

MIDNIGHT

LOVE

THE MARVIN GAYE STORY

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WGA Registered

OVER BLACK

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)
With mega-hits like - *What's Going On, I Heard It Through The Grapevine, Mercy Mercy Me* - duets with Tammi Terrell, Kim Weston & Diana Ross...

FADE UP ON:

INT. SMALL ALL-WHITE LIMBO/STAGE - **BLACK & WHITE FOOTAGE**

MARVIN GAYE (dressed all in black) lounges on a small, cheap, uncomfortable, white folding chair facing his Unknown Interrogator.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
...What brings the legendary Marvin Gaye to London with no fanfare or entourage?

MARVIN
(evasive)
You could say - a bit'a chance - a lot'a circumstance.

He shifts uncomfortably.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Right...
(changing tacks)
With all your worldly success, explain to our audience how a Motor City soul singer turned international superstar could walk away from the record company that created him?

MARVIN
(fidgeting)
Whoa, man (huh, huh, huh) you're too intense...
(recovering)
I'm an artist. I got something to say. We were making music like a factory making cars. I got off the assembly line.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
And your OLD boss - what did he have to say?

MARVIN
That man is a very vindictive man.
(directly to camera)
(MORE)

MARVIN (cont'd)
You don't have to be white to own
slaves...

We HEAR HORNS, COMMOTION, LAUGHTER, ANTICIPATION, WHISTLES...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE EMBASSY CLUB - LONDON - NIGHT - 1981 - COLOR FOOTAGE
SUPERIMPOSE - THE EMBASSY CLUB - LONDON - 1981

A log-jam of limos, cabs, walk-ups...

CLOSE ON a pair of endlessly long, shapely model's legs in a micro-mini as they slither out of the back seat of a cab, followed by a very punk pair of gams, both blending into the scene.

A British bull-dog of a Doorman/Bouncer in top hat & tails with multiple piercings waves some Aristocrats with attitude past the velvet robes, pushing the door open with a shove of his skull-handled cane.

DOORMAN/BOUNCER
Evening, Lady E...

We follow LADY EDITH FOXWELL (61) & Party through a beaded curtain into the club and are immediately enveloped in the dissonant, hard-driving sound of Joy Division.

The club is dark, smoky, packed, heroin-cool. MICHAEL FISH, avant-garde designer/official "greeter", dressed in his soon-to-be-famous "man dress" (David Bowie/Mick Jagger) embraces Lady E.

MICHAEL FISH
(air-kissing each cheek)
Darling, you're a vision.

She shimmies in her scandalously tight gold-lame suit.

LADY E
(coquettish)
Is he here?

MICHAEL FISH
GOR-geous!

He beckons Lady E & party forward with a swish, past the Fashionable, the Famous & the Fucked-up, Lady E an obvious fixture, greeting, air-kissing, waving, winking to all democratically.

They arrive at a back booth surrounded by a gaggle of Young White Punk Girls.

MARVIN GAYE (42, looking GOR-geous!) plays childlike to his admirers - tossing & twirling two skinny drink-straws like a teenager to the amusement of the girls.

Michael, Lady E, et al, forge a path through the Girls.

MICHAEL FISH
(shouting)
May I present - Lady Edith
Foxwell... Marvin Gaye.

Marvin attempts to stand, bowing his head but meeting her gaze. Lady E waves him back down.

LADY E
Please... Charming. I see chivalry
survives across the pond.
(to the Girl next to
Marvin)
Shove off, my dears.

The Girls split and Lady E wiggles in beside Marvin. Joy Division ends their set and Marvin WHISTLES his approval, then refocuses on his guest.

LADY E
I was hoping to meet you at the
Lakeshore Club.

MARVIN
Yeah, (sheepish grin), that didn't
come together.

LADY E
Quite... Princess Margaret didn't
take to being stood up, especially
for a charity event. Can you really
afford such enemies or bad press?

MARVIN
Ea-sy ... Not guilty.

LADY E
We Brits can equivocate. I get to
the point.

MARVIN
I never committed to it. I just
can't- I'm not here to sing.

LADY E
Ahhh.... Vacationing?

MARVIN
Checking out the British sound-

LADY E
 (sceptical)
 I see...

She reaches into her clutch, pulls out a joint, pops it into a silver holder, and Marvin (amused) lights it for her. She lets out the smoke and offers it to Marvin. He declines.

LADY E
 (leaning in)
 Mr. Gaye, I'm a wealthy woman with important friends. I'm prepared to offer you a refuge, a place to create and hopefully repair your tarnished image - no strings ... Consider it...

She slides out of the booth & the young girls slide back in.

Hooked, Marvin watches the Queen of London Cafe Society air-kiss her way to the dance floor, whisper something to the next band, catch his eye.

BAND MEMBER
 (on mike)
 Listen up, everyone. Marvin Gaye's in the house. Come on up here, mate, and give us a song...

All eyes turn to Marvin - APPLAUDING, HOOTING, CHANTING, which continues as...

Reluctantly, Marvin gets up and makes his way to the stage.

BAND MEMBER
 (shaking his hand)
 I'm blown away, man.

MARVIN
 Thanks... I, uh...

He gives Lady E a you-got-me-you-Devil look.

MARVIN
 (to audience, APPLAUDING)
 I appreciate it... I'm honored...
 But I'm here to learn...
 (to band member)
 If it's cool with you guys, I'll sit in on drums...

BAND MEMBER
 (surprised/impressed)
 Go for it!

The Drummer jumps up, hands Marvin his sticks, and the Band starts playing a cool, dissonant, Joy-Division-type groove (TBD).

On the floor, Lady E bops like a teen, her eyes drinking in Marvin.

Nearby, EUGENIE VIS (20'S, the leggy blonde model) and her punk girlfriend, PANDORA, observe.

Marvin gets lost in the music, so accomplished on drums that the band stands back, lets him solo - Marvin tossing & flipping his sticks, doing fills, driving the sound, wowing the crowd - a man in his element - free of pain.

EXT./INT. SHERSTON - LADY E'S WILTSHIRE ESTATE - DAY

The camera caresses the rolling green lawn leading up to the impressive country estate of Lady E.

We faintly HEAR Marvin's silken voice SINGING "*Amazing Grace*," getting louder as we get closer to an open leaded window at the back of the three-story gabled manor with a view of a pool and tennis courts.

MARVIN'S BATHROOM

Marvin is SINGING while showering, refreshed, optimistic, as he lathers his body and hair in this burnished bathroom with its surreal view of the grounds.

There's a KNOCK on the steamy shower door! Startled, Marvin opens the door a crack, peeks out.

MARVIN

Hey, Lady E. How ya doin'?

Lady E just stands there, full of mischief, flashing a fluffy white Turkish towel.

Marvin ducks back in the shower, turns around, Lady E cracking up, enjoying his discomfort and the hazy "view."

ON MARVIN through the steamy glass as Lady E sets down the towel and tiptoes over his discarded clothes on her way out.

LADY E (V.O.)

I've laid out the appropriate attire... I'm having guests in for tea... Hope you play tennis...

MARVIN'S BEDROOM

The door closes behind her.

Laid out on the canopied bed is a tennis sweater and a pair of very tiny white tennis shorts.

MARVIN'S BATHROOM

Safe again, Marvin shuts off the water, slumps in the shower - What the hell has he got himself into!?!

CLYDE (O.S.)
Careful, careful... not so quickly!

OUTSIDE (from his window), Marvin sees CLYDE, the butler, fastidiously supervising some Workers as they haul a pristine baby grand piano from the house to the pool area.

We HEAR the sound of TENNIS BALLS HITTING RACKETS...

EXT. TENNIS COURT - LADY E'S ESTATE - LATE THAT AFTERNOON

High tea is served at umbrella-covered tables as a mixed-doubles match is taking place on one of the grass courts. Snippets of high-brow chatter/laughter (ad-lib) ("Oh, goody, spotted dick." "Luv, pass the clotted cream." ...)

TABLE ONE

LADY GUEST 1
It's all the talk - Charles is
marrying Diana Spencer.

LADY GUEST 2
I say, Camilla's knickers must be
in a knot.

MALE GUEST 1
Bloody hell. He'll never stop
shagging that cow...

TABLE TWO

Lady E sits with Michael Fish; REGGIE, a TV PRODUCER; and his assistant, Pandora (from the club), all but Pandora in traditional tennis whites. Lady E pours, Clyde & a slew of white-gloved Servants at the ready.

LADY E
(to the Producer)
Cream & sugar?

PRODUCER
Just cream.

LADY E
(handing him his tea)
So, are we in agreement?
(MORE)

LADY E (cont'd)
 After all, he doesn't have to
 actually sing, whatever that's all
 about.
 (spotting Marvin)
 There's our guest of honor...

All eyes turn and focus on Marvin (tennis sweater & JEANS) at
 the back of the manor playing with ELSA, Lady E's Russian
 Wolfhound.

LADY E
 (waving)
 Yoo-hoo, Marvin...

Marvin waves back and all mark his graceful descent down
 toward the pool area, Elsa (as graceful) on his heel.

PRODUCER (O.S.)
 Let's face it, a man on the lam
 with a drug history - 5 million in
 debt to the IRS - isn't exactly in
 a position to make demands.

Sensing the vibe, Marvin doesn't proceed to the tennis area
 but stops by the piano - Elsa on guard - Clyde dashing up to
 assist him.

Then Marvin starts to play - doing runs, trills - Clyde
 setting a bench behind him - as he segues into a sexy, honky-
 tonk number (TBD) and the party goes from stuffy to alive.
 Even the tennis players stop playing. Elsa HOWLS her delight.

Lady E catches the Producer's eye, extends her hand.

LADY E
 Do we have a deal?

He considers it.

PRODUCER
 (taking her hand)
 Must I howl?

With a final dramatic run, Marvin takes his bow - all on
 their feet APPLAUDING.

Lady E blows Marvin a kiss.

Marvin flashes her a sheepish Marvin grin.

MARVIN (V.O.)
 Miss me yet?

A child SQUEALS "Daddy!"

INT. MARVIN'S BEDROOM - SHERSTON - NIGHT

Marvin is on the phone, lounging on the huge canopy bed in silk pajama bottoms.

MARVIN

Listen to me, Pie. I'm living in a castle fit for a queen, and a princess, just like you.

PIE (ON TELEPHONE)

CASTLES! Oh, Daddy, can I come?

MARVIN

Sure. The three of you - that is, if you still love me-

PIE (ON TELEPHONE)

Oh, Daddy, I do, I do. I really do.

MARVIN

Really truly?

PIE (ON TELEPHONE)

Really truly TRULY!

MARVIN

That's my girl. Me, too. Baby, put your Mama on.

JANIS (ON TELEPHONE)

Don't you go putting ideas in her head-

MARVIN

Jan, I'm clean and creating-

JANIS

Who is she?

MARVIN

It's not like that-

JANIS

Castles, huh? Just pay your child support!

MARVIN

Babe, I'm working on it and I-

Janis SLAMS DOWN the phone.

Marvin just stares at the receiver.

MARVIN

(finishing his sentence)
...want my family back...

There's LAUGHTER/NOISE coming from outside in the hall. Two Socialites carrying glasses and a wine bottle implore Clyde to point out Marvin's room.

GIGGLING LIKE SCHOOL GIRLS, they KNOCK on Marvin's door.

Inside, Marvin can't believe it!

MARVIN
(to himself)
Go away...

He gets up, goes to the door - MORE GIGGLING - he hesitates, then snaps off the light.

OVER BLACK:

We HEAR teenyboppers SCREAM...

MARVIN (V.O.)
Wow, guys, you're too much... You
make a visitor feel right at
home...

FADE UP ON:

INT. TV SHOW - DAY

As we follow Eugenie's long legs behind-the-scenes, catching glimpses of Marvin, on stage, addressing the throbbing Teen Crowd, cameras, lights, Crew - mayhem.

MARVIN
I recorded my version of this song
in Detroit because I wanted to pay
tribute to the Beatles, the
greatest rock band ever. Now seems
like the right time to break it
out...

Eugenie catches up with the Producer and Pandora by the monitors. She and Pandy hug.

They all watch as the music comes up and Marvin closes his eyes and begins to lip-synch to his soulful version of *Yesterday*.

And lip-synching or not, it's amazing - Girls swooning, Kids slow-dancing - Marvin absolutely feeling the words.

FLASHBACK TO:

SURREAL/DREAMY MONTAGE WITH AN EDGE:

Marvin & Janis standing in front of a STERN, DISAPPROVING BLACK PREACHER (Marvin's father) getting married. Marvin lifting Janis' veil, revealing her young, virginal face peering up at him with doe eyes...

That same face contorting in pain as Janis gives birth to their first child (BUBBY)...

Marvin twirling around, holding their baby boy, showing him off to his MOTHER, who coos appropriately...

Janis delivering baby #2 (PIE).

Marvin, Janis, & their two children posing for pictures - the epitome of the perfect family

The photo freezing - bleeding off the screen...

THE FLASHBACK ENDS

"Yesterday" continues over:

EXT./INT. LIMOUSINE - LONDON STREETS - LATE AFTERNOON

Marvin (in a hip, shark-skin suit) sits daydreaming & filled with hope in the back seat of the chauffeured limousine.

"Yesterday" continues over:

INT. RECORD COMPANY - LONDON - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin sits in a spacious old-world office across the desk from an older, seen-it-all, nattily dressed RECORD EXEC.

"Yesterday" FADES OUT...

MARVIN

This means everything to me, I mean, I really feel like this was meant to be, like the Lord's watching over me...

LONDON RECORD EXEC

And Lady Edith?

MARVIN

She's been great, a real blessing. I wouldn't be sitting here if it wasn't for her introducing us.

LONDON RECORD EXEC

She IS quite colorful and well-connected.

MARVIN
I've been working on some new
material I'd really like you to
hear.

The Exec fiddles with his cufflinks.

LONDON RECORD EXEC
Personally, Marvin, I'm a fan. I
think your sound is brilliant, and
if it were up to me, I wouldn't let
you walk out this door without
signing you...

Marvin squirms in his chair. Where is this going?

LONDON RECORD EXEC
Unfortunately, your reputation
proceeds you.

