND MR ALDEN...as Zora runs away.

6 EXT. OAKLAND AND BERKELEY - SAME - DAY

Zora comes out of the High School, goes to a mess of mopeds and
bikes, climbs on her scooter. She throws on her helmet, kick
starts the bike, and takes off.

7 INT. THE AFRICAN QUEEN - DAY

ON SARAH...wrapping a Japanese tourist in a big piece of Zulu
tribal cloth. Although in agony the woman is too polite to make
her stop. Suddenly Zora charges into the store.

ZORA
Mom!

SARAH
Why aren't you in school?

ZORA
You lied to me.

SARAH
What?

ZORA
You had an affair. Before Dad
died you slept with someone else!

Sarah looks like she was hit in the face. She pulls on the
cloth. The woman tourist spins like a top. Customers move down
the aisles to get a better view. James is leading them.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

JAMES

Thank God this happened on one of my work days!

ZORA

Your blood type s A. Charlie's was O. And I just came out AB. Mom, that's NOT genetically possible!!!!

ON SARAH...as she steadies herself on a pygmy sculpture.

SARAH

Look Zora, can we go somewhere and talk about this calmly?

JAMES

Oh please don't go anywhere.

SARAH

(to James)

I know where you can go, Miss Thing!

(to Zora)

Do you want everyone in the store to think I'm this lying slut?

JAMES

(to customer)

I always knew she was lying, but this slut thing is a revelation.

ZORA

Why did you spend seventeen years telling me--telling the world Charlie was my father?!

SARAH

Because he should have been. We wanted a child, but then he was dying and it was too late. I didn't want to be alone.

ZORA

So you slept with the first person you met at the funeral?

SARAH

I didn't sleep with anyone.

ZORA

Oh, great, so I'm the product of a one night stand.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
I got ARTIFICIALLY inseminated.

ON ZORA...whoa. Maybe they should go somewhere else. She takes Sarah by the hand, starts outside.

8 EXT. PARK - DAY

Zora and Sarah are on a bench. Behind them the sky is thick with gray clouds.

ZORA
A sperm bank. It's so...
undignified.

SARAH
Well, it was unusual at the time.
But I lost one love, so I made
myself another. I'm sorry you had
to find out this way, baby. I'm
sorry.

Sarah's all choked up. Zora puts her arm around her.

ZORA
Oh Mama, don't, please. It's
Okay. But so... you really have
no idea who it was? The guy they
gave you.

SARAH
I'm sure I asked for the best guy
they had. You know, smart, Black,
not too short.

ZORA
You bought sperm. God, how much
did it cost?

SARAH
Zora honey please.... Let's get
off this. I'm getting depressed.
You're a great girl. So whatever
they gave me was the best.

ZORA
But I could have a father.

SARAH
Charlie was your father. Life is
good. Okay?

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

ZORA
Okay....

CUT TO:

9 EXT. BAY BRIDGE - DAY

AERIAL SHOT...tight on Tea Cake and Zora on the moped. Tea Cake is driving and Zora is on the back. Both wear helmets. Tea Cake's helmet is odd, perhaps a football helmet.

TEA CAKE
Are you sure you want a father?
They can be real assholes, you
know.

ZORA
Look, you don't have to do this.
I'm prepared to go alone.

TEA CAKE
No, no -- I'll do it. I just want
to make sure you know what you're
doing.

PULLING BACK to reveal the moped's on the upper deck of the Bay Bridge.

ZORA
Do I look like someone who doesn't
know what they're doing?

PULLING OUT WIDER....as the moped becomes smaller and smaller.

TEA CAKE
It's hard to look at this speed,
but if I have to go by memory, no.

WIDE ENOUGH TO REVEAL...the entire Bay Bridge and the city of San Francisco beyond.

9A EXT. SAN FRANCISCO STREETS - DAY

ZORA (V.O.)
Left! Left! Turn left at the
light.

The moped swings into view. We travel with it. Zora has a piece of paper in her hands, is shouting directions.

TEA CAKE
At some point, you're going to
have to tell me where we're going.
I can't just follow you around
like some dorky moron.

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED:

ZORA
Why not? You've been doing it for
years. Are the rules suddenly
changing?

9B EXT. CALIFORNIA STREET - SAME

ON ANOTHER STREET...on a hill. The Bay Bridge and the city are
sprawled out below. A cable car passes in the foreground.

ZORA (V.O.)
Straight! Keep going straight!

The moped appears on the street.

TEA CAKE
At least give me a hint! I think
I deserve that.

ZORA
We're going to a bank, okay?

TEA CAKE
Your father works at a bank?

ZORA
Sort of.

ZORA
(points)
That's it. Pull over. There.

He pulls to the curb. They get off the moped and approach the
front of the building. On a plaque is a directory.

TEA CAKE
(reading)
Cryobank. Cryo, Cryo means
freeze...A freeze bank. Freeze
what? Don't tell me.
(starts to back up)
Sticky stuff. Sticky wriggling
stuff. Sperm. Your father works
in a sperm bank.

ZORA
Not exactly.

TEA CAKE
(almost at the moped)
Don't do this to me.

(CONTINUED)

9B CONTINUED:

ZORA
(follows him)
He is sperm.

TEA CAKE
I'm outta here. And if you know
what's good for you...

ZORA
(pulling him to the
building entrance)
For seventeen years I thought he
was dead. But it's not true. I
have a father.

TEA CAKE
Oh I see. You think you're going
to walk in here and say hello...

They are through the front door.

9C INT. MEDICAL BUILDING - DAY

TEA CAKE (CONT'D)
Seventeen years ago a man came in
here to make a deposit, looked a
little like me maybe...

Walking up the stairs.

TEA CAKE (CONT'D)
Anyway, could you please tell me
his name and number? Is that what
you think?

As he finishes this speech, they enter the Cryobank reception
area and are overheard by a nurse.

10 INT. CRYOBANK - DAY

TEA CAKE
They won't tell you anything.
Especially people like you. Crazy
people.

A woman sits behind a desk.

RECEPTIONIST
May I help you?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

TEA CAKE

Oh, we're just looking at the building for an urban planning class. (to Zora) Now you've seen it. Can we go?

Zora watches as a young MAN enters. The receptionist presses a button and a door buzzes open. He heads off.

ZORA

That's the sperm bank? Right behind that door?

(the woman nods)

Was he a sperm donor?

(She nods again)

And you have to be a donor to go back there?

(one more nod)

You know my friend here is interested in donating...

Zora pushes Tea Cake forward. He nearly falls over.

RECEPTIONIST

To apply you must be at least eighteen-years-old and in good health.

ZORA

His eighteenth birthday was last month. And he's never even had a cold.

Tea Cake is still reeling as Zora steers him into...

11 INT. CRYOBANK WAITING ROOM - DAY

Standard issue doctor's office but with Fertility and Modern Parent on the coffee table.

TEA CAKE

What're you doing?!

A NURSE is at a desk behind a glass partition.

ZORA

(she pushes Tea Cake into a chair)

Wait here.

NURSE

Can I help you?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

ZORA

(low)

Uh, yeah. I have a friend here
who's interested in donating.

TEA CAKE

(stands)

No you don't.

NURSE

For today he needs to fill out the
forms and leave sperm and blood
samples.

(she hands Zora the
application)

Only 15% of the applicants end up
becoming donors - if he qualifies
he'll be paid forty dollars per
donation, with no more than three
deposits allowed per week.

Tea Cake reacts with interest at the mention of forty dollars.
Zora returns to Tea Cake. He heard everything.

TEA CAKE

I can't jerk off for a stranger!

ZORA

What's the big deal? It's not
like you've never done it before.

TEA CAKE

That's my business.

ZORA

I want to see inside the offices!
Look, if I could do it myself I
wouldn't ask.

TEA CAKE

Forget it.

ON ZORA... this is going to be tough.

ZORA

Who pierced your ear?

TEA CAKE

It took you three days!

ZORA

Who believed in your astrophysics
project when everyone else on the
planet told you it would fail?!

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

TEA CAKE
It did fail.

ZORA
That's not the point!

Tea Cake drops his head into his hands.

TEA CAKE
The point?! Oh, suddenly there's
a point.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON NURSE... it's as if she's speaking in slow motion.

ON ZORA AND TEA CAKE... Tea Cake is hyperventilating.

NURSE (CONT'D)
We have magazines as well as video
tapes. Which would you prefer?

TEA CAKE
(in a gasp of air)
The video tapes, please.

NURSE
(to Zora)
He'll have to do the rest alone.

ZORA
I just need to use the bathroom.

12 INT. CRYOBANK - DAY

The Nurse lets them both inside.

NURSE
First door on the left.

Zora half closes the door as the Nurse and Tea Cake go down the hall.

She comes out, peeks around a corner, sees a large room with five technicians, all staring into microscopes as they analyze specimens.

ON ONE TECHNICIAN...looking up at Zora. She looks back down into her microscope.

ON WHAT SHE SEES...MACRO-PHOTOGRAPHY...millions of SPERM.
They're frantic little critters.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

ON ZORA... in another hallway. Doors on either side. She taps one, hears:

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
(breathless)
Just a second! I'll only be a
second!!

Zora jumps back. Goes to another door. Opens it:

Her face registers shock and embarrassment. We hear sounds of a porno movie.

ZORA
Sorry! Sorry!

She quickly closes the door, grimacing. She continues down the hall and goes to another door. Opens it.

13 INT. CRYOBANK OFFICE - SAME - DAY

File cabinets and a computer terminal. Zora locks the door, opens a file cabinet. It's filled with invoices. She turns to the computer. It's on.

ON THE SCREEN... pulsing numbers. Accounts Payable.

Zora punches a key, closes the file, exits the program. Within seconds a menu appears. Zora highlights a file titled: RECIPIENTS.

14 INT. MASTURBATORIUM - SAME - DAY

A sterile room with a sink, a bench and a TV.

NURSE
(she's said this a
thousand times)
And no creams or lotions. They
get into the sample. Please don't
grab the sink during collection.
One man ripped it off the wall.
We pay by volume.
(she hands him a plastic
cup)
You must reach the top line to
even be considered. Questions?

Tea Cake stares at the trembling plastic cup in his hand, shakes his head "no." The Nurse shuts the door. There is perspiration on Tea Cake's face.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

TEA CAKE
(to his reflection in
his mirror)
How'd I get into this?

CUT TO:

15 INT. OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Zora is scrolling through a computer file. She suddenly stops.
ON THE SCREEN...

Mattad, Jane Lee Mathison, Sarah Grace Mathews, Alisa

Zora highlights: Mathews, Sarah Grace.

ON THE SCREEN. . . A file comes up. Mathews, Sarah Grace.
June 19, 1974. Sample sent to Dr. Marcus Cones. Donor #13857C:
Halbert Jackson. Social Security #540-82-9789.

16 INT. MASTURBATORIUM - SAME - DAY

Tea Cake paces around room, clutching the cup.

TEA CAKE
If I don't do it they'll think
something's wrong with me...

He turns on the TV. Does a double take. This isn't a regular
TV channel. Tea Cake adjusts his glasses. Starts to watch...

17 INT. OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Zora is copying down the computer information.

ON THE DOOR KNOB... turning. Someone wants to get in.

Zora writes rapidly: Donor #13857C: Halbert Jackson; Soc.
Sec. #540-82-9789.

ON THE DOOR... a key is inserted into the lock.

18 INT. COLLECTION ROOM - SAME - DAY

ON TEA CAKE... smiling as he stares at the TV.

19 INT. OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Zora jumps up as the door swings open. The Nurse stands in the
doorway.

ZORA
I got locked in.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

NURSE
What are you doing?

Zora angles past the Nurse into the hall.

ZORA
I thought it was a bathroom.

NURSE
I'm calling security.

ON ZORA... in the hallway. Which way is out? She opens a door.
Slams it shut.

ZORA
Sorry!

Zora turns the other direction. Another door opens and we hear
Tea Cake's voice call:

TEA CAKE
(calls)
Nurse, I need another cup!

His head pops out and Tea Cake sees Zora sprinting down the
hall.

TEA CAKE (CONT'D)
(calling)
Zora! Where're you going?!

ZORA
I found my father!

20 EXT. CALIFORNIA STREET - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

Zora emerges onto the street. She hops on her moped and takes
off.

CUT TO:

21 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

HEAR... the sounds of lovemaking. LOUD lovemaking.

Moving past an empty blender and encrusted glasses to the

BED... it's like an earthquake. The headboard SLAMS
rhythmically into the wall. Under the sheets a WOMAN is
moaning, whining, out of control.

ON TOP OF HER... gasping for breath, is a MAN. He cries out as
if he were shot, collapses.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

A micro-second passes and the sheets flap up as a YOUNG WOMAN bounds out of bed... STACY.

She's 23, pixish, with streaked hair and a high definition body. She gets to her feet, does a naked CARTWHEEL into the bathroom.

22 INT. BATHROOM - SAME

Stacy hits the button on a tape deck. HEAR: Awful, heavy metal music. She opens her mouth, SPITS out a plastic retainer, stares at her teeth.

STACY
(in a yell to the
bedroom)
They're getting whiter! You
should bleach your teeth. I
swear. It's so cool!

ON THE MAN... still lying prone, breathing as if he just ran a marathon. As he rolls over onto his back in a tangle of sheets we see... HAL JACKSON.

He's in his forties, has several days worth of beard stubble, a hangover, and should consider a haircut. Despite it all he still looks great.

He reaches for a cigarette pack on the nightstand. Manages to get one lit. He takes a long drag, starts to cough, as Stacy comes back in. She's already showered. She towels off, moving like a whirlwind. In seconds she's covered in layers of spandex.

STACY
I gotta run. Step class in twenty
minutes.

Stacy opens a closet. Forty pairs of athletic shoes. She tosses two pairs into a gym bag, leaps on Hal, kissing him. She's up and out the door in a blur.

ON HAL... he runs his fingers through his hair, exhales deeply. She's a handful. He plugs his phone into the wall jack, dials.

HAL
(into the receiver)
Hey... it's Hal. What's up?
(they tell him)
Today? What time is it? Ah - for -
Chrissakes. I'll be there in
twenty.

CUT TO:

23 EXT. HAL JACKSON'S HOUSE - DAY

Zora coasts to a stop on her Honda scooter in front of Hal's house. It's large and nondescript. Perched in the Berkeley hills, the vast bay is spread out below.

Zora parks as the automatic garage door rolls open.

24 INT. HAL'S GARAGE - DAY

Hal is behind the wheel of a souped-up Chevy truck. He puts it in reverse, looks in the rearview mirror.

There's a young black woman standing in the driveway.

HAL
(to himself)
Very young. Very cute.
(calling out the window)
Do you need something?

Zora steps out from behind the truck.

ZORA
I'm looking for Halbert Jackson.

HAL
Look no further.

ZORA
Is he inside?

HAL
You're talking to him.

ZORA
(no way)
To Halbert Jackson?

HAL
The one and only.

ZORA
(in total shock)
You're white.

HAL
But when we're alone in the dark -
what difference is that going to
make?

ZORA
I mean... the Halbert Jackson
whose social security number is
540-82-9789.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

HAL
(his eyes narrow)
Are you a process server?

ZORA
What's that?

HAL
Did my ex-wife send you? Because,
dammit, we settled all that
alimony shit last year! Settled.
No more legal crap. She agreed!

ZORA
No. I mean, yes. I mean, I don't
know anything about your ex-wife.

HAL
(calming down)
Good. In that case, you're
talking to Hal Jackson. 540-82-
9789.

ZORA
(having trouble forming
a sentence)
Have you always had that name and
social security number?

HAL
Is this because I threw away the
census forms?

ON ZORA... totally dumbstruck.

HAL (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

He glances at his watch. At Zora's legs.

HAL (CONT'D)
Look, I'm late. Hey don't get me
wrong, I think we're good
together. Got a thing, a
connection. But I gotta go.
C'mon, babe, in or out.

Hal throws open the passenger door, Zora peers inside:

ON THE SEAT... is an oversized cowboy hat, a pair of handcuffs,
and a half dozen empty beer cans.

Hal sweeps the cans onto the floor, wacks the seat.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
Hello. Testing. Make up your
mind. Coming or going? I gotta
get to work.

Zora climbs inside in a daze.

24A INT. TRUCK - DAY

Hal rips down the driveway. Zora fishes for a seatbelt.

ZORA
Where... do you... work?

HAL
Jackson Motors.

(X)

He puts on his cowboy hat, steps on the gas.

HAL (CONT'D)
(affecting the way he
sounds in the
commercials)
Because real cowboys are strong
and tough...and so are American
trucks.

(X)

ON ZORA... oh, my God. She recognizes him.

ZORA
You're on TV. The guy in all
those commercials...

Zora swallows, grips the dashboard.

ZORA (CONT'D)
I had no idea these trucks were so
fast...

(X)

HAL
(with a wink)
It's not factory. Engine's worth
twice the body. This baby's been
bored, stroked and she's full
blown. Close your eyes and feel
this kitty purr.

ON ZORA... staring at him. He winks again, lights another
cigarette, makes a wide turn, catches part of the curb. Zora is
thrown hard against the door.

(CONTINUED)

24A CONTINUED:

HAL (CONT'D)
 Ah, no one but the U.S. of A. (X)
 builds 'em this tough. C'mon,
 enough about me. I'll autograph
 an 8X10 for you at the office if
 you promise to change expression.
 What did you say your name was?

ZORA
 Zora. Zora Mathews.

HAL
 Wait a minute, are you the girl
 Darrell's been telling us about?

ZORA
 I'm sure no one's told you about
 me...

25 EXT. ON THE TRUCK - DAY
 Merging recklessly into freeway traffic.

26 INT. TRUCK - SAME - DAY

HAL
 Hey, a first. Legal use of the
 carpool lane!

Hal floors it.

HAL (CONT'D)
 You like opera? I got opera. (X)

He slams a cassette into the tape deck. It is The Who's rock (X)
 opera, "Tommy." Sings: (X)

HAL (CONT'D) (X)
 "See me... Feel me... (X)
 Touch me... Heal me... (X)
 See me... Feel me... (X)
 Touch me... Heal me..." (X)

ON ZORA... her face glistens with sweat. She covers her mouth.

ZORA
 I think I'm getting carsick.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. JACKSON MOTORS - DAY

(X)

Hal pulls into the dealership, slams on the brakes. Burns rubber. Zora opens the door and vomits onto the asphalt. Hal hardly notices.

HAL

Ah, women, you gotta love 'em.

(calls)

Hey Diego, lady back here laughing
at the ground. Front and center.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

DIEGO starts over toward Zora. He's Hispanic, in his early 20's, wears mechanic overalls that show off his hunk body. Hal jumps out of the truck and heads into the lot, rushing toward the activity surrounding the commercial crew.

28 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME

There's a video camera crew wandering around a large trailer. (X)
Inside the trailer is a scruffy bear. Hal stares.

HAL (CONT'D)
(stunned)
For chrissakes, a bear!

A high-strung man in his thirties sprints up. TEDDY. He's got (X)
a Super 8 camera slung over his shoulder and a large BOX in his (X)
hands. (X)

TEDDY
You're late.

HAL
You said llama!

TEDDY
I may have mentioned llama. But
we did a focus group and bears are
very big right now.

Off to the side a one-armed man with a red beard paces around
the bear trailer. ROCKY, the bear trainer.

ROCKY
(yelling ominously)
Boris is getting restless.

TEDDY
Did you hear that? You better
change into the outfit.

HAL
This is bullshit! We're done with
circus. You promised me barnyard!
Chickens, geese, cows! Beavers,
weasels--

TEDDY
You loved the chimp, remember?
Little Larry?

HAL
I didn't love Larry, okay?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

TEDDY
You liked the ostrich.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

HAL
Tina? Yeah, yeah. I liked Tina.
Unexpected.

ROCKY
(yells)
The bear has to work now! He
hasn't eaten.

The director, DWAYNE, in baseball cap and flight jacket, holds
a viewfinder at the horizon, hollers:

DWAYNE
(yells)
The light's shit. Total shit. We
had a seven o'clock call. We've
been sitting for hours. What is
the problem?

Hal makes a face at the director.

HAL
Why are we using that asshole? I
told you I never wanted to see him
again! We're shooting a truck
commercial and he thinks it's
"Gone with the Goddam Wind".

TEDDY
Selling cars is what you do.
Advertising is what I do.
(hands him a large box)
Please get this suit on. The
bear's on the clock.

29 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SERVICE AREA

Zora comes out of a bathroom near the service area. She looks
slightly better but still queasy.

DIEGO
Are you the girl that Darryl was
telling us about?
(he thinks about this.
Dismisses it)
No - you couldn't be her.

ZORA
You talking to me or to yourself?

DIEGO
Both. But just say the word and
I'll concentrate on you.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

Zora walks away from Diego (even though they seem interested in each other) and starts toward Hal just as Teddy pushes him inside the dealership.

30 INT. JACKSON MOTORS - SAME - DAY

(X)

A very large woman in her fifties approaches Hal carrying a stack of contracts. ALBERTA. She's tough.

ALBERTA

We got forty new trucks coming in at noon. And Laura's getting take-out lunch. What do you want?

HAL

(thinks)

Uh... three packs of Marlboros... and some cheese.

Alberta nods, disappears into an office. Hal continues toward his, passing a dozen salespeople. He gives them all thumbs up.

31 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Hal enters a large office. He opens the box. We do not see what's in it, but he does.

HAL

Christ!

32 INT. DEALERSHIP - SAME - DAY

Zora moving through dealership towards Hal's office.

33 INT. BATHROOM - SAME - DAY

Now we see for the first time what was in the box. Hal is fighting to get into a glitzy Electric Horseman type cowboy outfit.

Struggling to button the waist, he sucks in his stomach, gets some of the sleeve's beaded fringe caught in the pant's zipper.

HAL

Shit!!!

He catches sight of himself in the mirror. His hair is a mess. He's still unshaven. And his left hand is stuck in his fly.

HAL (CONT'D)

I look like my mother.

Hal kicks the bathroom door open...and comes FACE to FACE with Zora. Her eyes glisten.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

ZORA
I need to talk to you.

HAL
You think you could help me with
this?

He motions with his free hand toward the zipper. Alberta sticks her head in the door, raises her eyebrows. What's he up to now?

ALBERTA
You got Detroit on line four!

HAL
I'll call back.

He tugs hard on the zipper. The fringe RIPS. His hand snaps free. The beaded leather strips dangle captive from the zipper teeth.

HAL (CONT'D)
Listen, Zorro, you're very sweet.

ZORA
(corrects him)
It's Zora.

HAL
Zora. Whatever. But I'm not
really into the whole black-white
thing. And right now I got a
commercial to shoot. But... let's
keep in touch. Ciao.

He heads out the door into the showroom.

ZORA
But I have to talk to you. It's
important! Will you listen to me!

She follows, he's getting away.

34 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME DAY

Hal comes out, is surrounded by the video crew.

TEDDY
We're ready to run a rehearsal!

Rocky, the one-armed trainer, yells:

ROCKY
Boris should meet Hal!

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

TEDDY

Hal, you gotta meet the bear.

A make-up woman begins dusting Hal's face with powder as Teddy takes Hal to the animal trailer.

Zora comes out, tries to follow, is stopped by a P.A.

P.A.

Crew only. We're filming a wild animal.

ZORA

I have to talk to Hal!

ON HAL AND ROCKY... at the trailer. Rocky opens the lift gate. (X)
A big brown bear sticks his head out, GROWLS and stands up. He (X)
is enormous.

ROCKY

Good boy! Good boy, Boris.

HAL

Sweet Jesus.

ROCKY

(to Hal)

You're going to walk him on this chain past the trucks. Just remember, keep your eyes forward and let me work Boris. Don't touch him on the back of the head and no whistling whatsoever. If you must sneeze make signal to me and I will protect you.

HAL

I forgot the first one.

ROCKY

Eyes forward.

HAL

(mutters to self)

Eyes forward, whistling, sneezing, moving.

ROCKY

Boris is the only working male bear in the country to still have all his teeth and claws.

(X)

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
(when this is over he's
going to kill Teddy)
Really?

ROCKY
No sudden moves.

HAL
No sudden moves.

Rocky tosses the bear a hunk of cooked roast. The bear swallows it whole, lumbers out of his cage licking his chops.

DWAYNE
We're ready to go, people!

Hal clutches the chain, starts to walk the bear. Off in the distance in a clearly safe spot Teddy is rolling his super 8 homemovie camera. He waves at Hal, hollers: (X) (X)

TEDDY
(from forty feet away)
It's fabulous. Really fabulous!

HAL
Shut up.

Zora appears from behind a truck. She's ditched the P.A. She tries to get to Hal. A burly, gapped-toothed mountain man stops her. STEW. Another trainer.

STEW
No closer. You see that wire.

He points to a wire strung a foot off the ground.

STEW (O.S.)
It's hot. Keeps Boris back.

Zora walks alongside the wire toward Hal.

ZORA
(yelling to Hal)
I need to talk to you!

HAL
Teddy... handle this!!!

ZORA
No! I need to have a conversation
with you.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (3)

Boris the bear pulls Hal by a row of new pickup trucks. A CAMERA on dolly track PANS with them, the Director rides the dolly, shouting at everyone. It couldn't be more hectic.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED: (3)

DWAYNE
I need a flag set!

ZORA
Do you hear me? I have to tell
you something!

HAL
(yelling at Zora)
Tell me! Whatever it is. Just
say it, dammit! You're driving me
crazy!!

ZORA
(yelling back)
I think... I mean... I found
out...

HAL
What?!!

ZORA
(she sucks in her
breath, blurts it out)
You're my father!

Hal freezes. Boris the bear jerks to a stop on his chain.

HAL
I'm... what?

ZORA
My father.

Hal whips around. A sudden move. A big mistake. The bear
turns, is on top of Hal like an avalanche.

Hal manages to scramble out from under the bear. He runs on all
fours, bear-like, hits the hot wire. It's a major electrical
JOLT.

ROCKY
He made a sudden move! He made a
sudden move!

Hal is thrown straight back four feet into Boris. Rocky the one-
armed trainer jumps into the fray with his good arm. It's a
tangle of Rocky, Boris, Hal.

OFF HAL'S SCREAM...

CUT TO:

35 INT. HAL'S OFFICE DAY

Zora is seated. So is Hal. His jacket is partly shredded. His arm's in a makeshift sling.

HAL
You're black. I'm white. This is
bullshit!

ZORA
I know.
(she stares down at her
folded arms)
I can't believe it either.
It's... so horrible. I mean,
I've always been sort of light,
but God, not this!

HAL
(firm)
It's a mistake.

ZORA
(hopeful)
You never donated sperm?

HAL
I didn't say that.

Hal lights a cigarette. Starts smoking like a fiend.

HAL (CONT')
But for godsakes it was my
understanding it was anonymous!
Otherwise I sure the hell wouldn't
have done it!

ZORA
It was anonymous. I... found the
records.

HAL
What's that supposed to mean? You
found the records?!

ZORA
I took them. From the sperm bank
computer.

HAL
Dammit! Kids have no respect for
privacy!

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

ZORA
(yelling back)
Don't you think a person has the
right to know who her parents
are?!

Hal jumps to his feet.

HAL
No!!! I don't!

Silence. Hal paces. He's now got a limp.

HAL (CONT'D)
Besides, you've got no real proof.
A stolen medical file doesn't add
up to a hill-a-beans in my book!

ZORA
Well we could take blood tests and
find out!

HAL
You're missing the whole point!
Look, suppose I am your-- suppose
we knew I was--
(he can't even say it)
the contributing party--
(he finally looks her in
the eye)
Why are you telling me?! Do you
need a spare kidney? Or some bone
marrow? For chrissakes it was
conception in a plastic cup! You
seem adjusted. Like a good kid.
I got nothing to offer you. Maybe
a deal on a truck or an extended
warranty and financing...but
otherwise....
(he goes to the door,
holds it open)
I'm sorry....

ZORA
Yeah, right.

Zora just manages to keep it together. She gets to her feet and
heads out the door.

OFF HAL...watching her go. He stubs out his cigarette, looks
down at his hand. It's shaking.

36 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME

Zora crying, she runs away.

37 EXT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - DUSK

Establishing. One of many wooden one story houses built in the fifties. Sarah RIDES UP on her bicycle.

38 INT. HOUSE - DUSK

Sarah comes in stripping off her Afrikan Woman garb.

SARAH

I'm home...

Sarah sees the dining table. It's set for two. Good china. Flowers from the garden. She sheds her layers of beaded bracelets. She pulls off her dashiki, removes her heavy bottle cap earrings and her head literally seems to rise.

SARAH

(to herself)

It's a form of torture.

(calls to Zora,
referring to the set
table)

What got into you?

Sarah heads for her bedroom, stepping out of the buba pants.

ZORA (O.S.)

I'm just making dinner.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(she doesn't buy it)

Nothing special going on?

ZORA (V.O.)

I wanted... to make sure you
knew...even though we fight... I
think you're a good mom.

OFF SARAH... staring at their fat old house CAT.

(X)

SARAH

(to the cat)

This is major.

(X)

39 INT. HOUSE - SAME

Zora serves Sarah. She steps back from the table, CRACKS HER KNUCKLES. Sarah grimaces.

SARAH

I hate it when you do that.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

Sorry. ZORA

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

Sarah prods herself on the arm with her fork.

SARAH
(to herself)
Well, I'm awake.
(to Zora, highly
skeptical)
So how many guesses do I get?
James dozed off listening to Judy
Garland on a Walkman and the store
burnt down. You can tell me,
baby. I can take it... They
didn't accept you at M.I.T.
You're pregnant-- What is it?

ZORA
(her voice cracking)
I found my real father. And he's
a mean asshole...

SARAH
You what?

ZORA
I found my father.

SARAH
(in shock)
How could you find your father?!
How could you know such a thing?!!

ZORA
I got the name from the sperm
bank. I went there and took your
file from the computer. He's my
father...
(tears roll down her
cheeks)
Mom, it was so awful.

Sarah rises, goes to her daughter and puts her arm around her.

SARAH
Oh, baby.

ZORA
Mom, you haven't heard the worst
part... he's... he's... he's...
(she chickens out)
...a car salesman--

SARAH
Get outta town!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

ZORA
Yeah...and you're not going to
believe this...but...Mom...
he's...

SARAH
You can tell me. Go ahead, baby.
What could be worse? A car
salesman!

ZORA
A white car salesman.

Sarah literally recoils.

SARAH
What'd you say?

ZORA
He's... white.

Sarah stares at her daughter.

SARAH
White as in... white-white?

ZORA
White-white-white.

SARAH
You mean like a creamy brown. A
brown eggshell. A light tan.

ZORA
No. White. Like white. Like
totally white. Like a white guy.

SARAH
(one last hope)
You mean he's so light he's like
a white guy.

ZORA
He's so light he is a white guy.

SARAH
Dear God!

ZORA
I'm sorry!

SARAH
Dear Lord!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

ZORA
It's not my fault.

SARAH
Help me Jesus!

ZORA
It's bad. I know it's really bad.

SARAH
It's not possible! No way!! I
asked for a black man!!!

ZORA
(hopeful)
Did you see the guy? Was it a
black guy?