MARVIN
Sir, I haven't touched-

The Exec holds up his hand, stopping him.

LONDON RECORD EXEC
This is quite discomfiting for me,
but your old boss has put out the
word. Don't say you heard it from
me, but NO ONE will touch you. It's
a shame, really...

No one knows this more than Marvin!

INT./EXT. LIMOUSINE - WILTSHIRE - NIGHT

Marvin sits defeated as the limo snakes it way up the winding
drive to Lady E's estate.

EXT./INT. SHERSTON - NIGHT

An orgy of decadence is going on. Lady E is entertaining her
eclectic mix of "club friends." There are drugs galore,
dancing, eating, drinking and openly sexual couples/groupings
of all persuasions.

Lady E is reclining on one of many low divans smoking opium
as Clyde stands by refilling her pipe and lighting it, the
Party-goers acknowledging her as their surreal priestess.

We follow a Servant with a bucket of champagne as he makes
his way outside.

OUTSIDE

The champagne is delivered to Marvin, who sits alone bummed at the grand piano snorting cocaine off a mirrored tray. Elsa, the dog, sits like a sentry nearby.

The servant sets down the bucket & refills Marvin's flute.

MARVIN
(looking up/white powder
on his nose)
Thanks, man.

He snorts another line.

EUGENIE (O.S.)
I like your friend...

Marvin turns. Eugenie is standing there petting Elsa, who wags her tail appreciatively.

EUGENIE
Mind if I sit down?

She doesn't wait for an answer but sits down on the bench beside Marvin. Her micro-mini, now hiked up to just below her crotch, says sex, but when he meets her eyes, he only sees kindness and concern.

EUGENIE
You've got powder on your nose.

MARVIN
I do. Where?

EUGENIE
(pointing)
There.

Marvin wipes his nose, missing the spot. She shakes her head.

EUGENIE
Missed it. Mind?

She reaches over and wipes the white powder from his nose.

EUGENIE
Got it.
(referring to the coke)
You know that stuff is poison.
It'll destroy your creative mind.

MARVIN
(put off)
Do I know you?

EUGENIE
You'd remember... I'm Eugenie and
I'm bored.

MARVIN
(warming)
Oh, yeah?

She nods.

MARVIN
(all suave)
Well, I'm Marvin and I'm good at
saving damsels in distress from
boring drug and sex parties.

She leans over and gives him a tender kiss on the cheek.
Marvin stares back at her.

EUGENIE
You needed that.

MARVIN
How did you know?

EUGENIE
I just know.

Some Party Guests streak down the hill tearing their clothes
off and jump into the pool, naked.

Both Eugenie and Marvin laugh.

CLYDE
(clearing his throat)
Excuse me, Mr. Gaye, but Lady Edith
requests your presence.

Eugenie looks at Marvin, gets up.

EUGENIE
That's my cue.

MARVIN
Hey, don't go.

But Eugenie keeps going. She looks back at Marvin - so cute
and so VERY sad...

INT. SHERSTON MANOR - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Clyde is leading Marvin up the grand staircase.

MARVIN
Where are you taking me? You know
your timing sucks...

They approach a double door at the end of the hall. Clyde
gestures for Marvin to enter.

CLYDE
 (with grave concern)
 Madam is very fragile.

Marvin looks to escape, but Clyde implores him with his eyes. Marvin opens the double doors and steps in.

LADY E'S BEDROOM

Candles glow in this ultra-romantic boudoir. On the bed in corset, silk stockings & heels is Lady E, lipstick smeared, eye makeup smudged - very stoned, very vulnerable.

Marvin closes his eyes - shit! What do I do? - She flashes him. It feels like incest to him. Marvin walks up to the bed, kneels down, takes her outstretched hand, and tenderly kisses it.

MARVIN
 M'Lady ...

She scootches over to make more room for him. He just looks at her, his heart going out to her.

MARVIN
 I'm sorry. You're a beautiful,
 generous, kind woman-
 You saved my life and I really
 appreciate-

LADY E
 (confused)
 Sorry? ... Appreciate?
 (snapping)
 APPRECIATE!?! ... Why you little
 shit! ... I want you out'a my
 house, NOW! I don't EVER want to
 see your SORRY face again!

She rips off her heels, launches them at his head as Marvin runs for cover.

MARVIN
 Can't we talk? ... You're like my
 mother-

An earring cracks into his head.

LADY E (O.S.)
 (SCREAMING)
 LIKE YOUR MUM?!? HOW DARE YOU, YOU
 BLOODY FAG! **OUT!!!!**

EXT. BREAD TRUCK - SEAMY SIDE OF LONDON - FOGGY, WET DAY

Marvin exits the bread truck, ratty looking, clearly drugged and down on his luck. We follow him down the street past other Indigents and tons of trash. He sees an artificial rose & a funky guitar amongst the debris, picks them up, lights up a fag, passes it to the next vagrant he sees.

VAGRANT RASTA

Thanks, mate... Bob Marley's dead!

Marvin touches his heart, his lips, points to the sky.

EXT./INT. SEEDY PUB - CONTINUOUS

Marvin enters and makes his way to a table in the back.

The BARTENDER, a wise old bird, takes a bottle of Absinthe and a glass to his table. She sets them down. Marvin hands her the fake rose.

BARTENDER

Buying me off, are you?

Marvin gives her a sheepish grin.

MARVIN

You know you're my valentine...

She grins.

BARTENDER

You do it every time. Some day I'll have to collect.

Marvin shrugs. She leaves him to his misery.

EFX: MARVIN'S WOOZY POV as time passes and the bar fills up and gets more raucous. A blurry Eugenie and a burly white dude, FREDDY COUSAERT (boxing promoter), stand in front of Marvin. Freddy is paying off Marvin's tab.

EUGENIE

(apologetically)

I wanted you two to get together, but maybe this isn't the right time.

FREDDY

Poor guy. He doesn't even know we're here.

A COUPLE OF DRUNK GUYS stumble up to their booth.

DRUNK GUY #1
I hear this guy's the best singer
in America - looks like a wanker to
me.

DRUNK GUY #2
Come on, mate, sing us a ditty.

EUGENIE
Let's get him outta here.

Freddy pulls Marvin out of the booth and his bulk lets the guys know not to mess with him, Eugenie grabs the guitar and they push past the drunks, dragging Marvin out of the club.

OUTSIDE

It's wet, dark, and dreary. Freddy releases Marvin and goes to hail a cab. Marvin just collapses, falling face down into the rain-filled gutter. Eugenie looks to Freddy, imploringly.

EUGENIE
Help me.....

FADE UP ON:

INT. SMALL DARKENED BEDSIT - OSTEND, BELGIUM - AROUND THE
CLOCK - 1981

A LARGE ALARM CLOCK WITH AN ILLUMINATED DIAL sits on the bed-stand and **TICKS** TAUNTINGLY THROUGHOUT - THE TELEPHONE **RINGS** INTERMITTENTLY

EFX: TIME-LAPSE PHOTOGRAPHY/SERIES OF CUTS/DISSOLVES TO BLACK:

CREDITS BEGIN OVER CUTS/DISSOLVES TO BLACK (Marvin's beard growing throughout)

We barely see Marvin inhabiting the darkened space recovering from his drug addiction. He can't sleep; he tosses and turns; he sweats; he CRIES OUT to the Lord for help; he BARGAINS with the Devil to heal him; he throws whatever he can get his hands on at Eugenie, who slips in with bags of groceries, then flees, locking the door behind her; he PLEADS with his captors, Eugenie and Freddy, to let him out, but they stand conflicted but resolute outside the locked door. In an act of utter frustration, he picks up the funky guitar (the only symbol of his dead career) and SMASHES it against the door. Finally, in desperation, he answers the phone and his whole demeanor changes. It's his second wife, Janis, who gives him an earful.

MARVIN
Easy, baby, easy... It's cool. I'm
cool. Thinking 'bout you all too.

SILENCE

MARVIN

I've been busy working on my new album - you know how I get. That dude that called you, he's my new manager-

Another tirade.

MARVIN

At least let me speak to Bubby-

More anger.

MARVIN

Don't turn him against me. He needs his Daddy, and I need him, more...

SILENCE

MARVIN

Send him out for a visit - I mean it. I'll be ready to take care'a him in a couple'a weeks...

Sharp response.

MARVIN

What d'ya mean - *'Am I still living with that whore'?* ... She's my FRIEND!

Janis hangs up. Marvin throws the alarm clock against the door - it SHATTERS and finally STOPS TICKING. Then he runs to the bathroom and starts VOMITING.

INT. SMALL BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - DAY - SOME TIME LATER

SUPERIMPOSE: OSTEND, BELGIUM - 1981

The curtains are drawn. This time a small night-light is on. Marvin, looking skinny and drained, is sitting in the corner dressed in jeans and a T-shirt rubbing his arms and untangling his beard, the smashed guitar in his sightline.

FANTASY FOOTAGE:

ECU: MAGNIFYING MIRROR - EYEBROW - BLACK SKIN

As a stray hair is tweezed.

REVEAL: A black woman, back to camera, wearing a crazy-ass turban, legs spread mannishly apart, the tops of her nylons showing, the hem of her slip hiked up, a Bible on her lap.

She's scrunched over her makeup mirror. We cannot see her face. She's HUMMING A SPIRITUAL TUNE (TBD).

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTGUN FLASH CUTS - FEMALE BODY PARTS - ARCHITECTURAL, ABSTRACT - A COLLAGE OF SHAPES AND COLORS

BACK TO:

INT. BATHROOM - BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

Marvin (42, bearded) looks up and sees his reflection in the mirror. We HEAR LAUGHTER as we watch Marvin's face.

LADY (V.O.)
Come on, folks, let me get through
this. The final nominee for best
male R&B performance - 1971 - is
Marvin Gaye, "What's Going On."

The applause SWELLS and DIES OUT over:

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. AUDIENCE - THE GRAMMY AWARDS - NIGHT - 1971

SUPERIMPOSE: THE GRAMMY AWARDS - 1971

CLOSE ON: Marvin (35,), clean-shaven, suave, full of confidence, as he sits coolly waiting for the announcement. Beside him are his sweet Mama, eyes closed reciting verse, & his stern Daddy, ramrod straight.

LADY (O.S.)
And the winner is...
(she SQUEALS)
LOU RAWLS, "A Natural Man"...

Marvin pretends to take it in stride. Nearby, LOU RAWLS gets up, points his finger at Marvin and gives him an "I-got-you" grin.

BACKSTAGE PARTY

Marvin (35) mingles with industry artists (DIANA ROSS, SMOKEY ROBINSON, etc) and BIGWIGS, all attempting to console him. It's the end of a long evening of expectation and disappointment. Marvin excuses himself.

Off in a corner sit his Mom & Dad. Marvin goes over to them. His mother rushes forward to give him a hug.

MOTHER
Don't fret, son. Next time-

His father approaches, puts out his hand. Marvin takes it.

FATHER

*'What a heavy burden God has lain
on men...*

(Marvin - open, vulnerable)
You know why I didn't pray for you,
son?

(Marvin nods, unsure)
Cause you're not ready... You need
a humble mind and a covenant with
the Lord...

Marvin wrenches out his hand, heads off.

MOTHER

Son, wait-

FATHER

(calling after him)
*'Everything is meaningless...
A chasing after the wind...'*

OUTSIDE - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin (35, unnerved) is escorted to his waiting limousine,
flanked by his FLUNKIES, who push back his ADORING FEMALE
FANS, who fling bras, panties, keys, and phone numbers at
him. Just as the limo pulls away, it stops, the back door
flies open... *and the girls rush in.*

BACK TO:

INT. BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

CLOSE ON: Marvin's face (42, bearded) as he stares into the
mirror. He's sweating profusely...

We HEAR GOSPEL MUSIC (TBD)...

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT./INT. SMALL STOREFRONT/MAKESHIFT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST
CHURCH - SIMPLE CITY, WASHINGTON, D.C. - SATURDAY - THE
SABBATH - **1946**

**SUPERIMPOSE: PENTECOSTAL HOUSE OF GOD - SIMPLE CITY,
WASHINGTON, D.C. - 1946**

LITTLE MARVIN (7) is flanked by his younger brother FRANKIE
(4), his Mother, HIS SISTERS, and the OTHER FAMILIES of this
tiny congregation as they sway back and forth while finishing
a **spiritual song** (TBD). (The men are separated from the
women, who are covered head-to-toe in white, wearing white
pillbox hats with blue Stars of David on top.) Little Marvin
starts fidgeting and his mother pokes him. The song ends.

MOTHER

Pay attention, Marvin, the Lord is speaking through your daddy.

POV LITTLE MARVIN as the minister, Reverend Marvin Gay, Sr., addresses his flock. Reverend Gay looms larger than life.

FATHER

And the Lord sayest to Moses, 'I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey...

(looking at little Marvin)

So, go down, Moses, the Chosen One. I am sending you to the Pharaoh to deliver my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.

CLOSE ON LITTLE MARVIN swelling with pride as the rest of the congregation accent the sermon with 'Hallelujahs' and 'So sayest the Lord', 'Go down, Moses', Lord have mercy, etc.

BACK TO:

INT. BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

CLOSE ON MARVIN (42, bearded) as his eyes go from joy to sorrow.

SUPERIMPOSE:

ECU: SYRINGE TIP as the liquid squirts out like a geyser.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. LAVISH HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT - **AFTER THE GRAMMYS** - 1971

EXTREME DRUGGIE SLO-MO: Marvin (35, suave, clean-shaven) is lying on a bed on his back in only a T-shirt and underpants, CHRIST-LIKE, arms stretched to the sides, one arm tied off above the elbow. A lingerie-clad GROUPIE (from Grammys) holds the syringe. The OTHER GROUPIES in the room are sprawled about either watching or nodding out.

GROUPIE

You're gonna dig this, honey... Get ready to meet your maker.

She plunges the needle into his vein.

BUBBY (V.O.)
Daddy, daddy, DADDY...

STYLIZED POV: MARVIN'S EYES SNAP OPEN IN TERROR, then roll back in his head as the drug kicks in.