SARAH
Of course I didn't see the guy!
I didn't even go there! It was a
guy in a tube they sent to my
gynecologist's office!

ZORA
You should have asked to see him!

Sarah stares at her daughter. It's sinking in.

SARAH
Your hair's always been fine.

ZORA
I know.

SARAH
And you've always been lighter
than me.

ZORA
But Mom, Rissa's real light. And
so is Lacie. And their parents
are both pretty dark! Look at
those kids on the Cosby show! I
think two of them are mixed. You
just never can tell what's going
on...

SARAH
(her version of Pearl
Harbor)
They gave me a white guy.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (5)

ZORA
Is it wrong?

SARAH
It's not wrong because no one will
ever know!

ZORA
Okay.

SARAH
A white guy. A white car
salesman.

ZORA
Even worse. Hal Jackson
(the way he says it)
"Because real Cowboys are strong
and tough...and so are American
trucks."

ON SARAH... realizing who she's talking about.

SARAH
(outraged)
The jerk on the cable channel!
The maniac with the animals.

ZORA
My Dad...

CUT TO:

40 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE UP - Television screen

41 EXT. JACKSON MOTORS - DAY

Hal is in front of a silver convertible. Little Larry the Chimp (X)
is on the hood at his side. They are dressed in identical red (X)
western cowboy outfits. Larry holds a duffel bag in one hand (X)
and a revolver in the other. In the back seat of the car are (X)
stacks of suitcases, fishing rods, coolers, an enormous tent. (X)

HAL (X)
This is Hal Jackson from Jackson (X)
Motors... (X)
(grins a toothy smile to (X)
camera) (X)
HAL (CONT'D) (X)
And this is Larry. (X)
(more) (X)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

(X)

HAL (Cont'd)
(CAMERA PANS over to
Larry. He grins, too)
Larry and I saw "Thelma and
Louise" and we've decided it's
high time we saw America. The old
fashioned way. Behind the wheel
of a top of the line American
vehicle.

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

Hal lifts Larry off the hood and puts him in a kid's carseat
that's on the driver's side. He buckles him in and hops into
the front seat at his side.

(X)
(X)
(X)

HAL (CONT'D)
So come on down to Jackson Motors
and see the specials we got going
on cars and trucks. It could
change your life. Larry's gonna
change mine.

(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)
(X)

Hal lifts his hat, winks.

(X)

(more)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2) (X)

 HAL (CONT'D) (X)
 Larry's my pal. And Hal's your (X)
 pal! Hit it, Larry!!! (X)

We hear the sound of the engine roar and the convertible lurches (X)
out of frame, Larry all the while gripping the wheel, grinning. (X)

As the Jackson Motors jingle comes on so does the SUPER: DO NOT (X)
TRY THIS AT HOME. (X)

 HAL (O.S.) (X)
 No, Larry!!! No! (X)

We HEAR the sound of squealing brakes, gunfire, Hal's wild (X)
screams... (X)

42 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT

Sarah is in bed in her nightgown watching this bizarre
commercial. Her face registers shock and horror. She holds the
clicker mesmerized by this scene from Dante's late night
inferno.

43 INT. ZORA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zora is in her bed with her eyes wide open. Thoughts racing,
unable to sleep, she shifts positions and stares at the wall,
sighing.

44 EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Establishing.

45 INT. HAL'S STUDY - SAME

Hal is seated at a desk. A cigarette dangles from his mouth.
He's immersed in a mess of bills and invoices. He gets up from
his desk, flips off the light, taking his drink with him.

45A INT HAL'S HALLWAY - SAME

Hal pads down the hall. Since the bear episode he's walking
funny. There's just the glow from the tip of his cigarette and
the clinking of the ice in the glass till he HEARS the sounds of
WAVES CRASHING.

45B INT. HAL'S BEDROOM -SAME

Hal enters. The waves are really loud now. And accompanied by
the soothing voice of an Indian woman. It's all coming from the
CD player by the bed.

(CONTINUED)

45B CONTINUED:

SELF HELP VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 ... The light surrounds you as you
 inhale its warm glow into your
 tranquil lungs. You and the light
 gradually become one and radiate
 outwards in majestic charged
 harmony. You are now part of the
 God light, the God energy, at one
 with all things as you drift
 slowly to sleep...

On the bed Stacy is sound asleep. The CD worked. Hal stares at her, taking particular note of her tranquil lungs. Finally, he hits the switch on the CD, cutting off the waves and Indian woman mid-breath. He stares out the dark window at the city beyond. This is his life. His pathetic life.

46 INT. AFRICAN QUEEN - DAY

The following morning. Sarah is behind the counter with the phone book. She cradles the receiver, dials. She's determined to keep it together.

O.S. PHONE VOICE
 Bay Area Cryobank.

Two BUBBLY middle-aged WHITE WOMEN approach the counter.

WHITE WOMAN #1
 We're looking for books on
 weddings.

WHITE WOMAN #2
 Her daughter Cindy's getting
 married!

WHITE WOMAN #1
 Finally!

Sarah rolls her eyes. What are they doing here? She covers the mouthpiece.

SARAH
 I only got books on traditional
African wedding ceremonies.

WHITE WOMAN #1
 That's a start I guess.

Sarah points to a bookcase. Go figure.

O.S. PHONE VOICE
 Hello? May I help you?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

SARAH
(into the receiver)
You can help me. Big time.
Seventeen years ago I purchased
some--

WHITE WOMAN # 1
(calling out to Sarah)
We can't find the wedding books.

SARAH
(into the receiver)
Hold on.
(to the woman)
By the incense. Next to the
voodoo dolls!
(back into the receiver)
Seventeen years ago I bought
sperm. I asked for an African
American. I filled out a form--

WHITE WOMAN #2
Are the books in order of subject
matter or are they by author?

SARAH
(into the receiver)
Hold on.
(getting angry)
Author!

WHITE WOMAN #1
Who's the author of the wedding
book?

SARAH
(she's losing it)
Do you mind?! Can't you see I'm
on the phone here?!
(back into the receiver)
Now, it's possible I didn't get
what I asked for--

O.S. PHONE VOICE
All official complaints must be in
writing.

SARAH
Why are all official complaints in
writing? From where I sit it
doesn't look like you people read
too well!!!!

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

WHITE WOMAN #2
Do the Urban Bush Women t-shirts
come in extra large?

WHITE WOMAN #1
What exactly is an Urban Bush
Woman?

O.S. PHONE VOICE
If there's been a mix-up we'll
proceed after a formal written
complaint.

SARAH
(it's official. She's
lost it)
This isn't a mix-up! It's a mix-
up when you order a cheeseburger
and you get a plain burger. Or
it's a mix-up when the dry
cleaners gives you someone else's
shirt. This is a shitload worse
than that!!!!

WHITE WOMAN #1
I hate it when the dry cleaners
make mistakes.

WHITE WOMAN #2
They say the chemicals in dry
cleaning are very bad for you.

SARAH
(to the women)
Will you two shut up!!!!
(into the receiver)
Hello? Hello?! Are you there?
(dial tone)
Dammit!

Sarah slams down the receiver. Cradles her head in her hands.
This is bad.

WHITE WOMAN #1
Good news! I found a wedding
book!

The two women head to the back of the store. Sarah regains her
composure, picks up the morning newspaper. The first thing she
sees is...

THE AUTOMOTIVE SECTION. There's a FULL PAGE AD for Jackson (X)
Motors. A cartoon character of Hal is riding a zebra.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (3)

ON SARAH...that's it! She tosses the newspaper into the trash, heads OUTSIDE, LOCKING the front door behind her.

As Sarah rides off on her bike we see the two white women inside the store POUNDING to get out.

CUT TO:

47 EXT. OAKLAND - DAY

A busy street in Oakland in the bright light of morning. Zora and Tea Cake zoom by on Zora's scooter.

ON THE SCOOTER... Zora is driving. They have to shout at each other to be heard.

TEA CAKE

I guess it explains why you like all that surfing music!

ZORA

That's not funny!

TEA CAKE

Unfuckin' real. A white dude.

ZORA

I never should have told you!

TEA CAKE

And he said he could get you a deal on a car.

ZORA

(bitter)

Yeah, amazing, huh.

TEA CAKE

Do you think he meant that? There's a real difference between factory sticker and what they charge.

ZORA

Big deal.

TEA CAKE

It is a big deal. You know my parents said they'd get me a car for graduation.

ZORA

Tea Cake, I'm taking you there just to show you the place. Not to get you a deal on a car!!!

48 EXT. JACKSON MOTORS - DAY

(X)

Hal pulls up in his truck, steps out. He's still walking funny from the bear as he moves through the rows of trucks and cars.

HAL
(to salespeople)
How many trucks sold this morning?

On the sales force... a few grumbles. No solid answers. Lots of eyes slide to the ground.

HAL (CONT'D)
The first rule of sales...
enthusiasm.

49 INT. DEALERSHIP - SAME - DAY

As Hal approaches, a hyper man in a suit clears his throat.
JOSE.

JOSE
Toyota cut prices.

HAL
(hiding his surprise)
How much?

JOSE
Five percent across the board.

HAL
That makes me feel great.

JOSE
It didn't make us feel great.

HAL
Look at the big picture. They had
to lower prices. We've got a
better product. All you need is
conviction of belief. I'll bet a
hundred dollars I can nail the
next person to walk in the door.

The group visibly brightens. Action. A Japanese-American gentleman puts down his coffee cup. BOB TAKASHIMA.

BOB
I'm in.

Several others nod.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

HAL
Okay then. Contract signature
from the first person to step
inside--

JOSE
(interrupting)
If not, forget the money and lower
prices.

Hal considers. All eyes are on him.

HAL
Okay, but if I win, we stay open
all week for Moonlight Madness.

Groans. Everyone hates Moonlight Madness.

BOB
Deal.

They stare at the door. Hal lights a cigarette, inhales,
waits...the tension builds. Finally the front door swings open.
They all watch as... SARAH comes inside. Her jewelry jangles
like forty keyrings when she walks.

HAL
(uneasy)
Piece of cake.

Hal stubs out his cigarette, heads across the showroom. As he
extends his hand....

HAL
I'm Hal Jackson... welcome to the
best selection of the finest built
cars and trucks you can find west
of Detroit!

SARAH
(in her most highbrow
manner)
Don't touch me you poor, miserable
excuse for a human being.

HAL
(what the hell?)
Okay. So we're in a recession.
No down payment. So what're you
looking for today?

SARAH
Your head on a stick.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

ON THE SALES FORCE... taking it all in.

JOSE
This is gonna be a very tough
sale.

ON HAL... staring at the woman.

HAL
(slowly)
Is it trucks you have a problem (X)
with or just me?

SARAH
My problem is you!

HAL
(this is bad)
You're from the Animal Rights (X)
group?

SARAH
I'm Zora Mathews' mother. (X)

ON HAL... it's like someone hit him.

50 EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - SAME

Zora and Tea Cake arrive as a bright Impala convertible swings (X)
into the lot. It's got a stereo system that could service a (X)
disco and a custom-painted flame-job. Tea Cake stares wide- (X)
eyed.

TEA CAKE
That's cool. Maybe I'm making a (X)
mistake with a truck.

ZORA
We're making a mistake hanging out
here. Let's go.

TEA CAKE
It's flashy. But flashy can be (X)
good, you know.

The convertible parks and DIEGO steps out. He sees Zora. They (X)
make serious eye contact. Tea Cake bristles. (X)

TEA CAKE
And flashy can also mean you're a (X)
real dickhead. C'mon, let's go. (X)

Diego approaches.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

DIEGO
(smiling at Zora)
You're looking better. A lot
better.

ZORA
This is Tea Cake.

DIEGO
(to Tea Cake)
You Zora's little brother?

TEA CAKE
You wish.

Zora suddenly notices something outside the showroom.

ZORA
Hey, does that look like my
mother's bicycle?

Zora walks toward the showroom leaving Diego and Tea Cake.

TEA CAKE
Why would your mom be here?

ZORA
It's got a big basket...
(horrified)
Oh, shit. There's an Afro-
American sticker on the seat...

CUT TO:

51 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Hal closes the door. They stare each other down. In the
privacy of his office her demeanor completely changes.

SARAH
Let's get a few things straight.
No way you're her father!

HAL
I knew it was some kinda screw up!

SARAH
Just no way! I ordered a black
guy!

HAL
Thank God! So what's the problem?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

SARAH
(changing gears)
So my kid comes in, and you mouth
off she could come back if she
needs a kidney! Shit, who do you
think you are?!

HAL
She caught me off guard! I donate
an ounce of sperm eighteen years
ago and today some kid wants to
call me Daddy!

SARAH
She does not want to call you
Daddy!

HAL
Fooled me!

SARAH
Hey, I know who you are! You're
the piece of shit polluting the
late night airwaves! I wouldn't
like you even if you were Black!
So just...just...stay away from
her!

HAL
Listen lady, she came to me!
Who's following who around? You
keep her away from me.

CUT TO:

52 INT. JACKSON MOTORS - SAME - DAY (X)

Zora and Tea Cake enter. Zora's in a panic, goes straight for
Hal's office. Jose gets to his feet.

JOSE
Watch the radios, everybody.

Tea Cake becomes mesmerized by a silver 4X4. Zora continues (X)
toward Hal's office. PAULA gets to her feet. She's very
attractive, a seasoned pro. Her skirt is slit up the side
exposing a healthy portion of thigh.

PAULA
Can I interest you in a test drive (X)
of a new model car or truck? (X)

TEA CAKE
Sure... anything.

53 INT. DEALERSHIP - SAME

Zora sails past Jose.

JOSE
(smiling at Zora)
Good morning. Can I interest you--

ZORA
No!!

She's running now.

JOSE
0 for 2.

ON ZORA... as she sees Sarah's outline behind the blinds in Hal's window. She opens the door.

54 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME

SARAH
How dare you judge me or my
daughter!!!

Hal and Sarah stop shouting, turn to the door, frozen like deer in headlights.

SARAH
Zora!

Hal hurries to the door. In the showroom all the sales people are staring. He gives them thumbs up, slams the door shut.

ZORA
What are you doing here?!

HAL
Good question!

SARAH
What are you doing here?!

A stand-off. Hal grabs his Marlboros.

HAL
Anyone mind if I have a cigarette?

SARAH
Yes!

ZORA
Mom, it's his office!

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

SARAH
And they're my lungs! Kill
yourself not me.

Sarah takes Hal's cigarette, tosses it in the trash. Hal
retrieves a bottle of scotch from a file cabinet.

HAL
How about a drink? You gotta
problem with that?!

SARAH
Make it two.

Hal pours two coffee cups of Glenlivet, hands one to Sarah. She
downs it. Zora is shocked.

ZORA
Mom!
(to Hal)
She never drinks hard liquor.

HAL
What a shame.

SARAH
(to Zora)
You seem to have a problem keeping
yourself in school these days.

ZORA
I--I--

He re-fills their cups.

HAL
A good education is invaluable.
(to himself)
I can't believe I said that.

SARAH
(to Hal)
She knows that! She's going to
Berkeley next fall.

HAL
I wanted to go to Berkeley.

ZORA
(to Hal)
I got into M.I.T. That's my first
choice.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
(to Hal)
She doesn't really want to go all
the way to Boston.

ZORA
(to Hal)
Yes I do really want to go all the
way to Boston!

SARAH
(to Hal)
We could never afford that kind of
tuition anyway!

ZORA
(to Hal)
My high school science teacher
helped me apply for scholarships.

SARAH
(to Hal)
She's always winning those kinds
of things.

ZORA
Mom!

SARAH
Well it's true.

ZORA
Two seconds ago you didn't want me
to go to Boston. Now I'm winning
all kinds of awards!

SARAH
I still don't want you to go
there! You can use all the awards
you'll win at Berkeley!!!

HAL
I wanted to go to Berkeley.

Sarah turns on him.

SARAH
Who asked you?!

55 INT. SHOWROOM - SAME

Tea Cake and Paula at her desk, filling out what seems to be an
application to buy a new truck.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

PAULA
Are you working now?

TEA CAKE
Oh yes.

PAULA
May I ask where you work?

TEA CAKE
Uh... At a bank.

PAULA
And what department would that be?

TEA CAKE
Um... deposits...

PAULA
Deposits and withdrawals?

TEA CAKE
No withdrawals. Just deposits.

CUT TO:

56 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME

Sarah and Zora are still going at it.

ZORA
Mom, we can talk about college at home!

HAL
Good idea.

SARAH
Will you butt out of this?!

ZORA
We're in his office!

SARAH
I know we're in his office. Look, he's got bowling trophies. Pictures of race cars! Shag carpeting! Of course we're in his office.

HAL
You have a problem with my office?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

ZORA
Sorry. She hates shag carpeting.
It's not you.

SARAH
Don't you go saying you're sorry!
It is him!

HAL
Hey, she'll say whatever she
wants! She's got rights too.

ON ZORA...hiding a smile. He stood up for her.

SARAH
Will you shut up and stay outta
this!!!

HAL
I'd love to stay out of this. But
you're in my office!

SARAH
I know that!

ZORA
Mom, we should just go.

SARAH
Not till we've made our point!

HAL
What is your point?

SARAH
We don't want you. You don't want
us. We want that clear. You're
not the father. And even if you
were we'd have nothing to do with
you.

Hal looks at Zora, shrugs.

HAL
She doesn't look a thing like me.

SARAH
Thank God!

Hal extends his arms, CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES. A nervous habit.

ON SARAH...holy shit. Zora stares down at her own hands. She
has the overwhelming desire to crack her knuckles.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
(to Zora)
Don't do it.
(to Hal)
We'll leave now.

Sarah starts for the door, feels suddenly like she's swimming.
She drops into the closest chair.

ZORA
Mom!

SARAH
Gimme a second.

Sarah shuts her eyes. The room is spinning. Hal puts his hand on her shoulder. She opens her eyes, stares at him. He quickly withdraws his hand. They both immediately look away.

HAL
Are you okay?

SARAH
All the automotive products make
me queasy.

ZORA
She's fine.

Zora helps her mother to her feet.

HAL
Where did you park?

SARAH
On the sidewalk.

HAL
(appreciative)
I do that too.

ZORA
She rode her bicycle.

57 INT. SHOWROOM - SAME

Hal, Sarah and Zora step into the showroom. Everyone is waiting. What happened?

HAL
We're cutting prices.

ON THE SALESFORCE...wow.

58 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME

Tea Cake and Paula whizz past in a new silver 4X4. Tea Cake (X)
shouts:

TEA CAKE
I think I bought a truck!

ZORA
What'd he say?

Sarah struggles to get on her bicycle.

SARAH
Are you coming?

ZORA
I gotta wait for Tea Cake.

HAL
What is that? Is that a name?

ZORA
His name's Thomas Craig. T.C.

SARAH
She calls him Tea Cake. You
wouldn't get it.

HAL
You're right. I don't.

Sarah looks like she's getting on a feisty horse, not a parked
bicycle. She keeps trying to get her leg over the bicycle bar.

HAL (CONT'D)
Let me put your bike in the truck.
Drive you where you're going.

SARAH
I told you I'm fine. Good-bye.

ON HAL AND ZORA as Sarah manages to pedal. She starts across
the lot. They both watch.

HAL
You caught me by surprise
yesterday...I apologize if I hurt
you.

ZORA
Forget it. Sorry about my Mom
showing up.

HAL
No problem.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

She finally looks at him, manages a small smile.

ZORA

Bye.

HAL

Good-bye.

Zora goes to her scooter. Hal keeps his eye on Sarah. She's dodging trucks like an alpine skier.

At the entrance to the parking lot is a LIFESIZE cardboard cut-out of HAL, in his buckskin outfit, his hand raised high in greeting.

ON SARAH...heading right for cardboard Hal. She's muttering to herself, trying to keep it together.

ON HAL...what the hell is she up to now?

ON SARAH...as she runs RIGHT OVER cardboard Hal. Flattens him. And then crashes into a parked car.

CUT TO:

59 INT. HAL'S TRUCK - DAY

Hal is driving, Sarah is in the passenger seat. Her bicycle is in the back of the pick-up.

HAL

You did it on purpose.

SARAH

I did not.

HAL

You were aiming for me.

SARAH

Was not.

He looks at her. Her African crown is on sideways. Her bracelets are all bent out of shape. She looks funny. He can't help himself, he smiles.

HAL

Do you have a dance troupe or something?

SARAH

I own a store.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

HAL
What do you sell?

SARAH
Books. Clothing. Art. All to
raise Black consciousness.

HAL
Oh-kay.

SARAH
You got a problem with that?

HAL
Everybody's got an angle. Sounds
good to me.

SARAH
It's not an angle! It's an asset
to the community.

The car phone rings. Hal pushes a button.

HAL
Ahoy. You're on the line.

STACY (V.O.)
Hello bunny butt...

He tries to grab the phone off the hook. It's not easy.

HAL
Hang on, doll. One sec.

STACY (V.O.)
Love puppet, this morning was
great. I mean, I never thought
I'd like that position.

SARAH
(interrupts)
What -- all fours?

STACY (V.O.)
Who is that?

Finally, Hal gets the phone off the hook and to his ear.

HAL
Hey, doll - what's up? No, no
one... I'm alone. Who would be
with me?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
Exactly.

HAL
Look babe, I gotta go. I'll see
you later... sure, sure-- you too.
What babe? I'm heading into a
tunnel...It's cutting out, babe...
I gotta go.

He replaces the receiver.

SARAH
Nice going bubble butt.

HAL
Bunny butt.

SARAH
Whatever.

60 EXT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Hal's truck drives up, he hops out and starts taking Sarah's
bike out of the back. Sarah gets out and slams the door.

SARAH
Well, thanks for the lift.

HAL
You mind if I come in and drain
the lizard?

SARAH
You may come in and use the
bathroom if you wish, yes.

Hal follows to the front of the bookstore carrying the bike.

61 INT. BOOKSTORE - SAME

Sarah opens the door, is shocked to find the two white WOMEN
locked inside. They're covered with African paraphernalia.

WHITE WOMAN #1
You locked us in!

WHITE WOMAN #2
We were going to call 911 but then
we started reading books.

WHITE WOMAN #1
I'll take these. They're
fascinating.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

She holds an enormous stack of books.

WHITE WOMAN #2
And I'll take these.
(she lowers her voice)
And I'm sorry, dear. I really had
no idea how many awful things we'd
done.

HAL
Helluva idea! Lock in customers
and they buy stuff. Do you think
it would work with cars?

Sarah ignores him, begins ringing up the sales. Hal wanders
down the aisles, looking at the books.

HAL (CONT'D)
Woa - Book City! You read all
these?

SARAH
The bathroom is up the stairs and
on the right.

HAL
Wow, Black authors up the wazoo.
I read Black authors. The Wilt
Chamberlain book changed my life.
Well wait, maybe I don't have to
go anymore.
(he checks himself)
No, no. There's that little
silvery feeling. Call of the
wild.

He goes down the aisle humming "Wild Thing."

SARAH
(to herself as the women
exit)
He's never going to leave. He and
his crazy lizard are staying
forever. Oh God.

62 INT. UPSTAIRS AFRICAN QUEEN ADJACENT TO BATHROOM - SAME

Hear: the sound of a toilet flushing. Hal comes out of the
bathroom, stops when he sees a bulletin board, stares at all the
memorabilia.

There's a newspaper clipping: "JUNIOR WINS STATE SCIENCE AWARD"
with a photo of Zora. Snapshots of Sarah and Zora.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

One section of the board is devoted to Sarah's late husband.
Hal takes it all in.

HAL
(calling down to Sarah)
Is this the guy?

He stares at a photo of a young Black man. He has a beard, is
in his twenties.

SARAH (V.O.)
Is who what guy?

HAL
The guy! The guy that was
supposed to be Zora's father but
isn't because, well...

Sarah looks up at the balcony. What the hell's he doing now?

SARAH
(calling up to him)
Yes. That was my husband,
Charles...Charlie.

HAL
Looks nice. Was he nice?

SARAH
Yes, he was nice.

HAL
So he should've been the father.
(she nods)
And you never remarried.

SARAH
No point.

HAL
I'm divorced. Twice. I live with
someone right now. Never had any
children.
(looks back at the
photos)
Zora seems like a good kid.

SARAH
She's an amazing kid. My life
would've been shit without her.
Family's the best way to go.

HAL
I live to... enjoy myself.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

Sarah starts back to the front of the store.

HAL (CON'T)
Funny thing, sperm.

OFF HAL.. staring at a photo of Zora.

63 thru OMITTED

65
66 INT. BOOKSTORE - SAME

Sarah is back at the cash register. Hal is coming to the front of the store, taking his time, looking at everything. He sees a t-shirt on the wall. Reads it.

HAL
"Jesus was a Black man." Hey, at least you have a point of view. Having a half-white kid must be a real bumner.

SARAH
Fuck you!

HAL
Apparently we already did that.

SARAH
Get out!

They're at it again.

HAL
You know, for being such a free spirit you're surprisingly uptight.

SARAH
And you, not surprisingly, are a pain in the ass!

HAL
Hey, it turns out I got a daughter I never knew about.

SARAH
You don't have a daughter! I have a daughter. You have a dealership! We agreed to that.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

HAL
Fine by me.
(this should get her)
But you sure it's fine with her?
She's the one who hunted me down.
Maybe she wants to see me.

SARAH
Bullshit!

HAL
I was always good in math and
science! Maybe I had something to
do with that part.

SARAH
You had nothing to do with
nothing. You hear me!

HAL
I hear you, your highness.

SARAH
I can't talk to you anymore!

HAL
Don't worry. I'm outta here.

He goes to the door, smiles a big fake smile.

HAL (CONT'D)
Have a nice life.

SARAH
I will.

ON HAL... that was kinda fun.

ON SARAH... watching him go.

CUT TO:

A PAIR OF REEBOKS... moving up and down onto foam steps to the
rhythm of loud, pulsating MUSIC. We are:

67 INT. BERKELEY HEALTH CLUB - NIGHT

Stacy is leading a Step Class. It's filled with young, hard
bodies, all soaked with sweat.

Stacy wears a Madonna headset, speaks into the side microphone:

STACY
Side to side! Keep it high!

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

The class follows like out-of-control wind-up dolls.

ALONGSIDE ONE WALL... Hal is waiting. He glances at his watch, makes a face. It hurts to even watch.

The music abruptly ENDS. The class applauds. Stacy jogs to Hal.

STACY (CONT'D)
Hey... you have those bags under
your eyes again. Are you okay?

HAL
Cut off my head and count the
rings.

A MAN passes, gives Stacy a swat on the ass.

MAN
Burn of a class. Total burn.

Stacy giggles, pulls the Man toward Hal. He's 25, muscle-bound, with a ponytail the width of a licorice whip.

STACY
Hal, this is Bruce. The new
weight man.

Bruce extends a hand. They vice grip each other.

STACY (CONT'D)
Hal sells cars. Has his own
dealership.

BRUCE (MAN)
Boss. I'm checkin' out Hondas.

HAL
American cars.

BRUCE
(Mr. Condensation)
Bummer.
(swats Stacy on the butt
again)
Gotta blow.

He struts off. Stacy gathers her exercise bag and throws on some sweats over her incredibly tight lycra outfit.

She and Hal head for the exit.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
(drenched in sarcasm)
What an addition to the club.

STACY
(totally sincere)
I'll say!

Hal stares at her. Did she always look this young?

STACY (CONT'D)
You're so... moody. Are you
thinking of something?

HAL
Do you think Jesus was a Black
man?

Hal and Stacy exit the gym.

68 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

STACY
Is that a trick question?

HAL
Sort of. Forget it. Stacy, how
long have we been together?

Hal and Stacy arrive at his truck.

STACY
Four months.

HAL
Wow. That long.

Stacy climbs into the truck.

69 INT. HAL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

STACY
Are you getting ready for the next
step?

Hal climbs into the truck.

HAL
Uh...

As she settles into the truck, Stacy automatically sweeps some
beer cans off the seat and onto the floor where they join the
rest of the debris.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

STACY
I've got my heart set on a
Terrier. I know you want a Lab,
but you're not the only person in
this relationship and it would be
unfair if we didn't at least look
at a few Terriers! They're so
smart!

She kisses his cheek again and they drive off.

CUT TO:

70 INT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sarah is on her bedroom phone.

SARAH
(into the receiver)
Well if the Better Business Bureau
doesn't get involved in these
kinds of things then I don't know
who does!

Sarah turns around... Zora's in the hallway listening.

SARAH (CON'T)
(lowering her voice)
You haven't heard the last of
this!
(she hangs up the phone,
smiles at Zora)
You need something, baby?

ZORA
Do you think he's my father?

SARAH
Who?

ZORA
Come on, Mom.

ON SARAH...dammit.

SARAH
At most he was a fluid! A
motivated swimmer. Nothing more!

ZORA
I wish I coulda asked him a few
things.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

SARAH
Ask him what? He doesn't know
anything. You gotta forget about
him! It's over.

ZORA
I know....

SARAH
I don't want to talk about it. He
just causes trouble.

ZORA
Okay.

ON ZORA... she can't stop herself.

ZORA
Mom, just one more thing...

SARAH
Please.

ZORA
When you were alone with him...
did he say anything about me?

ON SARAH... shit. Why does she so desperately want his
approval?

SARAH
He said that you seemed very
smart...and confident...and that
you were beautiful.

ZORA
(unable to hide her
smile)
Really?

SARAH
Yeah.

ZORA
That's cool. It's not true but
it's cool.

Zora picks up a sleeping cat off the bureau, holds him happily
in her arms.

OFF SARAH... watching. She's got a scowl on her face.

CUT TO:

71 INT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hal is watching TV. In the background, wearing headphones, is Stacy on a Nordic Track.

Hal flips back and forth between an emotional family scene in a classic movie and the commercial assembled from his bear incident. It's make up of the shakey super 8 footage Teddy shot. We see the bear lunge at Hal, hear the announcer:

TV ANNOUNCER (X)
So come on down to Jackson Motors (X)
and wrestle the best deal you can (X)
out of Hal Jackson... (X)

Hal takes a sip of his beer, reaches into his pocket, unfolds something. He looks at it, his face reflecting something we haven't quite seen before.

IN HIS HANDS...he's holding the photo of Zora from the store. He took it.

CUT TO:

72 INT. THE AFRICAN QUEEN - DAY

It's Saturday. Zora is working behind the front counter. A few customers mill around. James is in attendance.

Tea Cake enters.

TEA CAKE
I got a call from the sperm bank.

JAMES
(as he passes by)
You sure that was for you?

ZORA
Sorry.

JAMES
You're sorry.

TEA CAKE
No. It's good. They ran my tests. The count. Grade. How fast they swim...

JAMES
(to a customer)
I went out with a Count once. But it had to end.

TEA CAKE (CONT'D)
They've asked me back. They were impressed.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

Really? ZORA

TEA CAKE
Don't look so shocked. I do well
on tests. You know that.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

ZORA

I guess it is good news.

TEA CAKE

Forty dollars a pop. I told my
parents I'm selling seeds door-to-
door. To explain the new funds.
They bought it.

ZORA

You know they'll use your sperm to
impregnate women.

JAMES

What a waste!