BACK TO:

INT. BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

The door is wide open. Marvin (42, bearded) stands at the mirror as we left him now fully clothed. His son, BUBBY, runs into the room and jumps up into his arms, carrying an album cover half the size of him.

BUBBY
 You should'a come...

MARVIN
 Whoa, tiger...
 (twirling him around &
 collapsing on the couch)
 You're gettin too big for your old
 man.

Eugenie slips in gracefully carrying bags of groceries.

MARVIN
 What you got there, little man?

BUBBY
 Look what Genie got me.
 (displaying the album
What's Goin' On)

Marvin shoots Eugenie a look but she pretends to be too busy.

BUBBY
 An' she got me the best ice cream
 ever...

MARVIN
 Did she now?

BUBBY
 Yeah, an' the man at the store said
 he loved your music but didn't know
 what happened to you and I tol' him
 you're my daddy and you just got
 sick for a while and when you get
 better we're gonna play like we
 used to...

Marvin abruptly gets up, goes over to the curtained window and peeks out. The daylight is blinding.

MARVIN

Hey, guys, I'm gonna take a quick walk. Get some fresh air before I turn into a bat.

(looking into Bubby's eyes)

Superman or batman?

BUBBY

Superman!

MARVIN

(kissing his head)

That's what I thought. Superman's gotta go leap a tall building...

(to Eugenie)

And tell Freddy this place is too small for the three of us.

EUGENIE

Don't you think-

I guess not - for Marvin is off, leaving Eugenie and Bubby to wonder if he'll ever walk through the door again.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin (42, bearded) walks down the street completely unrecognized, a stranger in a strange land and the only black in a white world. He passes a park where some WHITE GUYS are playing a pick-up basketball game. He sits on a bench and checks out the game.

One of the players tosses him the ball, and he reluctantly gets up and joins in. But instead of being the black superstar they expect, Marvin makes a fool of himself - stumbling, out of breath, the ball is stolen from him, he drops a pass. He puts up his hands in surrender and keeps on walking.

EXT. RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Parks and baby strollers are replaced by a few HOOKERS, PIMPS, and DRUG DEALERS out early before the night-shift. Some of the girls sit on stoops or lean out of windows enticing the early prowlers. At the front of one window, a CHINESE WHORE leans out and tries to hustle Marvin.

CHINESE WHORE

You want your laundry done, good-looking?

He pulls out his empty pockets to show her he's not buying. In the back of the room, AN EXOTIC TALL AFRICAN MAN/WOMEN IN A DOMINATRIX OUTFIT enters frame. Marvin is mesmerized.

CHINESE WHORE
 No tickie; no laundry. Come back
 an' party with us, black man, when
 you have some cash.

He gives her his sheepish grin and keeps on walking. He hears the SOUND OF CHURCH BELLS in the distance. He follows the sound to the docks, past the boats, till he finds the source.

EXT./INT. SMALL SEASIDE CHAPEL - OSTEND - LATE AFTERNOON

Marvin enters. There are some OLD WOMEN saying prayers but otherwise it's pretty empty. Marvin takes a seat in one of the pews. AN OLD WOMAN turns to him and smiles. She's missing all her teeth!

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. HIS FATHER'S CHURCH - WASHINGTON, D.C. - DAY - 1946

Reverend Gay is seated at the piano.

FATHER
 Come on, son. The Devil don't stay
 where music is.

He beckons to little Marvin (7), who is pushed forward to the front of the small congregation as his father plays the opening chords to "*His Eye Is on the Sparrow*". The boy is terrified. He hesitantly begins SINGING but gains confidence as soon as he shuts his eyes and starts letting the plaintive song transport him. His mother and the other women cry gently; some begin SPEAKING IN TONGUES.

YOUNG NEIGHBORHOOD TOUGHS press their faces to the glass at the front of the storefront.

When little Marvin finishes, he's swept up in the arms of his mother - his debut a triumph. But his father's demeanor changes dramatically. He resumes his place in front of his flock and LASHES OUT.

FATHER
 Hear me, you Sinners. The Lord
 detests the proud of heart. Of this
 I am sure. Pride goes before
 destruction, a haughty spirit
 before a fall. For whoever exalts
 himself will be humbled, so sayest
 the Lord...

Mother Gay shepherds Little Marvin outside, tears streaking down his face.

MARVIN
Why's Daddy mad at me? ... All I
did was sing...

MOTHER
(stooping down to eye-
level)
Son, you made your Mama proud.

YOUNG TOUGH (O.S.)
Gay, ain't dat a sweet-guy name?

The neighborhood toughs all SNICKER at Marvin in his cheap
black suit two sizes too small for him. Mother Gay pulls him
away.

MOTHER
Don't pay those nasty boys no never
mind. Your Daddy says Gay means
'happiness' AND IT DOES - sure as I
know Jesus.

BACK TO:

INT. BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - NIGHT - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

In the cramped room, Eugenie and Freddy sit watching the
door. Bubby is playing in the corner, coloring the album
cover. Marvin (42, bearded) slinks in.

BUBBY
Daddy, daddy, you've come back.
(running up and clutching
his leg)

MARVIN
(to Genie & Freddy)
Now don't you go giving me that
look, you two, I'm not 'you-know-
what,' not with my boy here.

Freddy, a round, warm, Teddy-bear of a guy, barrels over and
gives Marvin a bear hug.

FREDDY
Fresh air is good for the soul.
(referring to his belly)
I need to get out and walk
myself... Why don't we talk.

Eugenie's already at the door with Bubby's coat.

EUGENIE
Don't know about anyone else, but I
feel like another ice cream.

Bubby doesn't need more than that.

BUBBY
Can I Daddy?

MARVIN
You go on. Have a good time.

BUBBY
Are you gonna be here when I get back?

MARVIN
(crossing his heart)
Promise...

When they're gone, Marvin and Freddy get down to it.

MARVIN
So... (giving him an affectionate punch)... What's happening? You want tea or something?

FREDDY
Nah, I'm good. Eugenie says you want a bigger space...

MARVIN
(looking at the cramped quarters)
You think?

FREDDY
You know I'd do anything for you, Marvin, but for me to take on more expense, at this stage...

Marvin picks up the smashed guitar, plays with a broken string.

MARVIN
That's cool. I understand. It's just- for me to get my life back and beat down my demons, I need my music and a space to create it in.
(placing the guitar in the trash)
AND a new guitar...

FREDDY
(facetious)
Anything else?

MARVIN
(apologetic)
It's all I know...

He starts shadow-boxing and playing around with overweight Freddy, then puts his arm around him affectionately.

MARVIN
(imitating an Island
accent)
How else I gonna pay you back, *man*?

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BIZARRE FORTUNE-TELLER'S SHOP - WASHINGTON, D.C. -
NIGHT - 1946

Mother Gay shepherds Little Marvin (7) in. They pass other BLACK LADIES just leaving. Mother Gay presents her little boy to MADAME HAITI, an enormous Island lady with gold teeth seated on a sagging couch who reads cards and predicts the future for all the church ladies on the sly for a living.

MOTHER
Madame Haiti, I've brought you my
first-born son. He got the gift,
but I worry 'bout him. He wets his
bed...

MADAME HAITI
Bring 'im to me, *ma'am*.

Mother Gay deposits Marvin in front of the oracle.

MADAME HAITI
Kneel down, son.

Marvin looks over at his mother; she nods her approval. He squats down and Madame Haiti pushes his head into her enormous lap and starts rubbing the knots on his skull.

MADAME HAITI
Oh, yah, *ma'am*, dis one bery
special. He gonna be punished and
praised at da same time. He gonna
be berry famous & travel da world,
and he gonna take care'a his
mudda...
(finding a special knot of
interest)
Ooh la la, and dis one gonna love
da la-dies.

Holding his head between huge hands.

MADAME HAITI
You like dat-

All of a sudden she starts quaking, like a frozen draft has invaded her lair.

MADAME HAITI
 There's an evil wind a-blowin'... I
 fear for you, *little man*.

She clutches Little Marvin to her bosom as if shielding him
 from the wind...

BUBBY (V.O.)
OUCH! That hurts!

BACK TO:

EXT./INT. HOTEL PUB - OSTEND - AFTERNOON - **PRESENT TIME** -
 1981

CLOSE ON BUBBY: A LITTLE WHITE GIRL is trying to rub the
 color off his skin. OTHER WHITE KIDS look on.

BUBBY
 I tol' you it won't come off! God
 made us like that.

Bubby and the white kids run inside past the table where
 Marvin (42, bearded) and Freddy sit talking, barely missing
 FREDDY'S WIFE, Irene (warm, plain) carrying two plates.

FREDDY'S WIFE
 Easy, easy. Slow down, children.

They continue on at a reduced speed. Irene proudly places
 both plates in front of Marvin.

FREDDY'S WIFE
 Dover sole, just the way you like
 it & my home-made bread to mop up
 the sauce.

FREDDY
 (feigning offense)
 Hey, where's mine?

MARVIN
 (to Freddy's wife)
 You're an angel, Irene. What do you
 see in this pudgy white guy?

She blushes, drinking in the attention, anticipating his
 first bite.

MARVIN
 Mmmmm-mmmmm. De-li-cious... Dump
 the dead weight and YOU come home
 with me.

She beams her way back to the kitchen.

MARVIN

Seriously, Freddy, you're lucky. Me, if I don't get something going soon, I'm gonna trip out to the Twilight zone.

FREDDY

You gotta be patient, Marvin. I've been checking around, and I got a friend who's trying to set me up with an A&R guy at CBS Records who MIGHT be interested in talking to you.

MARVIN

You know I'm a good sweet-talker.

FREDDY

Don't get your hopes up, all the established guys passed. But this guy's an up-and-comer, supposed to be an aggressive black guy looking for a big act to help him move up with the big boys in New York.

MARVIN

An aggressive brother trying to step up? Could be good.

FREDDY

Not so easy... He'll be in Germany in a couple of weeks but doesn't even want to come over here unless he's sure you're completely clean and healthy.

MARVIN

That's crazy... I never met a record exec who didn't want to hang with Marvin Gaye. Tell him I'm one fine specimen. I'll be in the best shape of my life when he comes.

(Island accent)

You hear me, man?

(then raising his right hand in earnest)

As God is my witness...

A GOSPEL SONG like "**Come to Jesus**" weaves in and out over the following:

MONTAGE:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE, CITY STREETS, BY THE WATER - OSTEND -
THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Marvin is jogging trying to get healthy, but he's so out of shape that unless someone is watching, he walks most of the way or sits on a bench watching others run by.

When he starts jogging, his feet barely leave the ground. But as the sequence progresses, he moves faster and faster, the sweat pouring off him.

MONTAGE/MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - OSTEND - ANOTHER DAY

Marvin tries to teach Bubby some basic moves.

MARVIN
Son, we're gonna work on your
skills.

Bubby watches earnestly as Marvin attempts a lay-up and misses badly. Bubby can't help LAUGHING.

MARVIN
Now that's not nice. You laughing
at your daddy?

Bubby sheepishly nods, a hint of fear in his eyes. Marvin goes over to him, bends down and looks him in the eye.

MARVIN
Okay, so I'm no Dr. J. It's **my**
skills need working on ... Wanna
help?

Bubby eagerly shakes his head 'yes'.

MONTAGE/MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

SERIES OF DISSOLVES as Bubby keeps passing Marvin the ball from various parts of the court and Marvin tries different shots till he actually starts to look pretty good. He finally makes the lay-up he missed earlier and gives Bubby the thumbs up, prancing like a kid.

MARVIN
Move over, Dr. J. **Here comes MAR-
velous MAR-vin.**

Bubby GIGGLES.

MONTAGE/MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - OSTEND - ANOTHER DAY

Marvin joins the neighborhood pick-up game with Bubby and Eugenie watching. He's actually decent, though no Dr. J., matching up, not stumbling, even stealing the ball and making a shot. Bubby and Eugenie CHEER him on.

MONTAGE/MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

INT. LOCAL BOXING GYM - OSTEND - ANOTHER DAY

Marvin starts to train, using the speed and heavy bags, then takes his first lesson in the ring. His SPARRING PARTNER is a brash young European-style fighter. The TRAINER, a pug of a guy, BARKS OUT ORDERS. Marvin touches gloves with his sparring partner. But instead of doing what his trainer tells him, he starts fooling around like Muhammad Ali. He mugs in front of his opponent, rope-a-dope style, and gets walloped. He drops to the canvas.

MONTAGE AND SONG ENDS:

SONG

*Child, when life don't seem worth
living; Come to Jesus; let him hold
you - in his arms.*

CUT TO BLACK:

We HEAR a Sinatra imitation of "*Come Fly with Me*" sung by a YOUNG SOULFUL VOICE.

FADE UP ON:

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. ALLEY - WASHINGTON, D.C. - EARLY EVENING - 1955

SUPERIMPOSE: WASHINGTON, D.C. - 1955

TEENAGE MARVIN (16, short-cropped hair) and a bunch of KIDS, with Frankie tagging along, hang out in a ghettoey setting with the splendor of the capital in sharp contrast behind them. Marvin is SINGING, doing his best "Sinatra" while the other boys IMPROVISE A BACK-UP RIFF, not quite understanding Marvin's obsession with pop music and trying to doo-wop it up as much as possible.

They get through the first stanza and crack up LAUGHING.

FRIEND #1

Man, you one crazy nigga getting
into that white shit.

FRIEND #2

We sing the blues. We're into soul,
R&B...

He turns on a small transistor radio (TBD) and all the guys start dancing - including Marvin, who sucks - while Frankie just watches.

FRIEND #1
I know why you dig that ofay music,
'cuz you sure can't dance.

FRANKIE
In our religion, we don't shake
that way for the Lord.

FRIEND #2
What religion is that? Crazy white
man's religion. Anyway, dancing
come natural to us coloreds.
(imitating Marvin's moves)
What's this shit?

They all LAUGH at Marvin.

MARVIN
Laugh all you want, but I'm not
staying 'round here. You'll see.
I'm goin' big time. I'm gonna be a
crooner and travel the world.

FRANKIE
Yeah, well, you gonna get another
whippin' if we don't get home soon.
(Frankie & Marvin take off
running)
An' Daddy gonna kill you if he
finds out you singin' and dancin'
to the Devil's music.