ZORA

Have you thought about that? You
might be fathering kids.

TEA CAKE

No one seems too interested in
doing it with me the old fashioned
way...

ZORA

What if one of those children came
to you twenty years from now...
what would you say?

TEA CAKE

It would depend on what they
wanted.

ZORA

That's it?

TEA CAKE

What would we have in common?
They'd know by then about the
hives from clam dip. Hopefully
someone good will have raised
them.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED: (2)

ZORA

That's what a parent really is,
right? The one who does the
growing up stuff...

TEA CAKE

Yeah... maybe... I don't know...
I'd hope the kid had someone who
really loved him. Shit, I hope
twenty years from now I have
someone who really loves me...
Maybe I'll be worse off than the
pushy kid.

ON ZORA...as it sinks in.

ZORA

You're so smart...

TEA CAKE

(hopeful)

About what?

ZORA

He needs me. Maybe more than I
need him.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. HAL JACKSON'S DEALERSHIP - DAY

Balloon arches are in front of all the entrances. Enormous "10%
REBATE" banners flutter in the breeze.

The camera crew is back. Hal, dressed in yet another western
outfit, is on top of an elephant under a "10% REBATE" banner.
Teddy is at the elephant's feet. Teddy is looking up at
something.

TEDDY

You have to talk to me... we work
together.

HAL

(to someone else)

Dwayne, tell Teddy I said Barnyard
and I got Jungle Cruise. So---

DWAYNE

(interrupts)

I'll tell him after the rehearsal.
We need a line up.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

TEDDY
(to Dwayne)
Tiny is the most obedient elephant
in North America! He's nothing
like the bear. It's all sound
signals. Tell him.

DWAYNE
You tell him. I need a rehearsal,
people...

CUT TO:

74 INT. THE AFRICAN QUEEN - SAME

Only Tea Cake is at the counter. Sarah comes to the front.

SARAH
Where's Zora?

TEA CAKE
Just left.

SARAH
Getting lunch?

TEA CAKE
Sort of.

SARAH
Where'd she go?
(he doesn't answer,
pretends to read a
book)
Tea Cake, where is she?
(still nothing)
You'd better open your mouth
before I jump over the counter and
rip out your vocal cords!!

TEA CAKE
She went to the car dealership...

ON SARAH... she's REALLY mad now.

SARAH
She what?!

CUT TO:

75 EXT. HAL JACKSON'S DEALERSHIP - SAME DAY

Zora pulls up on her scooter, watches the commercial shoot from
a distance. She suddenly hears:

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

VOICE

You need a smog check?

She turns around... sees Diego. The hunk mechanic.

ZORA

Is that what you do here? Smog checks.

DIEGO

(flirting)

Well, this is the Service Department. I do all sorts of things.

ZORA

What do you think of Hal Jackson?

DIEGO

Anyone who pays overtime is okay by me. Trying to get a sales job?

ZORA

No. I'm still in school.
(what the hell)
High school. Senior year.

DIEGO

Not yet street legal?

ZORA

Sure I am. I think.

They eye each other.

We could be a couple.

76 EXT. DEALERSHIP

CLOSE ON ZORA. She is shaking. She is afraid of a piece of machinery.

At his side, Diego is shaking. He is afraid of a film school. He is afraid of a launch. He is afraid of a golf match.

76 CONTINUED:

ON DWAYNE... with his back to the whole thing, staring into a (X)
video monitor.

DWAYNE
Action, Jackson!

(X)

Hal removes peanuts from a pouch.. The elephant's trunk swings
up, vacuums them from his hand.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL

So come on out to Jackson Motors!
Ten percent back means ten percent
more peanuts in your pocket.
Isn't that right, Tiny? Or did
you forget?

OFF SCREEN... we hear Dwayne's command, it's like an operating (X)
room:

DWAYNE (O.S.)

(X)

Cue Tiny.

(X)

P.A. (O.S.)

Cueing Tiny.

(X)

We HEAR another bell. The elephant rears up on two legs. Hal
holds on for dear life, waves to camera.

DWAYNE

Cut! Re-set!

ON THE P.A. and the trainer...

P.A.

Resetting Tiny!

The trainer rings his bell again and the elephant comes back
down on four feet.

Hal, we're losing you when you
rears up!

You are... of...
That's...
...
...
Hal pushes...
suddenly...

76 CONTINUED: (3)

TEDDY
I think we're ready to roll again.

HAL
Now!

Teddy lights a Marlboro, hands it up to Hal.

DWAYNE
Let's make one!

Hal takes a draw on the cigarette, eyes Zora.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
God, she's like the swamp thing.
She keeps returning.

DWAYNE
We're rolling.

ON HAL... still holding the cigarette. He's going to hand it
when he suddenly sees something else.

HAL
Oh Geez, it's the mother of the
swamp thing!

IN THE DISTANCE... Sarah charges toward the dealership on her
bicycle.

ON THE CAMERA CREW...

DWAYNE
We're rolling!!! And... Action,
Hal!

ON HAL... now he's flustered. He never replenished his peanut
supply. He cups the cigarette in his hand, reads the
teleprompter:

HAL
This is Hal Jackson from Jackson (X)
Motors inviting you to come on (X)
down and see the circus of deals
we've got going on the latest (X)
model cars and trucks...

The elephant swings his trunk for his peanuts. Hal realizes he
doesn't have anything. The elephant gets hold of the cigarette,
wraps his trunk around it.

HAL (CONT'D)
So come on out to Jackson Motors! (X)
Ten percent back means a ten
percent greater supply of peanuts
in your pocket. Isn't that right,
Tiny? Or did you forget?

ON THE ELEPHANT... as he puts the smoldering cigarette into his
mouth, ROARS with pain.

ON SARAH... approaching. She rings her bicycle bell to clear a
path. The bell sounds exactly like the one the elephant trainer
uses.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (3)

ON THE ELEPHANT... furious over his burnt tongue. He's confused...

ON SARAH... ringing her bell again.

ON THE ELEPHANT... he turns his wrinkled head toward the sound. Sarah's bicycle bell registers. His ears raise up into enormous gray flags and he takes off on a run.

ON HAL... on top of the elephant. It's like he's riding a bucking cement truck. He grips the elephant's massive neck as the elephant charges straight through the camera crew toward Sarah.

ON SARAH... pedaling across the car lot to Zora, unknowingly ringing her bike bell.

ON THE ANIMAL TRAINER... ringing his bell. Screaming commands. They're all being ignored.

ON THE CREW... both horrified and delighted.

TEDDY
Keep rolling! This is great
stuff!

ON HAL AND THE ELEPHANT... stampeding down the rows of trucks, (X) heading for Sarah's bicycle bell.

ON SARAH... What's going on? It's chaos. People are running everywhere, screaming, clamoring on top of cars and trucks. Sarah finally looks over her shoulder and sees...

HAL ATOP THE ELEPHANT... bearing down on her.

SARAH
What the hell?!!!!

ON SARAH... looking back. They're still behind her! She heads for the street, ringing the bell like a maniac as she crosses the sidewalk and...

77 EXT. BERKELEY STREET - DAY

... sails out into traffic.

Behind her in a stampede are Hal on the elephant followed by the camera crew, a STILL PHOTOGRAPHER and a crowd of onlookers.

Traffic comes to a SCREECHING stop as Sarah, Hal and the elephant cross four lanes of traffic, head down the street.

ON SARAH... in the center of the boulevard. She's now going against traffic. Cars peel off, in both directions.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

She looks over her shoulder again, sees:

HAL AND THE ELEPHANT... they're gaining on her.

Sarah looks ahead... sees MERRIT LAKE in the distance. She pedals through the intersection, hops the curb, and sails down a grassy incline toward the lake.

Behind her, Hal and the elephant stay right on track.

78 EXT. LAKE MERRIT - DAY

ON THE LAKE... ducks go flying. Sarah jumps off the bike at the last minute. Mothers grab their children as Sarah's bike heads straight for the water.

The elephant follows the bicycle and plunges into the cold water disappearing into the murk.

ON THE LAKE... still. No sign of Hal or the elephant.

ON WOMAN... watching wide-eyed with her friend.

WOMAN

This is one of the signs. The end
of the world is coming.

Finally, there's a blast of water from the elephant's trunk. Tiny surfaces, followed seconds later by Hal who swims in his western outfit to shore. The Still Photographer snaps a photo.

ON THE SHORELINE... the video camera crew, tape still rolling, bursts into applause.

ON ZORA... running down the grassy incline to Sarah.

ZORA

Mom!

SARAH

(grabs Zora)

Thank you Jesus I'm alive! I'm
alive! I'm so lucky to be alive.

ZORA

So is he.

ON HAL... as he emerges onto the shoreline. He looks like Wiley Coyote after an episode with the Road Runner.

Every step is a squish-squash of soaked leather.

Teddy is jumping up and down on the shoreline.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

TEDDY
Wait till you see this footage!!!
Two TV stations just showed up.
I'll bet they run it as a news
story!

Hal pushes past him, goes straight to Sarah and Zora.

ON SARAH AND ZORA

ZORA
Uh-oh.

SARAH
(alarmed)
What? What?

ZORA
(calling out to Hal)
Are you alright?

HAL
(livid)
Do I look alright?!

Hal squish-squashes to Sarah holding the bike with the little
bell and the handlebars.

SARAH
What are you doing?!

HAL
The elephant was following the
bell! Your bell! This bell!!!

He's gone berserk. He jerks the bell off the bike and stomps
the bell into the ground.

SARAH
(weak)
He was?

ZORA
Oh shit.

HAL
He was!!!!

ON SARAH... she stares down at the lake. The trainer is ringing
a bell trying to get Tiny out of the water. It makes sense now.

SARAH
My bell. He was following my
bell...

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED: (2)

She looks at Hal. He's a soaking mess. She starts to laugh. Tries to stop. Can't.

ZORA
(sincerely, to Hal)
When you crossed the street, I
thought for sure the log truck was
going to get you.

HAL
(sarcastically)
That was close, wasn't it.

SARAH
(a mass of laughter)
My bell...

HAL
It isn't funny!

ZORA
Mom. Really. It isn't very
funny.

SARAH
(laughing)
I... know. It's not funny. It's
serious. Very serious.

ON HAL... he looks anything but serious. He's a dripping mess.

ZORA
Mom! Please!!

SARAH
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

Hal squish-squashes across to the dealership.

OFF SARAH AND ZORA... in the park watching Hal squish-squash
into the distance. Sarah's still laughing.

CUT TO:

79 INT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hal is stretched out on the kitchen table like an enormous side
of beef. Stacy is giving him a rub-down, sort-of. She has a
half dozen body oils, a water spritzer, a rolling pin.

HAL
Take my word for it, it was a
disaster! A goddamn disaster.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

STACY

I hear elephants can be very violent. Plus, they're pregnant for two years. Two years, can you believe that? And then the elephant baby comes out with this really bristly hair.

HAL

Stacy, my whole business could be going down the toilet and you want to talk about pregnant elephants....

STACY

Aw, monkey man, you're filled with stress. Everywhere. There's a point right here on your hand. I think. I'm going to squeeze it. Close your eyes. Isn't that better?

Hal groans. Not a good groan.

STACY

You know, if you did lose your business you could take the time to explore your artistic side. I've always thought you had hands of someone who could be a surgeon, or play the violin or something.

HAL

Stacy...

STACY

I know what you're going to say - no one listens to the violin anymore. But that's just it- you could make them by doing it in a whole new way. More bluesy. Rap even.

(she realizes she may be talking too loudly)

Oh shhh... Your head hurts? Want me to sing or something?

HAL

No.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

STACY

It's no trouble, really. My (X)
mother used to do it when I was (X)
sick and it fixed me right up. (X)
Music can be so healing. Hey! (X)
Maybe you could do a music healing (X)
workshop. (X)

(sings) (X)

Dr. Song, Dr. Long. Nice song (X)
make you better, Hum along. Warm (X)
chords surround you. Surround you (X)
and make you strong. 'Cause you (X)
sit here singing long nice song. (X)

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

OFF HAL...he's living in a New Age nightmare.

DISSOLVE TO:

80 OMITTED (X)

81 OMITTED (X)

82 INT. HAL'S TRUCK - DAY (X)

CLOSE ON...a newspaper. There's a large photo of Hal and the elephant in the lake. Moving up off the paper to Hal. He's driving up to the dealership.

HAL'S P.O.V...Approaching the dealership, cars and trucks seem to be leaving the lot in droves.

83 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME

Hal gets out of the truck, grabs Paula.

HAL
What's going on? Are they
repossessing everything?

PAULA
Boss, no one's repossessing
anything. Everything's selling!

HAL
What is this?

All during this, various sales people, including Jose, come up to Hal for him to sign final deals, down-payment deals, all kinds of deals. People are everywhere, like locusts.

JOSE
It's like you always say. We
gotta better product! If we could
just get people in the door. It
was the elephant thing. You and
the lady were on every news
broadcast in the city! We're a
hit.

Hal keeps moving toward his office. Several people come up and take his picture.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

HUSBAND (X)
Where's the lady? (X)

WIFE (X)
Where's Tiny? (X)

HAL
Who?
(remembers)
Oh yeah...
(shrugs)
Drowned, I guess.

A child starts to cry.

HAL
(quickly)
I'm kidding! I'm kidding!

84 OMITTED

85 INT. AFRICAN QUEEN - SAME

Sarah is behind the counter. Her store is bustling. James is with a group of customers. He points at Sarah.

JAMES
Yeah, that's her. Nope, none of it was staged.

CUSTOMER
It was incredible when they hit the lake.

JAMES
Well, they almost hit her. That's why it's interesting I think.

AT THE COUNTER...the phone rings.

SARAH
(into the receiver)
African Queen.

ON HAL...behind his desk. Innercut at will.

HAL
It's the Truck King.

ON SARAH...surprised. She suppresses a laugh.

SARAH
Why're you calling?

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

 HAL
About the elephant...

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED:

SARAH

Yeah.

HAL

I've seen the footage a few times now...

SARAH

Everybody within five hundred miles has seen the footage a few times.

HAL

They did a big media buy. But anyway, about the elephant...

SARAH

Yeah.

HAL

You came awfully close to getting stomped... I guess what I wanted to say is it wasn't all your fault.

SARAH

Really.

A life-sized cut-out of Sarah being chased by the elephant goes by Hal's office window. Hal bangs on the window, motions where to put it.

HAL

And, well, sales here have been great. A few people even came in to meet you.

SARAH

Business is good here, too. I'm not sure it's related.

Two customers approach.

CUSTOMER #1

You're the elephant lady?

Sarah nods.

CUSTOMER #2

Can I have your autograph?

SARAH

(to Hal)

I gotta go.

(CONTINUED)

85 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
So no hard feelings?

SARAH
No hard feelings...

ON SARAH...hanging up the phone. She starts to laugh again.

86 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME

ON HAL... He's smiling. There's a knock on the door. He looks up. Jose is waiting.

JOSE
Got another one.

Hal motions for him to come in. Jose hands Hal a sheet of paper.

HAL
Bad zip code. No job security.
Forget it.

JOSE
Thought so. But I told them I'd
give it a shot.

Hal looks out the glass partition.

HAL
Where are they?

JOSE
The family. With the kids by the
4 X 4.

ON THE CROWDED FLOOR... on a Black family. Three kids. The father holds the smallest on his shoulders. There's a girl in her teens sitting on the liftgate.

ON HAL... feeling bad.

HAL
Take it.

JOSE
What?

HAL
But tell 'em if they're late on
the payments they'll find me
personally at their front door!

Jose scoops up the papers, almost runs out.

(CONTINUED)

86 CONTINUED:

JOSE
Yessir.

OFF HAL... staring at the family as Jose breaks the news. They look thrilled.