INT. BOYS BEDROOM - MARVIN'S PARENTS' APT - (SHANTYTOWN)
WASHINGTON, D.C. - EVENING - **SHORTLY THEREAFTER**

Marvin (16) and Frankie climb in through their bedroom
window. Their parents are ARGUING in the living room. The
boys press their ears to the door.

LIVING ROOM

Father Gay is seated in the only comfy chair, his whippin'
belt draped over his knee, his Bible on the table beside him
along with a shot glass and a bottle of rotgut on a TV table.

Mother Gay comes in from the kitchen and sets a dinner tray
in front of him. Father Gay tosses back a full shot of
whiskey.

FATHER

The eye that mocks a father will be
pecked out by the ravens, eaten by
the vultures.

MOTHER

Ravens, vultures, I clean houses
for a living, then come home and
wait on you. What kind'a example
you settin' for those young men?

FATHER

(picking up his Bible and
reading)
I am the Lord, and there is no
other. I form the light and create
darkness. I bring prosperity and
create disaster; I, the Lord, do
all these things.

BACK TO THE BEDROOM

MARVIN

Yeah, then why don't you get a
job...

SONG

*"Yip yip yip yip yip yip, boom boom
boom boom boom boom, Get a job, sha
na na na...."*

LATER THAT NIGHT

Frankie is sound asleep. Marvin is on the floor in his
underwear, a flashlight on. He's pressed up real close to a
little 45 record player, the sound down low. He places a
nickel on the needle to slow the song way down so he can
learn the words. A RAT scurries across the floor in the
darkness and Marvin takes a stone from a coal bucket by the
bed and nails him.

He HEARS his father, stumbling drunk, making his way to his
room and quickly lifts the needle and tosses the record under
the bed, then turns off the flashlight.

FATHER

I hear ya in there...

FRANKIE

(waking)
Marvin...?

Marvin puts his hand over Frankie's mouth.

MARVIN

Shhhhhhhhh...

FATHER (O.S.)
 (mumbling)
 Hey, I'm talkin' to ya ... probably
 playin' with yo'self for all I
 know.

He tries the door but it's locked from the inside.

FATHER (O.S.)
 What you hiding in there?

He proceeds to RATTLE the door, POUND on it, and YELL for them to open it.

Marvin's on his feet throwing on his clothes.

FRANKIE
 (whispering)
 What you doin', Marvin?

MARVIN
 (heading toward the
 window)
 Gettin' outta here.

Frankie jumps up.

FRANKIE
 What d'ya mean? Where you goin'?

Marvin opens the window and steps out.

Off-screen, Mother Gay is trying to intercede.

MOTHER (O.S.)
 Christ Almighty, ol' man, get to
 bed and sleep it off 'for I call
 the police.

MARVIN
 Take care'a Mama.

FRANKIE
 But...

MARVIN
 Frankie, I hear music... Listen, I
 gotta go...
 (giving him a hug)
 ... or somebody's gonna get killed.

We HEAR the sound of someone LAYING ON A HORN...

BACK TO:

INT. AIRPORT - OSTEND - DAY - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

Freddy picks up CBS Exec. LARKIN ARNOLD, a slick, fast-talking black man. They drive along in silence.

FREDDY
Marvin's really looking forward to meeting with you.

LARKIN
I'm sure Marvin's glad to be meeting with anybody considering all the shit he's pulled on people over the last few years.

FREDDY
Nobody complained when he was lining their pockets.

Larkin gives him a touché kind of look.

LARKIN
Look, everyone tol' me to stay away from this cat, but out'a respect for the guy, I'm here.

INT. BOXING GYM - DAY - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Freddy and Larkin enter and Marvin (42, bearded) immediately starts to show off with his CAREFULLY SELECTED SPARRING PARTNER. He breaks into the Ali shuffle taunting his flat-footed opponent.

MARVIN
Float like a butterfly; sting like a bee.

LARKIN
(to Freddy)
I came here to see a singer not a boxer, but I'll give it to you, he looks damn good.

FREDDY
I told you-

LARKIN
That's all I need. Got a plane to catch-

Freddy starts to protest-

LARKIN
Chill. I'll catch a cab.
(walking out)
(MORE)

LARKIN (cont'd)
 Tell Marvin I'll talk to my people
 and get back to you.

Larkin splits. Marvin abruptly stops his workout, climbs out of the ring and goes over to Freddy.

MARVIN
 What's with him?

FREDDY
 (resigned)
 Let it play out.

MARVIN
 (imitating Ali's voice)
 But I was gonna knock that boy out!

Then Marvin CRACKS UP, posing, flexing, pumping his pecks, he-man style.

We HEAR Bo Diddley's "*I'm a Man*" over:

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BO DIDDLEY CONCERT - WASHINGTON, D.C - NIGHT - 1958

SUPERIMPOSE: WASHINGTON, D.C. - 1958

Bo is on stage performing, looking all cool dressed in a sheriff's outfit. The MIXED-RACE AUDIENCE dances and grooves to the music.

BACKSTAGE

Bo is surrounded by WELL-WISHERS. A young soldier pushes past the BOUNCER.

BOUNCER
 Say, man, you can't go in there...

MARVIN
 Official business for Mr. Bo
 Diddley.

All eyes turn to see what's the commotion and young Marvin (clean-cut, 19) all spiffy in an Air Force uniform, steps forward.

MARVIN
 Tape for you, Mr. Diddley, *Sir*.
 (Marvin salutes)
 My buddies and me made a demo. You
 have a recording studio and we'd
 like you to produce our first
 record, **SIR**.

Bo doesn't know quite what to make of him, but he takes the tape. (After all, they're both dressed in uniforms!)

OUTSIDE

Marvin joins his BUDDIES (back-up singers).

BUDDIES

Well?...Tell us! Come on, man...

Marvin takes off his hat and tosses it in the air. They all celebrate.

BUDDY #2

Didn't the Air Force dump yo' black
ass cuz ya couldn't even peel
potatoes without talkin' back?

Marvin just shrugs, gives his sheepish grin. They all LAUGH, and for the moment, he's a hero.

EUGENIE (V.O.)

Close your eyes and don't peek!

BACK TO:

INT. BEDSIT (SAME) - OSTEND - DAY - **PRESENT TIME - 1981**

Marvin (bearded, 42) sits on the couch playing drums on his thighs, obviously distracted. He reluctantly complies.

The bathroom door opens and Eugenie peeks out. Satisfied, she sashays out wearing the same micro-mini she wore to meet Marvin at Lady E's.

EUGENIE

Okay. Open your eyes. Ta-da!
Remember this dress?

MARVIN

(distracted but kind)
Yeah, sure.

She turns and leans down.

EUGENIE

Unzip me?

MARVIN

Yeah but-

EUGENIE

Shhhh...

He complies. She shrugs off her dress in one motion & just stands there - nothing but her toned butt (in a lacy thong) and her long legs (in 5" stilettos) in front of him. Marvin WHISTLES his admiration.

MARVIN

You're one fine woman, Genie.

EUGENIE

(bending over/turning her head)

Just thought I'd get you before you're off singing to all those little girls. Bubby won't be home-

But something snaps inside of Marvin. He jumps up, picks up her dress and hands it to her.

MARVIN

It's just...Believe me, Genie, it's not you. I'm a mess. Gotta sort things out-

The phone RINGS. Both jump. Marvin picks it up.

MARVIN

Yeah... What's up?... Tomorrow? Larkin? 9:00 AM sharp? I'll be there. An' thanks, man, ya done good.

Marvin and Eugenie embrace.

EUGENIE

Oh, Marvin, I'm so happy for you...

Marvin gives her a kiss on the forehead.

MARVIN

You deserve better...

He takes off.

EXT. STREETS OF OSTEND - LATE AFTERNOON - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin (long coat on) walks with a certain determination as if he knows just where he's going.

EXT. RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - OSTEND - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin stands in the shadows staring at the window where the Chinese whore and the African showed their wares previously. The curtain is closed. The street begins to bustle with activity and Marvin can no longer stand there unobserved. Just when he's ready to move on, an aggressive hyped-up HOOKER on speed comes right up in Marvin's face.

HOOKER

What's a fine-looking dude like you standing 'round like a little boy with his dick in his hand. How much money you got?

MARVIN

Just some spare change.

HOOKER

You look like you need a party, honey. Give me what you got and follow me. Think of it as a mercy fuck.

INT. SLEAZY ROOM - RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

The hooker keeps on talking. Marvin is quiet.

HOOKER

(undressing)

Where you from, honey? You sure look like you could be someone famous... You famous?

Marvin comes over to her.

HOOKER

Hey, honey, don't you want to take your clothes off?

MARVIN

(bending her over,
unzipping, & taking her
from behind)

Shhhh. Don't talk. Just fuck.

EXT. STREET - RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin, still putting himself together, exits and resumes walking. A goofy drug dealer, BLOWFISH DAN (think Dennis Hopper, *Apocalypse Now*) runs after him.

BLOWFISH DAN

Hey, man, I see you been samplin' some of Ostend's finest...

MARVIN

Sir, I have no idea what you're talking about.

Marvin walks on, but he can't shake the dude.

BLOWFISH DAN

It's cool. It's cool. I'm a bit of a pervert myself. I dig it kinky.

MARVIN

Excuse me? I came here to walk with the Lord and He sent me off on a little diversion.

BLOWFISH DAN

Said like a saint, man. Said like a saint. Say, man, word on the street you're that American soul singer, Marvin Gaye. **Wow**. It's true. This must be my lucky day.

MARVIN

You got me, okay? Peace an' love. May the Lord be with you.

Marvin keeps on walking but the dealer stays with him.

BLOWFISH DAN

Sure, Mr. Gaye. Absotootly. Just kidding. Get it? You know, I can supply you with the best toot in Belgium - or anything you want - *discounted*, of course.

MARVIN

Very kind, but I kind'a like bein' low key.

BLOWFISH DAN

BRO, you ain't exactly Casper if you catch my drift....

Marvin chuckles, speeds up. Dan chases after him.

BLOWFISH DAN

Hey, I forgot to introduce myself. Blowfish Dan, that's my moniker, a Yank by birth but I've been an expat so long I feel like a native - you could say that the grass here is greener, excuse the pun. Got a boat down at the dock, part of a little import/export business I run. Wanna check it out? Take a little ride? Maybe you can preach to me and I'll see the light. Crazier things have happened. Come on, it'll be good for your soul. **HOLY MOLY, Holy Moly.**

He LAUGHS a CRAZY-MAN'S LAUGH.

SONG
Day-0, Day-ay-0 ...

We HEAR Harry Belafonte's "**The Banana Boat Song**" over:

E./I. BOAT - OFFSHORE - OSTEND - SUNDOWN - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

The boat floats peacefully on the water as the sun dips below the horizon. Marvin sits on deck with Blowfish Dan, taking it all in. A small dingy filled with CUSTOMERS approaches.

BLOWFISH DAN
 Sit tight. I got a little
 merchandise to unload.

He heads off, turns, and sets a gun down on the table.

BLOWFISH DAN
 Just a little precaution in case
 that love an' peace shit don't
 work. You never know, preacher man.
 My clientele's pretty whacked out.

He LAUGHS his CRAZY MAN'S LAUGH. Marvin pockets the gun and kicks back.

Below deck, Blowfish Dan does business, meticulously cutting hash and coke and doling it out to his customers.

LATER

Blowfish Dan reappears on deck with some samples, but Marvin is sound asleep, so he shrugs, lights a joint, and proceeds to get loaded.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING

The boat drifts back into dock. Blowfish Dan sticks a cup of coffee under Marvin's nose.

BLOWFISH DAN
 Wake up, preacher man. Hope you had
 pleasant dreams. I sure did. Say,
 don't you sleep where you live?
 Thought we'd shoot the shit about
 the virtues of clean living;
 instead, you missed one un-**fuckin'**
 believable sunrise.

MARVIN
 (coming to)
 My father calls 'em God's
 paintbrush... Say... (alarmed) What
 time is it?

BLOWFISH DAN
10:30 - give or take.

MARVIN
Oh my God! Gotta go!

BLOWFISH DAN
(dropping a joint in
Marvin's coat pocket)
Come back to the wild side, my man.

Marvin takes off running.

BLOWFISH DAN
An' hold onto that piece. I got
plenty.

We HEAR his CRAZY-MAN'S LAUGHTER echoing over:

THE FOLLOWING SCENES CUT BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN:

INT. LOBBY - LARKIN'S HOTEL - DAY

Larkin and Freddy sit fuming waiting for Marvin. Both check their watches.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

A distraught, disheveled Marvin runs full-out, weaving in and out of PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES, and TRAFFIC.

INT. LOBBY - LARKIN'S HOTEL - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Larkin gets up, shakes Freddy's hand. Freddy gives him an apologetic look, takes off.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

From a distance, Marvin sees Freddy exit the hotel and walk in the opposite direction.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin runs up behind Freddy and grabs him.

MARVIN
We gotta go back in there. I can't
blow this opportunity.

FREDDY

You should'a thought of that a lot sooner. And where the hell have you been? Why didn't you call? You're making a fool out of me. I can't keep making excuses for you.

MARVIN

(turning Freddy around)
Sure you can - *as long as it works.*

INT. LOBBY - LARKIN'S HOTEL - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Larkin's still there. Freddy walks over to him and directs Larkin's attention to the entrance where Marvin stands - one confident motherfucker with a twinkle in his eye. Nonchalant and cool, Marvin strides over to join them like a man who's had a shower, come on time, and thinks he's hot shit. Even Freddy's impressed by the transformation.

LARKIN

I see you're on CPT time.

FREDDY

CPT time? What's that?

MARVIN

'Scuse my man here, Freddy's a lovable bastard but really white.
(to Freddy)
Mr. Arnold's referring to 'colored people's time'. Why don't you get the man a drink and we can sit down and get acquainted.

LARKIN

(to Freddy)
Bacardi and coke...
(to Marvin)
Thanks, man.

Freddy takes off giving Marvin a look. Marvin and Larkin sit.

LARKIN

Before we begin, I just want to say, whether we do business or not, it's an honor to meet the man who brought such dignity to black people's music. You're one of the reasons I chose my profession.

MARVIN

Glad to be of service.

LARKIN

As much as I respect your music,
and more important, your sales over
the years, your reputation for
working with others - sucks. You're
one hard sell.

MARVIN

Just misunderstood.

LARKIN

Listen, I didn't come all this way
to lay negative shit on you, but I
do need to assure everyone back in
New York you're ready to play the
game.

MARVIN

Now I know I'm being set up.

Freddy returns with Larkin's drink.

LARKIN

Thanks, man... (takes a sip)
I have the authority to offer you
a demo deal AND, if we like what we
hear - a full seven-year deal.

MARVIN

For real? A demo deal? That's for
beginners; I'm Marvin Gaye-

FREDDY

Marvin, maybe we should talk-

MARVIN

(getting up)
Freddy, I'm nobody's slave-

LARKIN

Sorry you feel that way.

MARVIN

I got a family...

LARKIN

And I got a job to do.

MARVIN

Rob a man of his dignity - that
your job?

LARKIN

If you don't wanna do it, blow me
off. Go on being Marvin Gaye - but
without CBS money.

MARVIN
Thanks for your time.

Marvin heads off. Freddy runs after him.

FREDDY
Marvin, are you crazy?!?

MARVIN
Don't know... Maybe... Listen, man,
I gotta hit the john.

HOTEL MENS ROOM

Marvin stands alone before the mirror. He pulls out the gun and jams it against his temple. He closes his eyes and presses on the trigger, then opens one eye.

MARVIN
(to himself)
What the fuck you doin', man? You
got people to take care of. **FUCK!**

Marvin puts the gun back in his pocket.

EXT HOTEL - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin exits. Freddy's waiting for him.

FREDDY
I was worried about you.

MARVIN
(sarcastic)
Whad'ya think? I was gonna kill
myself?

FREDDY
Very funny... Look, take the deal.
I'll rent you a house, get you a
piano AND a guitar. Start writing,
give this dude some hits & he'll
back off. It'll all work out.

MARVIN
You're a good soul, Freddy. What
would I do without you?

FREDDY
Probably shoot yourself!

Marvin does a double-take.

EXT./INT. MARVIN'S (NEW) RENTED HOME - OSTEND - DAY - SOME TIME LATER

Bubby, Freddy, Eugenie unload bags from Freddy's car while MOVERS carry a piano in.

INSIDE

We see that the property fronts the beach. In the sparsely furnished front room, Marvin sits by the window lost in thought, a brand new acoustic guitar in hand. The movers enter with a piano.

MARVIN
(pointing)
Over there. Thanks.

MOVER
Nice place.

Marvin nods. Bubby and Eugenie enter.

BUBBY
This place is so cool.

He runs over to the piano and starts BANGING on the keys.

EUGENIE
Guess we'll have to get that tuned.

MARVIN
And some earplugs.

EUGENIE
(giving him a hug)
Well, you're making your son very happy.

MARVIN
You're a big part of it.

EUGENIE
(playful)
Well, I'm here, and you an' me could get busy making more...

MARVIN
Oh, my sweet Genie with the remarkably long legs...
(melancholy)
What am I going to do with you?

And for a brief moment, both know it isn't going to work.

FREDDY (O.S.)
Now isn't this a pretty picture.

Freddy slips in, camera in hand.

FREDDY
Come on, everybody, get close...
(Buddy runs between Marvin
& Genie)
Say GAYE...

ALL
GAYE!

POP! FREEZE FRAME on the three of them: Bubby - beaming;
Eugenie - hopelessly in love; and Marvin - conflicted.

We HEAR a child making AIRPLANE SOUNDS over:

INT. MARVIN'S RENTED HOME - DAY - SOME TIME LATER

The front room has been converted into a music room. The piano sits tuned. Marvin threads tape into a reel-to-reel recorder as Bubby runs in holding a paper airplane.

MARVIN
Hold on there, son, if you wanna
stay here while I'm working, you've
gotta be quiet or go play outside.

Bubby snuggles down in a corner, his plane on his lap.

MUSICAL MONTAGE - DAY TO NIGHT:

CLOSE ON THE REEL-TO-REEL TAPE RECORDER as it records snippets of the writing session.

Marvin PLAYS and/or HUMS along with each foray - **Gospel, soul, Nat King Cole, Sinatra** (TBD)- struggling to find a direction. Bubby sits frozen throughout - afraid to move.

Finally (now night), Marvin SLAMS the piano cover down in frustration and begins to rage about the room in the dark. Bubby starts to CRY. Marvin totally forgot about him!

MARVIN
Bubby, baby, I'm sorry. Daddy's
just a little out of it.... Come on
over here and sit with me, okay?

Marvin takes his seat back at the piano and Bubby scoots up onto the bench beside him. Marvin collects his thoughts.

MARVIN
You know I used to look up to my
Daddy, your grandpa.
(MORE)

MARVIN (cont'd)
Thought he ruled the world, that
the Lord spoke through him and
angels sat on his shoulders. Then
all that changed.

BUBBY
What happened?

MARVIN
Life didn't work out quite the way
he wanted it to and he lost faith
in God and then in himself... But
that's not gonna happen to us.

Sensing his desperation, Bubby nods in the dark.

BUBBY
It won't, Daddy...

MARVIN
I'm just frustrated, son. Run clean
out'a ideas.

Bubby's puzzled.

BUBBY
How many ideas are there in the
world?

MARVIN
(LAUGHING)
A whole lot. I just can't seem to
tap into 'em.

BUBBY
Does that mean you're gonna send me
away?

Marvin feels broadsided.

MARVIN
That's not gonna happen, you hear
me, son? I just gotta get back on
my feet and prove myself again,
that's all. Then me and your Mama
are gonna get back together an'
we'll be a family again. You'd like
that, wouldn't you, son?

Bubby nods.

MARVIN
Then as sure as I know Jesus it's
gonna happen.
(Island accent)
Dat Right, *little man*?

BUBBY
(nodding, Island accent)
Dat's right!

Marvin shows Bubby the "brother" handshake.

LATER THAT NIGHT

Marvin hands Freddy the tape of his creative session.

MARVIN
I hope Larkin has a sense of humor.

FREDDY
It'll go out tomorrow. You better
do more than hope; I'm running out
of money.

BUBBY'S ROOM

Bubby is tucked in. Marvin stands over him.

BUBBY
Daddy, will you be here when I wake
up?

MARVIN
Tomorrow and every day after.

He watches as Bubby falls effortlessly to sleep.

We HEAR HUMMING...

FANTASY FOOTAGE:

ECU: MAGNIFYING MIRROR - EYE - BLACK SKIN

A thick coating of metallic eye shadow is smeared on.

REVEAL: Back of the same black woman we saw earlier, hunched
over her makeup mirror, HUMMING the same spiritual tune.

**QUICK SERIES OF SHOTGUN FLASH CUTS - FEMALE BODY PARTS -
ARCHITECTURAL, ABSTRACT - A COLLAGE OF SHAPES AND COLORS**

BACK TO:

LARKIN (V.O.)
You're making me look bad...

I./E. MUSIC ROOM - MARVIN'S RENTED HOME - ANOTHER DAY - 1981

Marvin (42, bearded) is sitting by the side window, Freddy is
seated on a chair, and Larkin is pacing. Outside on the sand,
Eugenie and Bubby are playing.

LARKIN
You're all over the place...

FREDDY
It's a process. Creativity takes time. Marvin is just-

LARKIN
Just wasting my time. That's what he's doin'.

MARVIN
(all cool)
You record cats are all the same, feedin' the public the same ol' tired nonsense. I'm experimenting...

LARKIN
Spare me the creative rap. Did you listen to that tape before you sent it to me? Talk about tired shit. You gotta get into the present day. The past is dead.

MARVIN
That's harsh. I'm jus' lookin' for a new sound.

LARKIN
Just give me somethin' commercial that sells, then we'll talk about breakin' new ground... Look, Marvin, I don't wanna tell you what to write. Just remember, we all gotta pay bills.

FREDDY
But if you let Marvin...

Marvin gestures for Freddy to back off.

FREDDY
Can you be more specific?

LARKIN
Fuck no! When I hear it, I'll know it.
(to Marvin)
Listen, bro, when **you're** back on top, you can get in **my** face.

He stretches out his hand. Marvin takes it. They exchange a "brother" shake.

LARKIN

When it comes together, send your
tape to New York.

Larkin takes off. There's silence for a bit as Bubby runs up to the glass door and presses his nose against it, making faces.

MARVIN

I'm in trouble. I need Gordon
'Guitar' Banks.

FREDDY

Hey, Marvin, take it easy. I'm not
made out'a money.

MARVIN

Freddy, my man, you live for this
shit. Just think, when you're
standin' in front'a your maker,
you're gonna look back at this time
in your life with a shit-eatin'
grin on your face. And don' forget
the check for my mother...

Freddy starts to protest.

MARVIN

Don't worry, *man*. The minute I get
my deal, I'll pay you back...
(Marvin naively shrugs)
I gotta be a good son.

MARVIN'S BEDROOM - LATER

Marvin walks by and peeks in. Eugenie is waiting for him, lighting candles, getting dolled up. Marvin tiptoes away and down the stairs.

EXT. RED-LIGHT DISTRICT - OSTEND - LATER THAT NIGHT

Marvin stands beneath the African's window. The curtain is open and the Chinese whore is leaning out, soliciting.

CHINESE WHORE

Ah, black man, you come back for a
cleaning?

The African comes forward to the window, a whip in her hand, flicking the tip. Marvin reaches into his pocket and pulls out some francs. Instantly, the mercy-fuck hooker and HER FRIEND surround him.

HOOKER #1 (MERCY-FUCK HOOKER)

Oh, no, you don't! You owe me one,
lover boy - now that you're payin.

She grabs one arm and the other hooker grabs the other.

HOOKEE #2
Come with us, handsome.

They drag him off. The Chinese whore YELLS OUT after him.

CHINESE WHORE
We **see** you, black man. You be back.

We HEAR THUNDER...

EXT. ARRIVALS - OSTEND AIRPORT - A DREARY MORNING

GORDON "GUITAR" BANKS stands staring out at the rain, a suitcase and guitar by his side. Freddy pulls up, jumps out of his car, runs up to Gordon.

FREDDY
Gordon, welcome.

He grabs Gordon's suitcase.

GORDON
How'd you know it was me?

FREDDY
(giving him a sideways
glance)
You and Marvin are the only Black
dudes in Ostend... Come on. Let me
get you out of the rain.

They run through the rain into the car.

INT. FREDDY'S CAR/STREETS - RAINY DAY - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

GORDON BANKS stares out the window as Freddy drives. Freddy breaks the silence.

FREDDY
Marvin's probably not the same guy
you remember.

GORDON
That's not be a bad thing.

Freddy shoots him a look.

GORDON
Don't get me wrong. Marvin can be a
motherfucker but I dig the cat.

FREDDY

Well, he really needs your support.
He's lost musically.

GORDON

Marvin gonna need me till he don't
need me no more, but that's cool.
He's the star; I'm just the
sideman.

FREDDY

Don't feel alone. Everybody 'round
Marvin feels like a sideman.

MUSICAL JAM/MONTAGE:

INT. MUSIC ROOM - M'S RENTED HOUSE - OSTEND - **DAY TO NIGHT**

It's pouring outside. Gordon is PLAYING GUITAR, searching for a groove. Marvin (42, bearded) sits at the piano. He tries to PLAY a melody over the groove but quits in frustration. Gordon changes the groove and Marvin tries again and once again they struggle.

MARVIN

Hold on... Let's cop Odell's reggae
feel.

Marvin turns on the reel-to-reel tape recorder and Gordon gets into a reggae groove. Marvin connects a microphone to an amp and starts SCATTING over the groove, throwing in some religious quotes, social commentary, and sexual innuendos, all the while searching for a melody. He moves about the room, getting into it. As the music starts to find a cool groove, for the first time we see Marvin enjoying himself.

MARVIN

(stopping the tape)
Bro, where the fuck you been?!? I
been searching for this feeling and
it didn't come, and it started to
scare the hell out'a me...and then,
BAM, it's here and it's like it's
supposed to be. You're my savior!

GORDON

(digging it)
Marvin, you're bad. You just gotta
be 'round the right people and your
shit will happen. But it's cool. I
can tell my kids I saved Marvin
mutha-fuckin' Gaye's ass.

Marvin cracks up. They do the "brother" handshake.

EXT./INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CBS RECORDS - NEW YORK - DAY

Larkin PLAYS Marvin's demo for TWO A&R GUYS and his BOSS, who chomps on a big fat stogey in the smoke-filled room.

A&R GUY #1
Isn't he in all kinds of trouble
with the IRS and ex-wives?

LARKIN
That's what they say...

BOSS
Can we squeeze him?

LARKIN
Probably...

A&R GUY #2
It feels like a reggae groove, real
small market-

BOSS
Yeah, that niche music don't sell
for shit.

A&R GUY #1
In parts it's sexy but he sounds
like a space cadet...

LARKIN
He's definitely out there, but he's
Marvin Gaye...

BOSS
Just watch out. He's a desperate
man on the way out, and desperate
men do desperate things.

BOSS (V.O.)
Don't let him drag us down with
him.

INT. MARVIN'S RENTED HOUSE - OSTEND - NIGHT - SOME TIME LATER

Larkin has flown in to make a deal. Eugenie sets out a tray of drinks and Larkin rather crudely checks her out.

LARKIN
(winking)
Thanks, babe.

Marvin cops an attitude; Eugenie ducks out.

LARKIN

Brother, I told you I'd do you a solid, but before we can close, I gotta lay down some contractual and musical rules.

He waits for a response; Marvin looks right through him.

FREDDY

Go on...

LARKIN

Let's talk music first. The spiritual stuff - out - leave it to the Gospel singers - and the socially conscious shit has it's place, but it's not what CBS is paying for... But most important, we're gonna get you a producer who'll keep you **on** budget and **in** line musically.

MARVIN

I wanna produce my own record.

LARKIN

Not gonna happen.

MARVIN

Then Harvey Fuqua.

LARKIN

Harvey Fuqua!?! He's hasn't had a hit in years.

MARVIN

(getting up)
We're done.