87 OMITTED

88 EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - DAY TO DUSK

We see a TIME LAPSE shot of the car lot, people looking, trucks being purchased and driven away. At the end of the shot it's dusk. There are three cars left parked on the street and one truck parked. The truck is Hal's.

The enormous "Hal Jackson Dealership" sign glows in the semi-darkness. Suddenly it flickers off.

89 INT. DEALERSHIP - SAME NIGHT

They're locking up. As Hal is on the phone, several salesmen knock on the window and wave goodnight, giving him the thumbs up sign, etc.

HAL
(into phone)
What time are you done?

90 INT. BERKELEY HEALTH CLUB - NIGHT

Stacy is on the phone. Bruce is giving her a backrub...

STACY
(into receiver)
I teach til ten. You have dinner plans, don't you?

91 INT. DEALERSHIP - HAL'S OFFICE - SAME

HAL
Sure, sure. We're all going out to celebrate. We had an unbelievable day. Sold everything on the lot. So I'll see you later...

Hal sticks his head in Alberta's office. She's putting on her coat.

HAL
(to Alberta)
Get outta here. It's late.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

ALBERTA
I'm going.

HAL
Perfect night for a celebration,
huh? What a day!

ALBERTA
Sure was. 'Night.

HAL
'Night.

She goes. Jose walks by, dressed to go.

JOSE
Wooo! They wiped us out, huh man?

HAL
Stripped clean. Gonna celebrate?

JOSE
Sort of. Tonight's my poker
night. You got plans?

HAL
Sure, sure, I'm covered. See you
tomorrow, man.

Everyone is gone. Hal is alone. He sighs, turns off a light,
grabs his jacket and moves to his truck.

92 INT. HAL'S TRUCK - DUSK- CONT. ACTION

Hal opens the door and swings into the seat.

93 INT. HAL'S TRUCK - NIGHT

As it drives through town. Hal stops for a red light, stares
out at the darkening skyline.

The light changes. Hal doesn't move. Horns HONK. He steps on
the gas, picks up car phone, punches numbers. We HEAR:

ON THE MOBILE PHONE
Operator, what city?

CUT TO:

94 EXT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Establishing.

95 INT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - SAME

Tea Cake is sitting with his arms folded on the couch, miffed. Sarah is crossing from the bedroom into the kitchen.

TEA CAKE

Mrs. Mathews, what do you actually know about this guy? You're just going to let Zora go out with a perfect stranger? I mean, shouldn't you have him checked out or something?

SARAH

Are you still here? Please go home, Tea Cake. Have you no dignity?

The doorbell rings. Zora comes out of her room, finishing her makeup. As she heads for the front door, she passes Tea Cake. He looks shocked.

TEA CAKE

Agh! It's worse than I thought.

SARAH (V.O)

(calls from kitchen)
What is?

Tea Cake crosses to the kitchen and brings Sarah into the living room.

TEA CAKE

Mrs. Mathews you can't let her wear that. He'll see her hogans. The outline of her entire hogans.

ZORA

(to Sarah)
Mama, get him outta here before I kill him.

TEA CAKE

Okay, okay, I'm outta here! You wanna flaunt your fun bags, it's okay by me. Just don't say I didn't warn you when it leads to big trouble.

He opens the front door. Hal is standing there with gifts.

TEA CAKE

Uh oh, white man at the front door. Come on in Mr. J. Welcome to the Cosby Show - you're our first guest tonight.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

HAL
Am I interrupting something?

ZORA
No. How you doing?

HAL
Okay. I brought you and your mom something.

SARAH
Why?

ZORA
Mom!

HAL
(honestly)
I'm not sure.

Hal and Sarah look at each other. Can't help but smile. It feels strange. He holds out a bag.

HAL
Here...

She takes the sack, opens it to find... a bicycle helmet and a new bell.

SARAH
I'm not good at being nice about receiving a gift, but that doesn't mean I don't like it.

HAL
Which in your language means thank you.

He hands Zora a bag. She opens it, removes a leather bound atlas. Inside is the inscription:

*The world's waiting for you. Here
are a few maps in case you get
lost along the way. Hal*

Zora stares at the book. Then back up to Hal. She's touched. She impulsively HUGS him.

ZORA
Thank you....

ON HAL... he didn't expect her to hug him. He steps back, embarrassed.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
I gotta get going.

SARAH
I'll walk you out.

96 EXT. HOUSE - SAME

ON SARAH AND HAL...as they step outside onto the SIDEWALK.

SARAH (CON'T)
That meant a lot to her. Thanks.

HAL
So are we getting along now?

SARAH
What's that supposed to mean?

HAL
I'm not sure. Just checking.

We hear a roar. Diego's truck pulls up at the curb. Diego gets out of his truck. Hal sees him.

HAL
What're you doing here?

DIEGO
Me? Boss, what're you doing here?

Zora comes out of the house, followed by Tea Cake.

ZORA
(to Diego)
Hi.

DIEGO
(smiling at Zora)
You look great. Let's go.

Tea Cake and Hal both scowl at Diego.

ZORA
Bye!

HAL
(to Sarah)
She's wearing that?

TEA CAKE
I rest my case.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

HAL
(to Diego)
You have her back here by what-
(to Sarah)
She has a curfew, right?

TEA CAKE
Home by midnight!

SARAH
Have a good time, you two.

And they go.

TEA CAKE
(calling after them)
What about me? I'm fine! Don't
worry about me! I'm gonna have a
great evening. I'm going to find
myself before somebody bigger
does.

Tea Cake leaves.

97 EXT. HOUSE - SAME

SARAH
You know him?

HAL
He works for me.

SARAH
So if anything happens?

HAL
I'll fire him.

There is an awkward beat. The kids have driven off. It's just
Hal and Sarah left alone in the dark.

SARAH
I'm sure you got plans. For
tonight.

HAL
Yeah. I'm gonna go grab
something.

SARAH
What are you gonna grab?

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

HAL
Eat. I'm gonna eat. If you don't
have plans you could come along.

SARAH
Do you WANT me to come along?

HAL
Yeah. I think I do.

SARAH
Okay. Then I don't have plans.

HAL
You coulda just said so.

SARAH
And you coulda just asked me out
to dinner.

She starts for the house.

SARAH
If we're going out I gotta change.

OFF HAL...following her. He raises his eyebrows. This should
be interesting.

98 INT. SUSHI BAR - NIGHT - A SHORT TIME LATER

ON A PLATTER...ordered by a hardcore sushi eater. Raw quail
eggs, octopus, yellow tail, eel strips, tuna belly. A SUSHI
CHEF places the last piece on the platter and places it in front
of Sarah and Hal.

Sarah definitely changed. And she looks great. They are
drinking sake, right in the middle of it.

SARAH
She wasn't into Barbi's or any of
that shit. She liked chemicals.
Batteries. Magnets. Powertools.

HAL
Good for her.

SARAH
It drove me crazy.

HAL
(looking at the tray)
Hey, where's the rice? The
noodles? The man who flips the
shrimp into his hat?
(more)

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

HAL (Cont'd)
I never shoulda let you order.
Half this stuff is still alive!

SARAH
That's the idea.
(she loads up her plate)
So when she was about seven I
bought her one of those Suzy
Homemaker cooking sets. Not ONCE
did she make the little brownies.
She used the burners to melt
things.

HAL
She gets that from me. I only use
my oven to dry my tennis shoes.

SARAH
That I believe. Anyway--

Hal has been studying the sushi tray this entire time, searching
for something to eat. He finally scoops up the cone of wasabi
(the green horseradish), pops it into his mouth.

SARAH
NO!

ON HAL...swallowing.

HAL
Too late!

His face seizes up into an awful contortion. His face turns
bright red. His eyes fill with tears.

HAL (CON'T)
Help me!!!

SARAH
You don't eat that shit whole!!!

ON HAL...drinking everything on the table. Both sake's, the two
waters. He grabs the flower vase, pulls out the flowers, tosses
them to Sarah. She catches them, he drinks the vase water.
It's still not enough.

Sarah turns to the table next to her, takes a Kirin light right
out of a man's hand, shoves it at Hal. He downs it.

SARAH
(to the other diner)
Sorry. We'll get you another.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
Waiter!!! Hol-y sh-it!

SARAH
Waiter!!! The wasabi's a
condiment!

HAL
I know that!
(more beer)
Now.

A WAITER comes running with a pitcher of water. Hal drinks two glasses.

SARAH
Are you okay?

She's giggling now. He's a wreck.

HAL
Yeah. You must think I'm some
kinda hayseed or something.

SARAH
(lying through her
teeth)
I don't think that.

HAL
Well I am. Sort of. Or I used to
be. And every now and then it
just slips out.

SARAH
Hey, it's okay. Really.

HAL
You know when I was about twenty,
I met this woman. I'd left
Bakersfield, come to the big city.
The woman seemed so sophisticated.
I took her to the most expensive
restaurant I could find. And I
ordered wine. Which I'd never
done before. The waiter brought
it to me, held it out to show me
the label. I didn't have a clue
what he was doing. I thought he
wanted me to hold the bottle so he
could open it. So I grabbed the
bottom.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (4)

HAL (Cont'd)

He held the top, and we sort of
tugged it back and forth for
awhile. Finally he just let me
have it. Gave me the opener and
walked away.

SARAH

What did the woman do?

HAL

She told me to always be myself.

SARAH

Hey, it's working for me.

99
thru OMITTED100
101 EXT. SATHER GATE - NIGHT

(X)

ON THE LIT GLOBES...at the top of the entrance to the
University. Moving down to find Hal and Sarah underneath.

(X)

HAL

The only thing I can ride is a
horse. And I've never ONCE done
a horse commercial. It's crazy.

SARAH

You'd look too good on a horse.
I think the whole deal is to make
you look like a wild man. That's
part of the appeal.

HAL

Really? I never thought of it
that way.

They are now walking through an arch, backlit.

(X)

HAL (CON'T)

You smell good.

SARAH

. It's lotion or something.

He leans closer to her.

HAL

May I?

SARAH

What?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

They start down the exterior stairs. It's very romantic. (X)

HAL
Smell you.

SARAH
I thought you already had.

He gets closer. She looks uncomfortable.

HAL
Wow, I could get lost in this
smell. I could just close my eyes
and no one would ever find me.

Their faces are very close.

SARAH
Oh, I'm sure someone would find
you. You could send up a flare or
something.

HAL
Do you smell like that everywhere?

SARAH
Well, I don't know. I don't
really go around smelling myself.

HAL
(going to kiss her)
I could check for you.

They are at the railing by the creek. He leans against her. (X)
Sarah pulls back.

SARAH
Look, this is very cute and all
that but I don't really do stuff
like this.
(smiling)
Is this how you sell trucks?

HAL
It's not like we haven't been
properly introduced. I don't mean
to be crass, but my sperm has been
in your body.

SARAH
And where it goes, you follow?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
Well, yes. Generally it is my
lead, but in this case the little
guys got there ahead of me. I
mean we've had the child.

SARAH
We didn't have the child, I did.

She moves off down the walkway. He starts after her. (X)

HAL
Well, I'd like to make it up to
you.

SARAH
I'll bet you would.

102 OMITTED (X)

103 EXT. SARAH'S STREET - NIGHT

They continue walking to Sarah's door.

SARAH
This is going to get complicated.

HAL
Don't worry, I've done it before.

SARAH
I bet. I just don't think...

Hal stops her mouth with a kiss. It's tentative. Like teenagers.

SARAH (CONT'D)
You're slick, you know that?

HAL
I'll change.

SARAH
No, don't do that.

She's got her key, puts it in the lock, opens the door.

HAL
What should I do then?

SARAH
Smell me.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

She grabs him, planting her mouth on his. It is wild and passionate as the door opens and they fall into the house and onto the floor.

104 INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - FRONT HALLWAY - CONT. ACTION

Hal kicks the door closed with his foot. They kiss and roll into a table, knocking over a lamp. It falls to the floor. She and Hal are all over each other as they bang into walls, overturn furniture, and slam into tables.

CUT TO:

105 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Establishing. Diego's truck is parked overlooking the city..

106 INT. DIEGO'S TRUCK - SAME

Zora and Diego are making out in the front seat. Diego's hands are inside Zora's shirt. They slide down to her jeans, tug at the zipper. Zora pulls away.

ZORA

Diego, stop...

He doesn't. She breaks away again.

DIEGO

What's wrong?

ZORA

I... I think I should go home.
It's getting so late.

DIEGO

So let's go back to my place. You
could stay over.

ZORA

No way! My mom would kill me.

DIEGO

Big deal.

ZORA

It is a big deal. Diego, I like
you. But I hardly know you.

DIEGO

So let's get to know each other
better.

He pulls her back to him.

CUT TO:

107 INT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hal and Sarah are in disarray. They're struggling with each other's clothes, trying to get undressed. They keep kissing.

(CONTINUED)

107 CONTINUED:

He has her pinned against a wall with her legs wrapped around him.

108 EXT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Diego and Zora pull up to the curb. Zora gets out and slams the door. Diego follows her.

DIEGO
Zora--- wait!

109 INT. SARAH'S LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

Sarah and Hal both hear Diego's voice and freeze.

HAL
(hushed)
What was that?

SARAH
Shit!

110 EXT. HOUSE - SAME - NIGHT

Diego and Zora come up the walk.

DIEGO
What's the hurry?

Diego whips her around, kisses her neck.

ZORA
Diego... come on.

She's not into it. She starts up the front steps, opens the front door to find...

111 INT. LIVING ROOM - SAME - NIGHT

Hal and Sarah, fully dressed, seated side by side on the couch. The TV is ON. They stare intently at the screen. On the television is the "Home Shopping Network."

SARAH
Hi, honey.

ZORA
Hi.

Hal gets to his feet, stretches. His fly is unzipped.

HAL
We started watching TV. Lost track of time.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

DIEGO
What happened to the lamp?

SARAH
It fell, I think. I mean it
must've fallen.

ZORA
What were you watching on TV?

Hal looks at Sarah for help. Then quickly at the TV. They
respond simultaneously.

SARAH
(jumping in)
A talk show.

HAL
"Studs."

They look at each other and laugh at the other's reply. Diego
and Zora exchange looks. Diego leans to Hal.

DIEGO
Speed 45 wide open, man.

Hal zips up, gives Diego a healthy thump on the back.

HAL
We're both out of here, pal.

Hal turns to Sarah. They awkwardly shake hands.

HAL (CONT'D)
Good night, Sarah.

SARAH
Good night, Hal.

112 EXT. HOUSE - SAME - NIGHT

Sarah watches from the porch as Hal and Diego go to their
trucks. She slowly walks back into the house

113 EXT. STREET - SAME - NIGHT

As Hal crosses to his truck, Diego looks over at him knowingly.

DIEGO
Quite a family, huh, man? I mean
like mother like daughter, know
what I mean?

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

HAL
(getting into his truck)
I'll tell you what I mean, man.
If you lay a hand on that girl,
I'll kill you.

DIEGO
Whoa, wait-- what's it to you?

HAL
I'll tell you what's it to me.
She's my daughter! Okay, man?

Diego reacts. Hal looks at his watch. Panics.

HAL (CONT'D)
Oh Christ.

Hal starts his truck and peels out of there, leaving Diego.

114 INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Zora turns to her mother. She's upset.

ZORA
What did you do?

SARAH
Huh?

ZORA
You heard me. What were you guys
doing?!

SARAH
Nothing. I can't believe you're
so upset.

ZORA
You told me to stay away from him!
But you can do whatever you want
with him-

SARAH
(interrupts)
What are you talking about?

ZORA
He's my father. He needs me!
He's never had a daughter. He
does have a girlfriend. He
doesn't need another one of those.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED:

SARAH

Now wait a minute, Zora. I never said I wanted to be anybody's girlfriend. I'm too old to be a girlfriend anyway--

ZORA

(interrupts)

Oh really? Is that why this house looks like a cyclone hit 'cuz you two were rolling around like a couple of kids? My whole life you brought me up with this fantasy-- this ghost of Charlie-- and now I bring home something real and you jump all over that. Well, I wanted this for me - not us - me! Is it wrong to want something just for myself? Do I hafta share everything with you?

Zora storms out. Sarah starts to follow, stops.

SARAH

(calls)

Zora! Zora, come back here!

But Zora doesn't. Sarah stands helpless, frustrated.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Shit.

OFF SARAH... devastated.

115 EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hal's truck pulls up. As Hal enters the house he hears loud LAUGHTER.

116 INT. KITCHEN - SAME - NIGHT

Stacy is at the kitchen table with Bruce.

HAL

Sorry, I got hung up.

STACY

Hal... you remember Bruce. He gave me a lift home.

HAL

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

BRUCE
No biggie.
(like he owns the place)
Sit down, man.

STACY
Where were you?

HAL
Just out. Lost track of time.

BRUCE
I gotta cruise.

STACY
(disappointed)
Do you have to?

HAL
I know how you feel. I'm beat.

BRUCE
Hey, the night's just startin' to
cook. I'm going to hear a new
band. "Stinky Nightgown." You
like 'em?

(X)
(X)

STACY
Oh sure.

HAL
We got all their stuff.

BRUCE
They're gonna record when the
drummer gets out of rehab. You
guys wanna hang with us, no prob.

ON HAL... glancing from Bruce to Stacy. They look like a modern
version of Ken and Barbie.

HAL
Stacy, why don't you go? You'd
enjoy it.

STACY
Wow. You don't mind?!

HAL
I want you to go.

As Bruce and Stacy leave:

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: (2)

STACY
(kisses him)
Have one of those sex dreams about
me, kay?

117 INT. ZORA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zora holds an ancient teddy bear. Her eyes glisten. Sarah opens the door and stands in the doorway. Zora turns her back to her mother. She's crying. Sarah looks stricken.

118 INT. HAL'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Hal wakes up. The light is streaming through the blinds. Stacy, fully dressed, snores at his side.

119 INT. HAL'S KITCHEN - SAME - MORNING

It's like an airport lounge, not a place where people live. Hal opens the refrigerator, looks inside. There's only a coffee can, a roll of film and a jar of hot sauce.

Hal closes the fridge, dumps a bottle of scotch down the drain, starts to load the dishwasher.

120 EXT. CAR DEALERSHIP - MORNING

Hal drives up and gets out of his truck. He's showered, shaved, and looks together for a change.

121 INT. CAR DEALERSHIP - SAME - MORNING

Hal sticks his head into Alberta's office.

HAL
Nice scarf.

ALBERTA
You gave it to me. Christmas '83.

HAL
You work too hard. Take a day
off.

ALBERTA
Really?

HAL
I feel good. Take advantage of
it.

He walks out.

122 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Hal opens the door; Sarah is there.

HAL
Hey... great!

SARAH
I've been thinking about last night.

HAL
(smiling)
Me, too.

SARAH
About Zora. I mean, she's so upset about... you know... Anyway, look, we've gotten along well for seventeen years. We've never let anybody come between us.

HAL
I'm not going to come between you and Zora.

SARAH
You already have.
(she can't even look at him; takes a breath)
I don't want you to be Zora's father. Or my boyfriend so-

She starts to leave, he grabs her.

HAL
What? What are you talking about? What did she say?

SARAH
If you were ever a parent, ever raised someone so that their... their... cares, their problems were yours, you'd understand.

HAL
Wait... wait... wait... just one second here. What is this? Something feels very off here.

SARAH
Look, you wouldn't be able to see her in pain for any longer than you can help it. Well this is how I can help it.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

HAL

What does all this have to do with us?

SARAH

How we feel at this point is some kind of an attraction. We can bail out now before we've done any damage.

HAL

(interrupts)

Oh...Oh...Oh... I see what this is...

SARAH

I don't think you do.

HAL

Yeah - well, you can go on with your speech. But it's bullshit!

SARAH

Is that right?!

HAL

Don't give me all your motherly crap about Zora when what's really happening is you got scared!

SARAH

You're the one who looks scared!

HAL

You're damned right I am! This kid comes along -- this incredible little girl, and she opens a door, and it's like she showed me this whole room filled with things, things I never knew existed!

SARAH

That's your problem. Not ours!

HAL

Oh, and I haven't changed your life? You got nothing outta this whole thing? You got a KID out of it, for godsakes! It wasn't the immaculate conception! And now you think you can tell me to forget it! How am I supposed to do that?!

(more)

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH (Cont'd) SARAH
(flustered and moving)
Hey, back off.

HAL
Yeah. Back off. Go away. Make
your life easy. You can just
control everything, can't you?
Make yourself a kid without ever
even meeting a man. I got news
for you: it doesn't work that
way! I get a say in this too!
I'm her father, goddamit!

ON SARAH... her head spinning. She wasn't prepared for this.
She turns on him, fierce.

SARAH
Just leave us both alone. That's
what we BOTH want!

And suddenly she goes.

123 EXT. DEALERSHIP - SAME - DAY

ON SARAH... getting on her bicycle, pedaling off. She's very
upset.

124 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME - DAY

Alberta comes in. It's unclear what she heard. She silently
places a cup of coffee in front of Hal. He lights a cigarette,
stares out into the morning fog.

HAL
I told you to go.

ALBERTA
I'm going.

125 EXT. BERKELEY - DAY

A busy street within a mile of the dealership.

ON SARAH... pumping hard, really moving her bicycle.

UP AHEAD... the traffic light turns red.

ON SARAH... not slowing down... she'll go through the light.
There's a car coming to her left. She can beat him. She pedals
even faster...

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

ON SARAH... as she enters the intersection. She's going to make it... the car lays on his HORN, brakes, she clears him by a hair, starts to smile when...

A MOTORCYCLE APPEARS from out of nowhere. He must have been obscured by the car.

It's impossible for Sarah to stop, or turn, it's too late...

ON THE BICYCLE... as it slams into the speeding motorcycle. Sarah's bike is thrown into the air. It travels twenty... thirty...forty feet. Sarah flies off, landing violently onto the concrete.

126 INT. HAL'S OFFICE - SAME - DAY

ON HAL... at his desk. He places his hand over the coffee cup, manipulating the steam. In the distance are the SOUNDS of sirens. He doesn't even notice.

127 INT. HAL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hal is in the kitchen unloading groceries into the once bare refrigerator. The doorbell RINGS.

AT THE FRONT DOOR... Hal opens it to find Zora. She's been crying.

HAL

Zora...

ZORA

I'm sorry... but I can't think of anywhere else to look... have you seen my mom?

SMASH CUT TO:

128 INT. ALTA BATES HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The emergency doors open and Hal and Zora rush inside.

129 INT. INTENSIVE CARE - NIGHT

ON SARAH... in a hospital bed, unconscious. Her face is a mass of cuts and bruises. She has tubes in her arms, her nose.

Zora goes to her mother, begins crying uncontrollably. A DOCTOR appears in the doorway.

DOCTOR

You're both family?

Hal motions to Zora. Ignores the question.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

HAL
This is her daughter.

DOCTOR
(addressing Zora)
She came into ER this morning.
We've been sustaining the vitals.
Without consent forms we're in a
holding pattern.

ZORA
(through her tears)
She's going to be okay -- right?

The Doctor shifts his weight. He's uncomfortable.

DOCTOR
Decisions need to be made.

HAL
Such as?

DOCTOR
You have to consider surgery or
she'll lose her leg.

ZORA
No!!! Mama... no.

HAL
So get her into surgery.

DOCTOR
There are risks. She's lost a lot
of blood. The operation could be
too much for her. Even if she
could take the surgery there's no
guarantee we can save the leg.

HAL
What are the other options?

DOCTOR
Amputate.

ZORA
No!!!

DOCTOR
(to Zora)
It's your decision.

ON HAL... turning on the guy.

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
She's seventeen years old!

DOCTOR
And who are you?

HAL
(motioning to Zora)
Her father.
(He looks like he might
rip the Doctor's head
off)
Now listen, if that was the mother
of your kid. You tell me -- what
would you do?

ON THE DOCTOR...it takes him awhile. Finally:

DOCTOR
Operate.

HAL
And what doctor would you use?

DOCTOR
Kline. He's in San Francisco.

HAL
So get him over here.

DOCTOR
Someone has to sign the consent
forms.
(looking at Zora)
Someone over eighteen.

HAL
I'll sign.

Zora stays at her mother's side. Hal has to pull her off. She
can't control her crying.

ZORA
(through her tears)
She's going to be alright? Isn't
she? Please...

130 INT. HOSPITAL LOUNGE - NIGHT

ON HAL AND ZORA...in chairs waiting. Hal starts to light a
cigarette, stops. No smoking signs are everywhere. He throws
the whole pack in the trash.

A NURSE approaches.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

NURSE

She's in surgery now. It's our policy at this time to ask family and friends to make a blood donation.

(to Zora)

Honey, why don't you go first. It's just down the hall.

Hal helps Zora up. She goes off in a daze.

131 INT. HEMATOLOGY LAB - SAME NIGHT

Hal is now seated. An Intern is drawing blood.

INTERN

Did you see that doll right before you? Hmm-mm, coffee with just that right touch of cream. Was she hot. My palms are still sweating.

HAL

In jeans and a blue sweatshirt?

INTERN

Her butt was a 10. You saw her?

HAL

My daughter.

The intern jerks the needle. Hal winces.

INTERN

(totally embarrassed)
And the interesting thing is she's AB negative. Not very common.

HAL

(slipping into the proud father role)
She's unusual. Won a science award last year. State contest. Came in first place.

INTERN

You don't say...

CUT TO:

132 INT. HOSPITAL LOUNGE - DAWN

Zora is asleep. At her side Hal sips coffee from a styrofoam cup. Low light comes in the windows.

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

Hal takes off his jacket, drapes it over her as a DOCTOR appears. He looks as tired as Hal.

DR. KLINE
We just sent her to post-op.

HAL
And...

DR. KLINE
She's stable. I'm still worried
about nerve damage--

HAL
(interrupts)
But she's okay?

DR. KLINE
I'm optimistic.

HAL
Thank God...
(he pumps the Doctor's
hand)
Thank you. Thank you so much.

The Doctor starts down the hall.

133 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah has been moved to a regular hospital room. Her face is bandaged. Her leg is in a cast. Zora is asleep in a chair at her side. Hal sits in the window seat watching them.

Tea Cake comes in carrying take-out Chinese food. James enters carrying flowers.

TIME CUT:

134 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - FOLLOWING DAY

Hal and Zora are having a conversation while Sarah sleeps.

ZORA (CONT'D)
I mean really, it was an awful
fight. And then... well, it's
just like what you're afraid of.
That you'll fight with someone and
yell at them and then they die or
whatever.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

HAL

Well, I had a fight with her too.
So we'll never know which fight
actually got her run over. What
we do know is that neither of us
can ever fight with her again.
Which is a shame 'cause she's so
good at it.

SARAH

You can fight with me, you just
can't win.

They both turn, stare at her. She spoke.

ZORA

Ma!

Sarah stares at Hal.

SARAH

What's this asshole doing here?

Hal and Zora exchange looks, smile.

ZORA

She's okay!

Zora puts her arms around her mother. Hal looks on.

HAL

Well, I'll leave you two for a
little while and go home and
change. I'll see you later.

He takes her hand and squeezes it. They exchange a look.

SARAH

Aren't you going to smell me
goodbye?

135 EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - DAY

Bruce's car is at the curb. Hal's pickup swings into the
driveway.

136 INT. HAL'S HOUSE - SAME - DAY

Hal enters. Stacy and Bruce are in the living room getting the
last of her things together. Bruce sees him and starts for the
front door.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED:

BRUCE
(gravely)
You shoulda called, man. You
shoulda called.

Stacy gives him a small wave. Goes to Hal. She's been crying.

STACY
We need to talk...

Hal puts his arm around her.

HAL
I don't think we need to talk
Stacy. That was never really our
thing anyway.

Stacy pulls away, shocked.

STACY
You can get on your knees to me.
I'm still breaking up with you.

HAL
You should break up with me.
Bruce is better for you than I
could ever be.

STACY
I don't think you quite understand
what I'm saying. It's over
between us, so don't try to stop
me.

HAL
Okay. I won't.

STACY
Once I walk through that door you
can just kiss me goodbye. I'm
serious.

HAL
I know.

STACY
How did this happen to us, Hal?
Where did we go wrong? I mean, we
were going to buy a dog together.
A terrier. Well, maybe a lab.
I'm lucky I found about you before
we wrecked its little life. Or
had to fight over splitting him
up.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED: (2)

HAL
Bruce is waiting, Stacy.

STACY
Don't hate me Hal. Remember the
way we were. Remember the good
times.

HAL
Okay. I will. Thank you. Bye
now.

She runs out of the house crying, then returns.

STACY
You'll find someone else. Maybe
not right away but I think in the
long run this is best. Someday
we'll thank each other...by phone
probably.

137 EXT. HAL'S HOUSE - DAY - CONT. ACTION

Stacy runs out of the house crying. She hops into Bruce's car,
flinging her bag in the back. Bruce starts backing the car out
of the driveway with Stacy's head buried in his neck. They
drive off down the street.

138 INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Sarah is sleeping, Zora is seated next to her reading. Hal
comes in looking good. Zora indicates for Hal to be quiet.

ZORA
(whispers)
They gave her more medication
about an hour ago and she fell
asleep. Geez, you look sharp.

HAL
Okay, changing of the guard. You
go home and get some sleep.
You've got school tomorrow. And
get a girlfriend to stay with you.

ZORA
What about Tea Cake?

ON HAL... considering.

HAL
Okay.

Zora kisses him.

(CONTINUED)

138 CONTINUED:

ZORA
Goodnight, pop.

HAL
Nite.

139 INT. SARAH'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Zora's in her room. Tea Cake stands in the doorway.

ZORA
Thanks for doing this. Staying
here and all.

TEA CAKE
Hey, no big deal.

He comes in and sits on the bed.

ZORA
Are you still going to the sperm
bank?

TEA CAKE
Went today. Another check for
forty. And one of the nurses
asked me out.

ZORA
Really? Which one?

TEA CAKE
Her names Kesha. She's new.

Zora can't believe it, she's jealous.

ZORA
Nothing happened with Diego, you
know.

TEA CAKE
Forget it. I forgot it. Almost.

ZORA
It's cold in here, don't you
think?

TEA CAKE
Maybe a little.

ZORA
You can get under the covers if
you want.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

Tea Cake gets inside the bed. They're lying next to each other. Tea Cake rolls over on his side, stares at her.

TEA CAKE
Zora...

ZORA
Yeah.

TEA CAKE
I love you.

ZORA
I know.

She puts her arms around his neck and pulls him close. They kiss. Slowly they come together...

DISSOLVE TO:

140 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Mid-afternoon. Hal steps out of the elevator. The Intern from the lab passes him in the hall.

INTERN
Hey, man, I wanna talk to you.

141 INT. HEMATOLOGY LAB - DAY

Hal comes out of the lab. His face is expressionless. He goes to the pay phone, dials...

142 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Hal walks down the corridor towards Sarah's room. His pace is slow.

ON HAL... hesitating. This is a struggle. He stops in front of Sarah's room.

HIS P.O.V.... as he looks inside. Zora is in a chair, her feet propped up.

ON SARAH... she sees him. Pulls herself up in bed, starts waving her arms.