LARKIN

If I get you your producer, you do live shows to support the album - **non-negotiable**. No shows; no money.

MARVIN

You're one two-faced, jive-ass brother. Now you want me to bend over?

LARKIN

You'll learn to love me, Marvin. I hold the keys to your kingdom.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT./INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT - 1958

Marvin (19, bushy Afro hair) and his buddies arrive freezing their buns off, all too poor to dress properly in the cold snowy weather.

They eagerly make their way down the hall, stomping the snow off their shoes, and enter Studio A.

INSIDE STUDIO A

HARVEY FUQUA (31), a big hulk of a guy, is seated at the console, he & his group, THE MOONGLOWS, listening to PLAYBACK of "***Sincerely.***"

MARVIN
Sorry, man. Bo Diddley?

HARVEY FUQUA
(turning around)
Studio B, down the hall...
(sarcastically)
Nice do....

MARVIN
(self-conscious)
Thanks, man.

INSIDE STUDIO B

Bo and AN ENGINEER await. Marvin opens the door and peeks in.

BO DIDDLEY
You got a lotta balls keepin' Bo
Diddley waiting.

Marvin looks scared.

BO DIDDLEY
(LAUGHING)
Come on in, boys, thought you
weren't gonna show...

MARVIN
Are you kiddin', Mr. Diddley...

BO DIDDLEY
Say, soldier boy, you look
different.

MARVIN
(shyly)
Yeah, can't afford a haircut...

BO DIDDLEY
Now don't go gettin' too girlie...

Marvin blushes.

BO DIDDLEY
So you boys ready to get a groove
on?

MARVIN
Yes, sir, Mr. Diddley, we're here
to do whatever you say.
(mock salute)

BO DIDDLEY
Then let's do it.

STUDIO B - LATER THAT NIGHT

Marvin is in the session room, eyes closed, struggling. Bo's rhythmic track is so busy it leaves no room for Marvin's melodic vocal.

In the control room, Bo sits at the console. Harvey Fuqua sits in back, taking it all in.

BO DIDDLEY
You sing like molasses, soldier
boy. This is kick-ass R&B... Let's
take a break.

Marvin walks out into the control room.

HARVEY
That track's all wrong for you,
boy.

Bo slaps him on the back.

BO DIDDLEY
Son, he's tellin' it like it is.

HARVEY
Maybe I can help...

We HEAR Harvey and The Moonglow's ***"Sincerely"*** over:

INT. BLACK CLUB - THE DEEP SOUTH - NIGHT - 1958

Harvey and the Moonglows perform on stage. Playing drums & singing back-up is Marvin (19, straightened hair, greased back like everyone else's) now officially a Moonglow (Harvey the lead singer), all wearing identical tight, shiny suits, the LADIES going crazy for Marvin but he's too shy to take advantage of it.

"Sincerely" continues over:

INT/EXT. OLD SCHOOL BUS - DEEP SOUTH - THAT NIGHT

Exhausted, Harvey, Marvin & the Moonglows harmonize as they drive along looking for a place to spend the night. They pass "Whites Only" signs on hotels, restaurants, and gas stations.

HAND-MADE SIGN IN THE FRONT WINDOW: **DETROIT OR BUST.**

Marvin stares out the window, his nose pressed to the glass. He sees a YOUNG BLACK BOY, no shoes & very little clothing, running for all he's worth in the dark streets of shantytown as if fleeing from some sort of demons.

BACK TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO, BELGIUM - DAY - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

SUPERIMPOSE: WATERLOO, BELGIUM - 1981

In the session room, A DRUMMER is setting up his drumkit and THE ENGINEER is miking it.

In the control room, Marvin (42, bearded) and Gordon are kidding around with a tall bearded black man, keyboardist ODELL BROWN (40'S). Freddy walks in.

MARVIN

Hey, Freddy, meet my old sideman,
Odell Brown, the smoothest keys man
out'a Louisville, Kentucky.

FREDDY

(extending his hand)
Welcome. So glad CBS agreed to have
you come. I know Marvin appreciates
the support.

ODELL

That's why I'm here, man, that and
a paycheck. With CBS involved, I
know I'll get paid.

(looking at Marvin)

I've been stiffed **more than** a few
times...

But before Marvin can respond, Harvey Fuqua (now 55) and MARILYN FREEMAN, a press agent/manager, arrive carrying their suitcases. Harvey throws down his bags and he and Marvin hug.

HARVEY

Motherfucker, look at you. You're
sure lookin' good. Hope you can
sing as good as you look.

MARVIN

The gentle giant! You're lookin'
good too - a little bigger ...

HARVEY

(LAUGHING)

More food, less drugs. Say hello to Marilyn Freeman - press agent, manager - here to get the machine rollin' and the hype started.

MARVIN

(alarmed)

Whoa, brother, I got my man Freddy here.

HARVEY

No problem. We can all work together. CBS feels more comfortable that way.

MARILYN

Two heads are better than one.

Marilyn lets out a PHONY LAUGH. Everyone looks uneasy. Harvey breaks the tension, goes over to Freddy, shakes his hand.

HARVEY

Nice to meet you, man. Any friend of Marvin's...

Freddy looks unnerved, but Marvin gives him a reassuring wink as everyone shakes hands.

HARVEY

Hey, look who's here... 'Bout time you showed up!

A pudgy balding white man with glasses, DAVID RITZ, walks in, kidding around feigning confusion. Marvin looks stunned.

DAVID

Am I in the right place?

He and Marvin clasp hands.

MARVIN

David Ritz?!? What are you doin' here?

DAVID

I always said I want to write your biography.

MARVIN

(taken aback)

Hey, man, I got a lot more livin' to do.

MARILYN

David's here to write a few
articles to get the buzz going-

HARVEY

And help with words, ideas-

DAVID

Hey, I'm here for a week on CBS'
dime. Whatever you need... Here's
my number.

He hands Marvin a piece of paper and Marvin sticks it in his
jeans.

HARVEY

(to Marvin)

Why don't we go some place private,
chat about how we're gonna put you
back on top and get those jive-
asses in New York to mellow out.

(taking over)

You all kick back & relax. Marilyn
will lay out the recording
schedule.

EXT. WATERFRONT - OSTEND - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin and Harvey walk by the water like two old friends.

HARVEY

Man, when I walked in the studio
and saw you with no dark shades on-

MARVIN

I'm clean bro...

HARVEY

What you doin' with the chubby
white guy?

MARVIN

Every respectable black man should
have a white spear-chucker.

Harvey CRACKS UP.

MARVIN

Nah, man, the guy saved my ass. If
it wasn't for Freddy, I wouldn't be
standing here right now. He's good
people, a real gentleman...

HARVEY

Well, my man, right now you got a shot to get all that acclaim you missed out on in De-troit. Those corporate white boys want in on the black music scene and you're their ticket. Play by the rules and don't fuck it up. You're playin' with some big fuckin' house-money.

MARVIN

Sounds like you bought the company line..

HARVEY

Practical, my man, just practical, and that's where *your* head should be at.

Marvin looks down.

HARVEY

Hey, man, it's me - *Harvey*...
(putting his arm around him)
Ain't you in some kind'a big-time debt, man? Use your head, brutha.

Marvin is silent.

HARVEY

Now let's get down to it. Tell me your ideas for the album.

MARVIN

You know - I got ideas, thoughts, feelings I want to share with the world - some political but also spiritual. I really want to use my music as a vehicle-

HARVEY

What the fuck! You Saint Marvin? You're givin' me a headache. **Sex**, man. Sex is what we're selling. **Turnin'** the ladies on with sexy dance grooves, **puttin'** the ladies in heat, that's what the public's buyin'. Make CBS some money, then play God all you want. Ya hear me, my brutha?

And then Harvey, for some reason, grabs Marvin and gives him a kiss smack on the forehead.

HARVEY

Great to see you, man.

Marvin walks away - betrayed.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RECORD COMPANY - DETROIT - DAY - 1959

SUPERIMPOSE: DETROIT, MICHIGAN - 1959

Harvey (31), snappily dressed and cocky, and Marvin (20) processed hair, clean-shaven, beautiful but shy, make their way through the building.

HARVEY

Welcome to the Snakepit, my brutha.
Just follow my lead and don't speak
unless spoken to.

LONG PAUSE as Harvey nods to everyone he passes and Marvin tags along awkwardly trying to do as Harvey does.

HARVEY

(softly to Marvin)
These brothers could make or break
our future - they're rakin' it in
and I'm gonna get me some of that.
(slicking back his hair)
Just watch and learn...

They enter the control room of the Snakepit, the main recording studio in the basement, where a YOUNG PRODUCER and a CRUSTY EXECUTIVE watch a session. Some BACKUP SINGERS are SINGING "**Mr. Sandman.**"

PRODUCER

Very white, but I like it. Who we
puttin' up front?

CRUSTY EXEC

Smokey, maybe David Ruffin...

HARVEY

Or Marvin Gay...

All eyes turn to Harvey as he steps up, extending his hand.

HARVEY

Harvey Fuqua, Esquire - at your
service.

Both men glare at him - who is this dude?

HARVEY

I represent Mr. Gay here, the next
cross-over superstar. I guarantee
you'll like what you hear.

All eyes on Marvin, who's blind-sided.

PRODUCER

Well, Mr. Fuqua. This isn't how we operate-

CRUSTY EXEC

Let the boy sing.

Harvey goes up to Marvin.

HARVEY

You're on, kid. Don't fuck it up.

Unsure, Marvin takes his place at the mike and the backup singers make room for him. The Producer hands him the lyrics, then taps out the beat.

BACKUP SINGERS

Boom boom boom boom boom boom boom boom....

Marvin starts in tentatively, eyes closed...

MARVIN

Mr. Sandman, sing me a tune...

Getting progressively more sure of himself.

CRUSTY EXEC

(impressed)

Smooth as silk... A **black** Sinatra...

SONG ENDS

Mr. Sandman bring me a dream.

HARSH DRUM SOUNDS - TOM TOMS, SNARE, BASS DRUM, CYMBALS - snap us out of "the dream" & continue over:

BACK TO:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - DAY - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

Harvey manipulates the levels on the board, fully in charge, as the DRUMMER PLAYS the drumkit. Also in the control room are Freddy, Gordon, Odell & Marilyn. David sits between them taking notes. Marvin (42, bearded) sulks in the corner, completely left out.

The BASS PLAYER is up next & Harvey tries tones from low to high, settling on one he likes, never once consulting Marvin.

HARVEY

Okay, guys, give me the feel we rehearsed. Take one.

Harvey hits 'PLAY' on a large 2" reel-to-reel tape recorder, cues the bass player & drummer. They begin to PLAY...

HARVEY
 Cut... Cut... Cut...
 (to Gordon)
 You and Odell, help them find the
 groove.

Gordon looks at Marvin, who just shrugs. Odell goes over to Marvin, leans down, whispers.

ODELL
 We got ya covered.

In the session room, Odell and Gordon get into a cool reggae groove, Odell showing his virtuosity on the organ. Marvin likes what he hears, but Harvey interrupts.

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM)
Ea-sy on the reggae. That's not our
 direction.

Marvin sits in the corner ready to explode.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT./INT. THE SNAKEPIT - MOTOR CITY - DETROIT - DAY - 1960

MATCH CUT TO: Marvin in the booth (clean-shaven) fuming.

CONTROL ROOM

ENGINEER
 (turning in his chair)
 I can't reason with him.

Reluctantly, the Crusty Exec extracts himself from the couch, goes over to the mike. The Engineer presses the button.

CRUSTY EXEC
 Haven't we been good to you Marvin?

MARVIN (IN BOOTH)
 Yes, sir, but that's not the point.

CRUSTY EXEC
 Didn't we add that 'e' to your last
 name so no one would think you were
 'light in the loafers'?

MARVIN (IN BOOTH)
 Yes, sir, you guys've been great,
 but there's a whole world out there
 - kids dying in ghettos, in Vietnam
 for God's sake - homelessness,
 despair. I jus' can't stand by and
 watch singing stupid love songs. I
 gotta let them know I care-

CRUSTY EXEC
You care about your job?

MARVIN
Yes, sir, I do.

CRUSTY EXEC
Then shut up and sing!

BACK TO:

INT. STUDIO - WATERLOO - NIGHT - **PRESENT TIME** - 1981

MATCH CUT TO: Marvin (42, bearded) as Harvey hands him a 1/4" copy of the instrumental track of the recording session.

HARVEY
Your turn. Take it home and come up
with a melody and some sexy lyrics,
then we'll lay down some lead
vocals. **Be freaky**, my man - **be
freaky...**

Feeling doomed, Marvin takes the tape, takes off. Freddy runs after him.

FREDDY
Hey, Marvin, you okay?

MARVIN
It's all slippin' away.

FREDDY
(calling after him)
At least let me drive you home.

But Marvin keeps on walking, mumbling to himself.

MARVIN
'Be freaky, my man, be freaky' ...
Where the fuck are you now God?
How can I save myself, let alone
the world? **The great black hope,**
huh! ... BULLSHIT!

He starts kicking a can that's lying on the street, and at one point he takes such a big swipe that he stumbles and almost falls down and gets filthy.

E./I. MARVIN'S RENTED HOUSE - NIGHT - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin enters and goes directly to the music room. He threads the tape into the recorder, hits play, and starts IMPROVISING, getting more and more frustrated. Bubby comes running in, clutching a book.

BUBBY
Daddy, daddy... Tuck me in and read
me a story.

Marvin snaps, grabbing the boy while simultaneously ripping
the belt from his pants.

MARVIN
(SHOUTING)
What did I tell you about
disturbing Daddy while he's
working...

He raises the belt menacingly over his head and goes to whip
Bubby when he sees his own reflection in the glass.

MARVIN
Oh, my God, what's happening...

He drops the belt, releases Bubby, and runs to the closet,
fumbling around looking for something. Then he runs out of
the house, distraught.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - NIGHT - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

He runs through the streets, tears streaming down his face.

OVERLAY MARVIN RUNNING OVER:

FANTASY FOOTAGE:

CLOSE ON: LEATHER STRAP LASHING BLACK FLESH AND DRAWING BLOOD

FATHER (V.O.)
Spare the rod; spoil the child...

**QUICK SHOTGUN FLASH CUTS - FEMALE BODY PARTS - ARCHITECTURAL,
ABSTRACT**

ECU: MAGNIFYING MIRROR - GROTESQUELY ENLARGED BLOODSHOT BROWN
EYE WITH IRIDESCENT SHADOW ON THE LID - BLINKING

A thick stripe of black liquid eyeliner is applied. A tear
escapes from the corner. The HUMMING stops.

We HEAR the loud shrill sound of a BUZZER...

BACK TO:

EXT./INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT -
PRESENT TIME - 1981

The light comes on and THE GUARD, a man in a makeshift uniform, peeks through the peephole before opening the main door. Marvin (bearded, 42) stands in the shadows.

GUARD

Oh, hi, Mr. Gaye. Pretty late to pay a visit.

MARVIN

(walking by him)

Artists are creatures of the night
... Not to be trusted.

GUARD

Pardon me?

MARVIN

Sorry, man, it's late. I know.

Marvin makes his way to the control room, shuts the door, slumps down in a chair, and puts his head in his hands. Then he places the gun that Blowfish Dan gave him on the console.

There's a KNOCK on the door. The guard sticks his head in.

GUARD

Excuse me, Mr. Gaye. Am I interrupting?

MARVIN

Nah... It's cool.

GUARD

Well, if it's not too much trouble, could I get an autograph for my son. He really admires you and, well, I said I'd ask if I got the chance.

Marvin can't help but LAUGH. The guard hands him pen & paper.

MARVIN

Why not. What's his name?

GUARD

Danny, sir.

MARVIN

(signing)

You know, God must have a sense of humor.

GUARD

Sir?

MARVIN

(handing back the paper)
Yeah, well, you tell Danny to
beware of who he looks up to. Stars
ain't what they appear to be. An'
tell him that his ol' man should be
his hero.

GUARD

(pleased)
I'll tell him, sir. Thank you.
(seeing the gun)
Say, you Americans sure have a
thing for guns...

MARVIN

(picking it up and
twirling it)
Yeah, the Wild West, shoot-out at
the OK Corral. We see it as a God-
given right...

GUARD

Well, I'll leave you to your work.

MARVIN

Thanks... Your timing was great.

The guard exits. Marvin reaches into his pocket, takes out a
piece of paper, dials.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

You available? ... I'm in the
studio.

Marvin hangs up, stares at his reflection in the glass, gun
in hand, and starts SINGING "*Amazing Grace*."

Before he finishes, David Ritz waltzes in, stops short.

DAVID

Hey, man, don't shoot.

Marvin didn't even realize he was pointing the gun!

MARVIN

Sorry, guy. I'm not myself.

He lowers the gun & David takes a deep breath, sits down on
the couch, expectant. Marvin deliberates - can he trust him?

MARVIN

You know how much I love my boy...

David nods.

MARVIN

(intense)
I almost hit him tonight. Something
I swore I'd never do, not to my
kid, not like my old man.

DAVID

Heavy, man, but I get it. Scary
shit. You lost it. The important
thing is you stopped yourself. Can
you appreciate that? ... Apologize
to your son, then do what you gotta
do to never let it happen again.

MARVIN

You think he'll ever forgive me?

DAVID

Sooner than you'll forgive
yourself. Now put that thing away
and let's get down to work before
you hurt yourself, or more
important - my lily-white ass!

MARVIN

(slapping hands)
You're too much, man! ... Heaven
sent.

SHORTLY THEREAFTER.

Marvin and David play with some lyrics as the 2" recorder
PLAYS the instrumental track. Marvin SINGS MELODIES as David
jots down the words they come up with.

MARVIN

(SINGING along with the
track)
When Marvin gets that feeling...
(laughing)
I want sex...

DAVID

Sexual healing...

MARVIN

Yeah, **sex-u-al heal-ing... SEX-U-AL
HEAL-ING....** (etc.)

Marvin plays with the words, CHANGING PHRASING AND
MODULATIONS.

MARVIN

(HUMMING and SINGING)
**Sexual healing... it's something -
good - for - me;**
(MORE)

MARVIN (cont'd)
*whenever blue teardrops are falling
 and my emotional sta-bil-ity is
 leaving me...*

He HUMS the next phrase and David plugs in the words.

DAVID
 There is something I can do.

MARVIN
 (picking it up)
*...there is something I can do. I
 can get on the telephone and call
 you, baby, and, ooh baby, I know
 you'll be there to relieve me. The
 love you give to me will free me...
 And when I get that feeling, I want
 sexual healing...*

Pleased with themselves, they shake hands and hug.

LATER

Marvin is alone in the control room, the lyrics he and David came up with on the table, the 2" REWINDING. He dials the phone filled with hope.

MARVIN
 (SINGING)
*Get up, get up, get up, ooh, wake
 up, wake up, wake up, ooh...*
 Jan, baby, it's me - Marvin. Forget
 what time it is. Jan?...
 Baby?... Janis? ...
 (into the silent phone)
*Cuz when I get that feeling, I want
 sexual healing, huh, huh, huh...*

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. STAGE - MARVIN GAYE CONCERT - NIGHT - 1972

AUDIENCE: GIRLS (Black & White) line the stage. There's a BUZZ of anticipation.

BACKSTAGE: Marvin (33, top hat & tails) paces nervously.

STAGE: The curtain parts and out struts Marvin trying to act all sexy but not quite pulling it off, but don't tell that to his SCREAMING Female Fans.

Marvin steps up to the mike and the Band starts the intro to "Amazing Grace." Marvin begins to SING, fumbles, freezes, but the girls still swoon, so he grinds the microphone, humiliating himself even further. That's when he spots an angel in the audience in a snow white dress.

JANIS HUNTER (16, Black) smiles up at him with pure innocence
- She understands!

SURREAL FOOTAGE: As the wave of girls parts and Janis is
lifted up onto the stage, and they start slow-dancing,
mesmerized, in their own world. It could easily be a junior-
high prom except for their ages - **16 and 33!**

BACK TO:

E./I. M'S RENTED HOUSE - OSTEND - LUNCHTIME - **1981**

Marvin stands outside the door looking scruffy but resigned,
and guilty as hell. He's carrying a bouquet of flowers. A
small kid's bike with training wheels and a giant bow on it
is next to him. He takes a deep breath, enters.

Bubby is eating at the kitchen table and Eugenie is serving
him. Both look at him suspiciously, not knowing what to
expect.

MARVIN

Forgive me. I know...

Eugenie moves over to the counter and Marvin follows her.

MARVIN

Genie, these are for you.

No response. He puts the flowers on the counter and goes over
to Bubby.

MARVIN

You know your daddy loves you and
would never do anything to hurt
you. He'd hurt himself first, and
that's a promise.

BUBBY

(hugging him)

Oh, Daddy, don't do that!

MARVIN

I got something outside for you.
You might want to it check out.

Bubby runs off SQUEALING. Eugenie remains with her back to
Marvin pretending to do dishes. He moves closer to her and
her words stop him short.

EUGENIE

I know you don't love me, never
did, probably never will, but when
you take off like that and go
wherever you go, don't you think
that hurts me?

(MORE)

EUGENIE (cont'd)

No self-respecting woman would stay, but I care about that little boy and wouldn't be *irresponsible*, like his Daddy....

MARVIN

The truth is you've got a huge heart and I've taken advantage of it. Genie, what can I do to make it right with you?

EUGENIE

Be a good father. I'll stay till I know Bubby is cared for - **properly**. Why don't you call Janis and get her out here any way you can. It's what you really want.

MARVIN

I don't know what to say... Is there anything I can do?

EUGENIE

Yeah, get some help. See a damn shrink. I tried to get inside your head, but I sure couldn't.

MARVIN

You got me wrong. I just need to get my head back on straight and get right with the Lord. That and a hit record and the inner healing will come. The Lord will take care of Marvin Gaye.

Eugenie tosses the flowers in the trash and walks out of the room.

EUGENIE

You're kidding yourself, Marvin. It's a shame.

MUSIC ROOM

Marvin enters, goes directly to the phone and dials.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)

Don't hang up! ... I swear things'll be different - on my life. You an' Pie come back to me. I'll send you the tickets. Bubby an' me, we'll be waiting...and no, she won't be here.

ENGINEER (V.O.)

Test, testing...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - THE NEXT DAY

In the session room, the Engineer is busy setting out mikes and headphones.

In the control room, Gordon and Odell are kicked back on the couch, David Ritz talking to them and taking notes. Marilyn and Freddy are at opposite ends of the room. Harvey is pacing.

HARVEY
(to Gordon)
So where is he?

GORDON
Don't sweat it. The cat's always late.

Harvey looks at Odell, who only shrugs. Harvey and Marilyn exchange annoyed glances.

HARVEY
(to Freddy)
Can't you control him?

But before Freddy can answer, Marvin comes prancing in, a sheet of lyrics in his hand.

MARVIN
Everybody's trying to control Marvin. Only my kids have that power... Now, let's get going.

Marvin goes into the session room and very deliberately and methodically selects the mike and headphones he wants. (The following conversation takes place ON INTERCOM - Harvey pushes a talk-back button in the control room and Marvin hears him on his headsets, whereas everyone in the control room can hear Marvin on speakerphone.)

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM)
This better be good...

MARVIN (ON HEADPHONES)
(ignoring him)
Test, test, testing....

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM)
And what are we gonna call this masterpiece?

MARVIN (ON HEADPHONES)
Sexual Healing, [BEAT] Boss...

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM)
Well, yes, sir. Let's do it... You ready?

(MORE)

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM) (cont'd)
 (Marvin nods)
 Sexual Healing - take one.

Harvey hits the 2" tape and the musical track starts PLAYING.

MARVIN (ON HEADPHONES)
 (SINGING)
*Ooh, now let's get down tonight,
 baby, I'm hot just like an oven, I
 need some lovin'...*

Marvin stops SINGING.

MARVIN (ON HEADPHONES)
 Slow it down, a half step. Gotta
 feel the sex.

HARVEY
 (to the engineer)
 You heard the man.

The engineer makes the adjustment to slow the tape down.

HARVEY
 Sexual Healing - take two.

MARVIN
 (SINGING)
*Ooh, now, let's get down
 tonight....etc.*

SLOW MOTION:

POV MARVIN - Everybody in the control room is wearing a long white robe, passing around a chalice of wine.

POV DISCIPLES - Marvin has been transformed into a Christ-like figure - crown of thorns.

MARVIN
 (SINGING)
*And when I get that feeling, I want
 sexual healing... (etc.)*

EFX: Harvey pushes the pause button and the whole image SHATTERS back to reality.

HARVEY
 Okay, Marvin, we're solid.

MARVIN
 I'm not so sure. I'll check out the
 tape and if it's cool, we move on.

HARVEY
 (begrudgingly)
 It's **your** show.

INT. MUSIC ROOM - MARVIN'S HOUSE - OSTEND - LATER THAT NIGHT

Marvin is listening to the vocal track, the written lines in front of him, completely immersed in the creative process, STARTING & STOPPING the tape, experimenting with MODULATION, PHRASING & TONES - showcasing his true genius at work.

LATER

Marvin is on the phone in the dark, talking to his mother.

MARVIN

Mama, if this album goes down like I think it will, I'm gonna buy you a new house and you won't have to let him in ever again.

MOTHER (ON TELEPHONE)

Don't be silly, son. I made my bed a long time ago. You pray for your father an' jus' worry 'bout yo'rself...

FATHER (O.S.)

Woman, who you talkin' to?

Marvin quickly hangs up the phone, still terrified of the voice thousands of miles away.

Bubby comes running into the room.

BUBBY

Daddy, Daddy, Mommy's coming...

Marvin picks him up.

MARVIN

I know, little man, I wanted to surprise you. How'd you find out?

Eugenie steps forward.

EUGENIE

Cuz she called before you got home.

Eugenie walks away and Marvin puts Bubby down and follows her up to the bedroom where her suitcase sits almost packed on the bed. She puts in the last few items and closes it and goes to pick it up. Marvin attempts to help her.

EUGENIE

Don't bother. Freddy'll be around to get me. I'm going back home.

MARVIN

Genie, I know I'm a bad guy, but try not to hate me.

EUGENIE
 You got a faithful companion and a
 nanny for your son and I got to
 hang out with **the one and only**
 Marvin Gaye.

(walking past him with her
 suitcase)
 Something to tell the
 grandchildren.

She walks out of the room and Bubby runs after her.

BUBBY
 Genie, Genie, where you going?

She stops, tears in her eyes, and bends down to talk with
 him.

EUGENIE
 I won't ever forget you, little
 man.
 (getting up)
 Take care of your Daddy.

She walks off. Bubby starts to CRY and Marvin goes over and
 picks him up.

MARVIN
 Sorry, son, I guess we're on our
 own till your Mama gets here.
 (drying his eyes)
 Genie's got to get on with her life
 & we gotta get on with ours.

PIE (O.S.)
Daddy?!?

INT./EXT. AIRPORT - OSTEND - NIGHT - 1981

Janis and Pie spot Marvin and Bubby.

MARVIN
 Come here, Pie...

He opens his arms and she runs into them. Janis joins them,
 Bubby in her arms. Marvin and Janis just look at each other.

JANIS
 You look good.

MARVIN
 An' you look like the answer to my
 dreams...

OUTSIDE

Marvin hails a cab and they get in. The cab takes off.

EXT. CAB - STREETS OF OSTEND - NIGHT

JANIS (O.S.)
Let's get a few things straight.

MARVIN (O.S.)
Shoot...

JANIS (O.S.)
I ain't gonna be your slave.

MARVIN (O.S.)
Got it.

JANIS (O.S.)
I come and go as I please...

MARVIN (O.S.)
Yes, ma'am.

JANIS (O.S.)
We stay in separate rooms till and
if I'm ever ready to make this
official.

MARVIN (O.S.)
Okay, okay, you win...

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - THE NEXT DAY

In the control room, Harvey, Marilyn, Freddy, Gordon, and
THREE BACKUP SINGERS are all hanging out waiting for Marvin.

HARVEY
Why are we always waiting for this
guy! I feel like I'm courtin' a
bitch & haven't got laid in a long
time.