SARAH
Get in here! We got news!!!

142A INT. SARAH'S HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Zora jumps up as Hal enters.

(CONTINUED)

142A CONTINUED:

SARAH (CONT'D)
Tell him! Go on!

ZORA
Mom!

HAL
What is it?

ZORA
I won a Westinghouse science
award. They give out a hundred
every year--

SARAH
In the whole country only a
hundred!

ZORA
--and the principal's going to
give it to me next week at
graduation. (X)
(X)

SARAH
My baby. Getting a big shot award
at her graduation! (X)

ZORA
They give me a trophy or
something. And they'll pay my
whole college tuition! (X)
(X)

He puts his arm around her. It's very tentative. (X)

HAL
Congratulations...that's
wonderful.

Zora goes to hug him, feels his anxiety.

ZORA
Hey... what's wrong?

HAL
I just came from the hematology
lab.

SARAH
Why?

HAL
They have all our blood. Sarah's
type is A.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

142A CONTINUED: (2)

HAL (Cont'd)
Zora, they want you to give more.
Since you're AB negative. It's
not too common. And they took
mine... I'm O.

ZORA
(shocked)
You couldn't be...

HAL
They did it twice. It's O. The
universal blood type.

(CONTINUED)

142A CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
(uneasy)
What are you talking about?

HAL
(almost c n't say it)
I'm not her father.

ZORA
But I got the name from Mom's
file. They had your name at the
sperm bank!

HAL
I called. Spoke to the head of
the place. He said the files were
all done by hand until ten years
ago. Then they sent them overseas
to be put on computer disks. He
said they all came back a mess.

SARAH
How can they do this to people?

HAL
You signed all legal rights away
eighteen years ago. The most
you'll ever know is that the
donors were from the university.
Mostly science majors.

ZORA
You're not my father...

HAL
It was good while it lasted.
Instant family.

ZORA
You're not my father...

SARAH
Honey...

ZORA
It's a lie.

HAL
Zora...

ZORA
I made a mistake. A horrible,
horrible mistake!
(more)

(CONTINUED)

142A CONTINUED: (4)

ZORA (Cont'd)
And don't tell me it's going to be (X)
alright. 'Cause nothing's ever (X)
going to be alright! Ever!

She gets up and runs out of the room.

SARAH
Zora!!!!!! Zora, come back here!

Sarah is powerless to do anything. She hits her nurse's button,
tries to sit up. It's impossible.

HAL
Should I go talk to her?

They now both feel strange. He stays by the door.

SARAH
No, she just needs some time
alone.

ON SARAH... thinking he wants to leave.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Look, if you want to get back to
the office or whatever...

ON HAL... thinking she wants him out of there.

HAL
You gotta get your rest, I guess.

SARAH
Yeah.

HAL
Okay then.

It suddenly feels like they're saying goodbye.

SARAH
I don't think... I've ever really
thanked you. For being there for
her. And for me.

HAL
I wanted to be there.

He wants to go to her. But he doesn't.

(CONTINUED)

'42A CONTINUED: (5)

HAL (CONT'D)
I'm going to Las Vegas tomorrow.
Dealer convention.

SARAH
Sounds fun.

HAL
It's work. I'll call when I'm
back.

Why does it now come out sounding like a lie?

SARAH
Okay.

HAL
Sarah...I'm sorry.

She turns away from the door toward the window. He can only see
her back.

SARAH
Me, too.

He walks out the door.

CLOSE ON SARAH... she looks sad.

143 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Hal's truck is in the lot.

144 INT. PICKUP TRUCK - DAY

MOVING IN ON HAL... behind the wheel. He's backlit by the
afternoon sun. He sits motionless, unflinching.

145 EXT. SARAH AND ZORA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zora comes up the sidewalk. She's been crying all the way home.
Tea Cake is sitting on the steps. He has a bunch of daisies in
hand. He yells to her:

TEA CAKE
A Westinghouse award! And I heard (X)
you gotta speak at graduation. (X)
You gonna thank me?

ON ZORA...getting closer. She has her head down. (X)

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

TEA CAKE (CON'T)

Hey, does this mean they give you
deals on light bulbs? Stoves?
Refrigerators? I'll take a
microwave.

(X)
(X)
(X)

(he can see her face
more clearly)

Shit, you don't look very happy...

She goes to him. Puts her arms around his neck, starts to cry.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED: (2)

ZORA

He wasn't... my father. And you
know the worst part... I wanted a
dad. And he was my dad.

OFF TEA CAKE... holding her.

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

146 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Three days later. It's the middle of the afternoon. Zora (X)
carries Sarah's belongings. A medical attendant pushes Sarah in
a wheelchair out the hospital doors and onto the sidewalk where:

Tea Cake and James are waiting by his new truck.

ZORA

I thought Hal might be here.

SARAH

He's outta town. Besides, he (X)
wouldn't just show up.

ZORA

Yeah, you're right.

SARAH

Honey, it's over. You can dwell
on it. Or try and forget it. But
either way it's all in the past.

ZORA

I know that.

ON TEA CAKE AND JAMES...moving to help:

JAMES

(low to Tea Cake)

Maybe we should keep her in the (X)
wheelchair and tow her behind the
truck.

TEA CAKE

Yeah, but when I put on the brakes
she might scratch the bumper.

Tea Cake gives James a little shove, pushes him toward Sarah.
They both give her big smiles.

SARAH

You couldn't be that happy to see
me.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

JAMES
Oh, but we are. Truly.

TEA CAKE
Not.

CUT TO:

147 INT. JACKSON MOTORS - DAY

(X)

Alberta's in her office surrounded by her sea of papers. It's (X)
mid-day. She's got a newspaper on her desk. It's got some (X)
section about local high school graduations. Hal comes to the (X)
door. He's got on a Hawaiian shirt, a canvas bag's slung over (X)
his shoulder.

HAL
Hey...I can't find my ticket. (X)

ALBERTA
It's on your desk. Right with (X)
your truck keys.

HAL
Good place. I didn't look there. (X)

Alberta motions to a chair. (X)

ALBERTA
Sit down. I'll get you a drink. (X)

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

 HAL
Naaaa. I quit. It was making me
feel numb. Lately I feel numb
enough. (X)

 ALBERTA
So today's the day. (X)

 HAL
Flight's in three hours. (X)

 ALBERTA
Not that. I'm talking about the
day your daughter graduates from
high school. (X)
(X)
(X)

That gets him. He glares at her. (X)

 HAL
She's not my daughter. (X)

 ALBERTA
Forgot. Sorry. (beat) So that
means you just never see them
again? (X)
(X)

He doesn't answer, gets up from his chair, starts for the door. (X)

 ALBERTA
Is it because they're black? (X)

He whirls back around. (X)

 HAL
Hell, I don't know what color they
are! I stopped seeing what color
they were a long time ago! (X)
(X)

 ALBERTA
So what's the problem? (X)

 HAL
They don't want to see me. I'm
not, you know, whatever. Besides,
I'm leaving town. (X)
(X)

 ALBERTA
(drenched in sarcasm)
Great idea. Keep moving. You
know my father left when I was
seven. My stepdad raised me. He
was more of a father to me than
anyone on this planet. (X)

(CONTINUED)

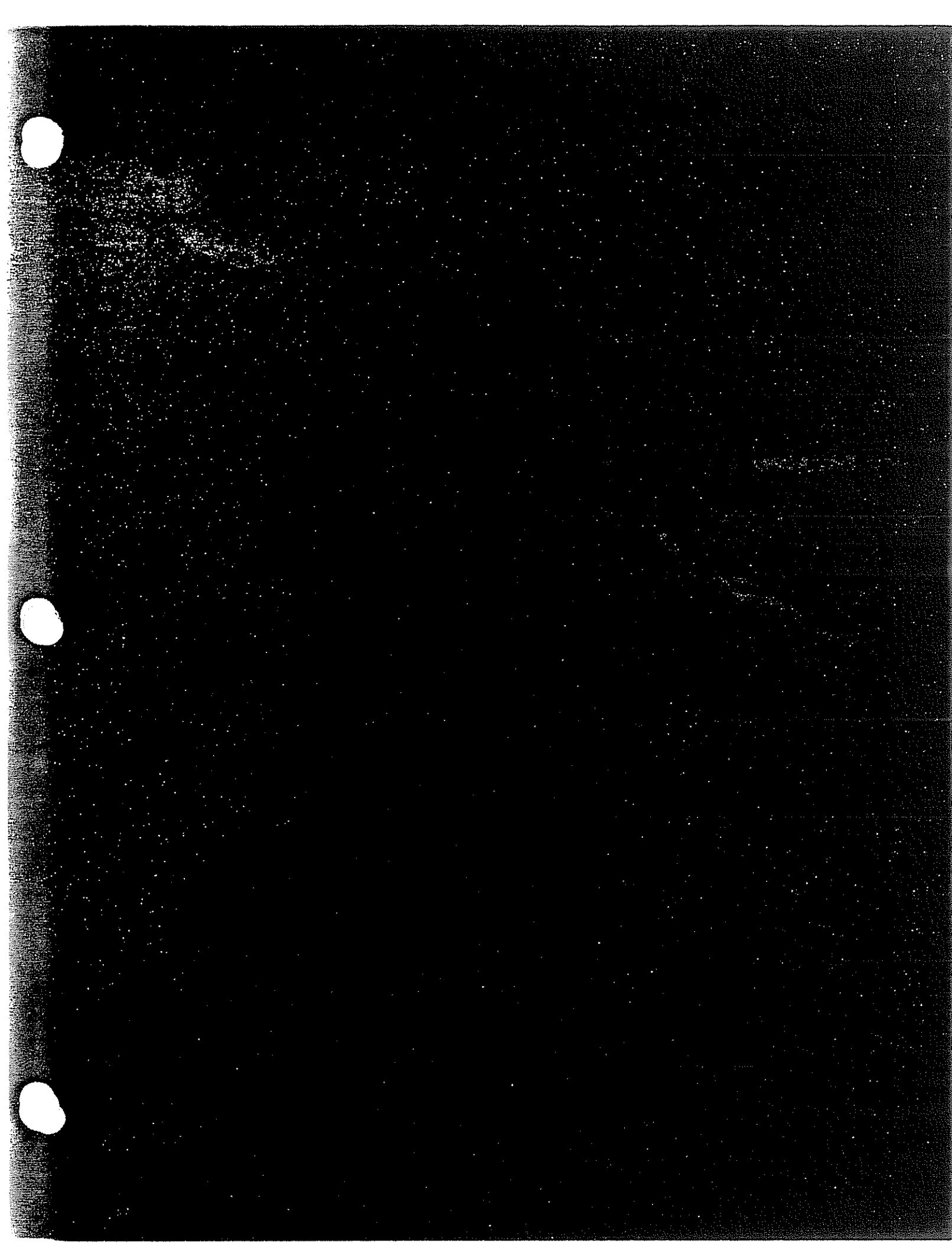
147 CONTINUED: (2)

 HAL
Yeah, well, that's not the same
thing.

 ALBERTA
I've worked here almost fifteen
years. You're part of my family.
Whether you like that or not.
Today you pick 'em and you choose
'em.

(X)

(CONTINUED)



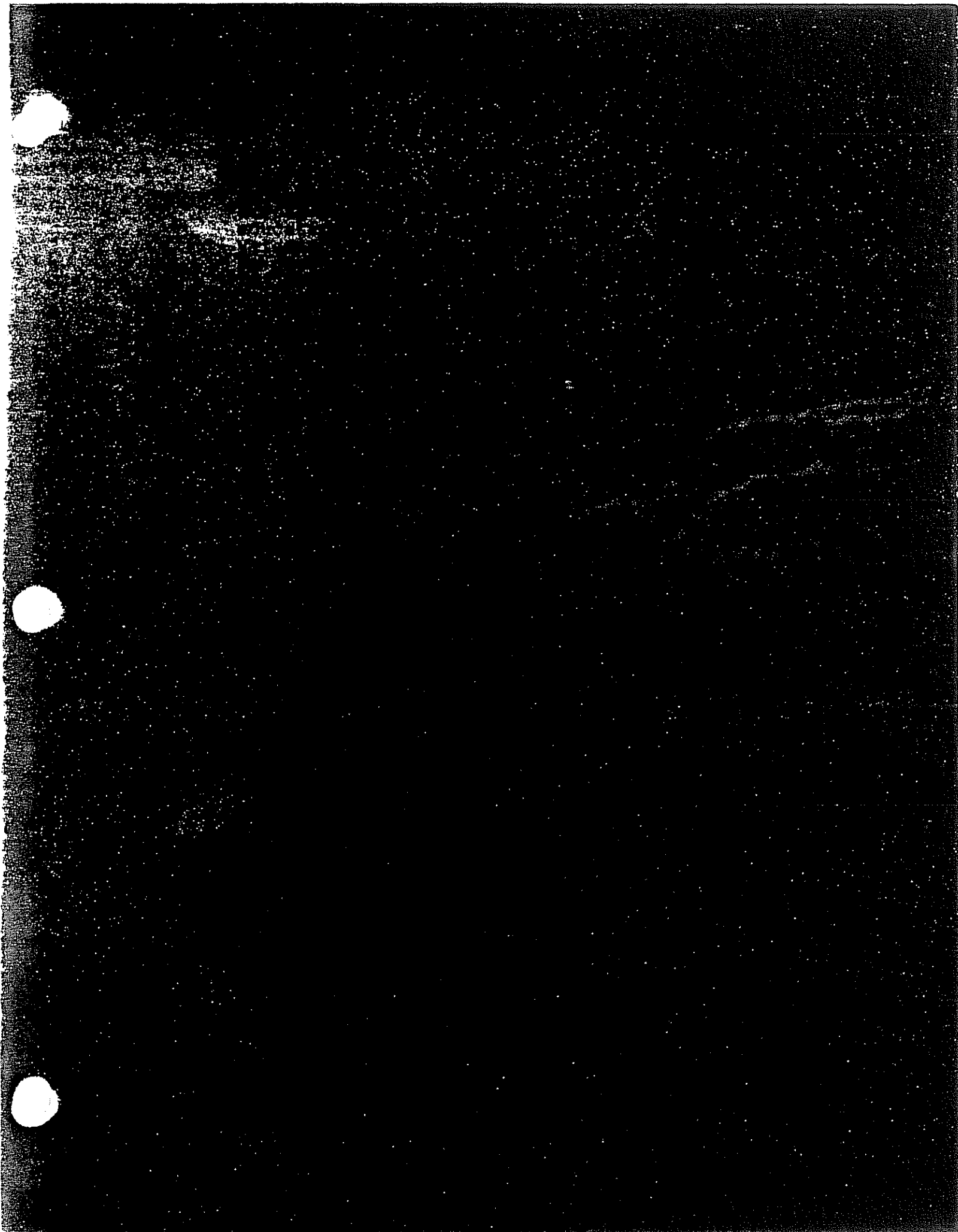
148 CONTINUED:

MR. ALDEN (Cont'd)
in the fall with two other Oakland
Tech students, T.C. Walters and
Joyce Lee. For the past three
years Zora has been an inspiration
in and out of the classroom. I
know she will continue throughout
her life to do things that will
make all of us who ever had the
privilege to teach her feel proud.

He stands back, applauds.

ON THE GRADUATES...Zora is sitting next to Tea Cake. She gets
up, goes to the stage. Alden starts to hand her the plaque.
She doesn't take it, goes instead to the microphone.

(CONTINUED)



'48 CONTINUED: (3)

HAL
I'm not sure. I mean, I wanted to
see, you know--

SARAH
(smiling at him)
Your daughter graduate.

HAL
(a big smile back)
Yeah. Yeah I did.

SARAH
Well don't just stand there, gimme
a hand.

(CONTINUED)