Harvey glares at Gordon, who just shrugs. He turns his wrath
on Freddy, but Freddy just shrugs as well. Marvin comes
sauntering in.

HARVEY
(sarcastic)
Oh, thanks for showin' up, my
brutha.

Marvin just shrugs.

HARVEY
(sarcastic)
You ready to get to work or should
I send out for breakfast.

MARVIN
Jus' coffee, my man. My wife took
care of my breakfast.

HARVEY
(exasperated)
Wife? Oh, I see. Freddy, get Mr.
Gaye here some Java.

Freddy looks to Marvin, then reluctantly takes off.

HARVEY
Now, if everyone's ready, let's get
to work.

The Girls get up and head for the session room.

MARVIN
Not so fast, bro. I got some
changes.

He hands Harvey the line notes.

HARVEY
My, my, my brutha, you're takin'
this real serious.

Marvin heads into the session room.

CONTROL ROOM - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

The 2" reel-to-reel recorder is on and we see Marvin
RECORDING the changes to the vocal track in the session room.
Marilyn approaches Harvey. Freddy enters carrying a cup of
coffee for Marvin.

MARILYN
I'm gonna need to get together with
Marvin and start the PR campaign.

Harvey nods.

FREDDY
I thought I was to be involved in
the process.

HARVEY
Why don't you just relax, Freddy,
and baby-sit Marvin. Marilyn's got
it covered.

MARILYN
(phony smile at Freddy)
You know, I could use a cup of
coffee...

Humiliated, Freddy hands Gordon the coffee for Marvin and takes off. Gordon puts it down and follows him out.

GORDON

Hey, man...

Freddy stops and Gordon catches up to him, looking him right in the eye.

GORDON

I don't know 'bout those guys, but
I see what you've done for Marvin.
I'd want you on my team.

Freddy squeezes Gordon's arm.

FREDDY

Thanks, Gordon. Don't tell Marvin
what happened - it'll only upset
him.

Freddy turns and takes off.

GORDON

(yelling after him)
You're one ***fine*** fuckin' sideman.

BACK TO CONTROL ROOM - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin is just finishing recording his changes.

HARVEY (ON INTERCOM)

We got it.

Marvin takes off his headphones and comes into the control room.

HARVEY

Go talk promo with Marilyn while I
set up the girls.

MARVIN

Where's Freddy?

HARVEY

He took off. Probably had better
things to do.

Marvin looks over at Gordon, who shrugs, speaking volumes.

OFFICE - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marilyn sits at her desk. Marvin stands in the doorway.

MARILYN

Hey, Marvin. Come on in. Make
yourself comfortable.

Marvin takes one step in, stops. Marilyn ignores the insult.
[BEAT]

MARILYN

Where to begin... Marvin, you've been out of the music scene for some time now, and thank God you've been flying under the media radar here in Europe, but all that's changing. It's my job to resurrect your image and get a positive spin going about the new album.

MARVIN

Yep. Bullshit sells.

Marilyn ignores him.

MARILYN

David's in New York right now getting the ball rolling, but I need your help...

(Marvin sneers)

We need to come up with a good story line to tell your fans where you've been for so long.

MARVIN

How 'bout - 'takin' a nap'.

MARILYN

Good attitude. I'll ignore that.

MARVIN

(turning to leave)

Then tell the truth, *if you can*.

MARILYN

Here's a little life lesson.

(Marvin turns back)

Image is everything.

MARVIN

Not with my fans.

MARILYN

Don't kid yourself. Not too many blacks have crossed over the way you have. People look up to you as some kind of preacher man leading his flock to the promised land... Your fans need to know you're alright and you haven't turned into a total scumbag...

Marvin feigns being shot in the heart.

MARVIN

Ooh, ya got me...

MARILYN

Good... Now, let's get down to business. I've got all kinds of magazines lined up as well as syndicated radio shows - all hot to dig some dirt, see if all the rumors are true, and drag your name through the mud. And trust me, they won't kiss your ass like David.

MARVIN

Relax. Marvin's got you covered. When the red light goes on, Marvin's rap is always smooth.

Harvey sticks his head in the room.

HARVEY

Hey, how you two gettin' on?

MARILYN

I think we understand each other.

HARVEY

Good. Now, Your Royal Highness, I need your golden voice.

HARVEY (V.O.)

Sexual Healing - Background Vocals - Take One.

STUDIO - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Harvey is in the control room with the Engineer.

Marvin, Gordon, and the Girls are miked separately in the session room. Harvey cues Marvin.

MARVIN

Get up, get up, get up... Wake up, wake, wake up...

The track PLAYS as Harvey cues them where to come in, layering the vocals.

LATER

Gordon, Marvin, and the back-up singers pile out of the session room, content with the session, the girls not quite ready to go, GIGGLING & asking Marvin for autographs, hoping he might choose one of them to party with. Marvin gets philosophical.

MARVIN

In our world, we're always lookin' for someone to tell us what we're doin' is good, cuz we're all such insecure bastards. Then we have moments, and I mean moments, when we know it's good and so does everyone else - That's before the record company gets their hands on it and fucks it up. This is what we live for...

(bowing)

I humbly thank you all.

EVERYBODY

Amen!

HARVEY

I second my brutha. That's one happenin' track. We'll lay down guitar, keyboards, percussion tomorrow, then figure out if we need horns.

(handing a tape to Marvin)

Don't get too comfy. I'm ready for your next song.

MARVIN

Don't worry... I'm out'a here.

There's audible *Ohs* & *Ahs* from the girls.

HARVEY

You getting all pussy-whipped?

MARVIN

(LAUGHING)

Right now it feels real good.

INT. KIDS' ROOM - M'S RENTED HOUSE - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Janis is putting the kids to bed. We HEAR Marvin enter.

MARVIN (O.S.)

Jan, kids, I'm home.

PIE & BUBBY

Daddy, daddy...

But Janis stops them from running to greet him.

JANIS

He'll come up and tuck you in. It's bedtime, kiddies.

Both Bubby and Pie can barely control themselves.

JANIS
You love your Daddy, don't you?

Bubby nods vigorously.

PIE
Of course, Mama...

JANIS
Well, he's got a lot'a charm. Time
for him to step up and earn our
respect.

We HEAR Marvin approaching. The kids can no longer contain themselves. When he enters, they run over & grab onto him.

MARVIN
(LAUGHING)
I guess ya missed your ol' man...

JANIS
Don't get them all riled up. It's
bedtime.

Marvin gives Janis a look.

JANIS
(blushing)
For the *kids*.

She walks out, leaving Marvin to tuck them in. He does so, fluffing their pillows and making sure they're all covered up. Then he kisses each one on the forehead.

MARVIN
Now get some sleep. We don't want
your Mama thinking I'm a bad
influence.

PIE
Daddy, can we stay here with you
forever?

MARVIN
Forever is a long time. When I
finish the album, we'll all go back
to the States and live happily ever
after. How's that, Miss Pie?

She smiles and closes her eyes. Marvin turns off the light and joins Janis in the bedroom. She's bent over her suitcase.

MARVIN
(alarmed)
What's going on?

She pulls out a gold record she brought with her.

JANIS
Thought we could hang this up
somewhere in the house.

Marvin takes her hand and squeezes it.

MARVIN
Jan, you're my best friend.

JANIS
Yeah, well, I just wanna make sure
that you're mine. I've been down
this road before and I jus' don't
wanna get burned.

Marvin drops her hand and looks sad. Janis walks up to him
and gives him a soft kiss on the mouth.

JANIS
So far so good.
(smiling)
Keep up the good work. [BEAT] I've
made up your bed - in the music
room.

MUSICAL MONTAGE:

We HEAR *"My Love is Waiting"* over:

Marvin in studio RECORDING the vocal, Bubby asleep on the couch in the control room. Freddy showing up but feeling so unwanted by Harvey & Marilyn he takes off. Janis & Pie showing up at the studio - Marvin SINGING to them through the glass partition. The family taking various outings - eating Dover sole & bread w/Freddy & Irene, boating, playing in the park, etc. - still feeling each other out as the children cavort happily. In the little church seen earlier - Marvin & Janis finally stealing a kiss in the pews, Pie & Bubby looking on, GIGGLING. They all go to leave. Walking toward them down the aisle is the Old Woman. She smiles her toothless grin.

FANTASY FOOTAGE:

QUICK SERIES OF SHOTGUN FLASH CUTS - FEMALE BODY PARTS -
ARCHITECTURAL, ABSTRACT

ECU: MAGNIFYING MIRROR - LIPS

As red lipstick is applied, thick and sloppy. Grotesque smile with yellowed teeth - the tongue sticks out.

INT./EXT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - ANOTHER DAY

The Gang tries to placate an uptight Larkin as they wait for Marvin to show up. Finally, Marvin glides in.

LARKIN

Lord have mercy. Look who the cat's dragged in...

Marvin, startled, quickly covers.

MARVIN

Brother, what an unexpected pleasure...

LARKIN

(giving Marvin the
"brother" handshake)
You're lucky this ain't a union job
or I'd fire your sweet ass instead
of kissing it.

Marvin CHUCKLES. All sit, relax.

LARKIN

I dig the two tracks you've come up
with, but they're not finished, so
I gotta crack the whip.

MARVIN

This is art, my masta. Sounds like
you're runnin' a fast-food chain.

LARKIN

(playing to the audience)
Always the snappy comeback ... But
this is business and it costs big
bread to accommodate all your
people over here when you don't
even have the rest of the songs
written to complete the album. Now
I'm sure you can fathom why I'm a
tad concerned.

MARVIN

Now don't you go losing your cool.
Marvin Gaye's got you covered -
always has, always will.

LARKIN

I'm counting on it. Now I got a
favor to ask of you.

MARVIN

Shoot. Anything.

LARKIN

I'm on my way to Germany to a CBS convention and I don't have a damn thing to play my boys to justify this expenditure & get me a few well deserved ata-boys, so I need **you** to cover **my** ass and perform a few songs **live** Saturday night.

MARVIN

(unnerved)

No way, man. Anything but that.

LARKIN

What's the hang up, bro? It's just a few hours of your time. I'll take care of everything.

MARVIN

(getting up)

It's not gonna happen. I'm in a creative space; performing's not an option.

LARKIN

You listen to me, Marvin Gaye, we got a contract.

MARVIN

For shows after the album comes out, not now...

LARKIN

I ain't askin', bro. *I'm tellin'.*

Marvin turns his back, walks to the door.

LARKIN

Don't turn your back on me!

MARVIN

Too soon, my brutha. Try to understand...

Marvin walks out.

LARKIN

(smoke coming out of his ears)

Somebody better teach that brother some manners...

FREDDY

(jumping up)

I'll talk to him.

HARVEY
 (mugging for Larkin)
 Tell him I'll rehearse the band -
 all he has to do is show up.

OUTSIDE

Freddy runs after Marvin, catching up with him on the street.

FREDDY
 Marvin, we gotta talk.

MARVIN
 Nothing to talk about.

FREDDY
 Do it for Janis and the kids.
 Harvey's got you covered. Fly in,
 sing, and fly back.

MARVIN
 Freddy, you of all people got to
 have my back.

FREDDY
 You know I do.

MARVIN
 Then pray for me, man.

Freddy watches him go, worried.

INT. MARVIN'S HOUSE - OSTEND - DAY - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin enters, goes to the music room. He sees Bubby & Pie playing outside in the sand, Janis nearby.

He goes to the bedroom closet, finds the coat he's looking for, takes the mashed joint (from Blowfish Dan) out of the pocket.

He goes into the kitchen looking for matches. Not finding any, he lights the joint on the gas stove and takes a long, slow hit, holding the smoke in, then finally letting it out with A DEEP SIGH OF RELIEF. He opens the fridge and the light inside serves as a spotlight. Marvin grabs a bottle of ketchup and, using it as a mike, spins around trying to assume a cool, sexy persona while SINGING a Capella (TBD).

Pie stands before him, staring in wonder at her dad. He sees her and doesn't know what to do

MARVIN
 Hey, Pie...

PIE
Hi, Daddy, what's that funny smell?

Marvin goes over to the sink, puts the ketchup bottle down and douses the joint, careful to save it for later.

MARVIN
I got the munchies.

PIE
Me, too...

KITCHEN - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

CLOSE ON THE KETCHUP BOTTLE

Marvin and Pie sit eating burgers.

PIE
Daddy, are you gonna go back on the road?

MARVIN
No, baby, I don't wanna leave all of you.

She takes this in.

PIE
Daddy, do you ever get scared?

MARVIN
All the time, baby, all the time.

INT/EXT MARVIN'S RENTED HOUSE - OSTEND - LATER THAT NIGHT

Marvin is tossing and turning beside the sleeping Janis. He gets up, takes the rest of the joint, and tiptoes down the stairs to the music room and out the patio door.

OUTSIDE

He lights up the joint and stares at the water.

JANIS (O.S.)
What the fuck are you doing??

Marvin turns and is confronted by Janis all angelic in a billowing white nightgown.

MARVIN
It's only a joint, baby, I couldn't sleep.

He stubs out the joint in the sand and sticks it in his pocket.

JANIS

Why would you ruin a good thing.
You're on the verge of getting it
all back together, we're here
backing you up - **WHAT'S WRONG WITH
YOU, MARVIN?**

Marvin ponders this for a moment.

MARVIN

Honestly, I don't know. I know
Jesus loves me and He and you are
my strength, but Larkin wants me to
perform in Germany Saturday night,
just a few songs, and I can't do
it.

Janis goes over to him and leads him by the hand inside and
over to the couch. She sits down & pulls him down after her,
placing his head in her lap. She starts stroking his brow.

JANIS

It's okay, baby. Nobody's gonna
hurt you any more.

MARVIN

I'm not ready, Jan, to stand up in
front of all those people and play
the game-

JANIS

Shhhhhhhhhhh.
(SINGING)
**Hush, little baby, don't say a
word, Mama's gonna buy you a
mockin'bird...**

The SONG continues over:

E./I. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - THE NEXT DAY

Two limos wait outside.

Inside, there's much commotion with suitcases and equipment
being packed up.

MARILYN

Let's get a move on. The limos are
waiting. Come on, hurry, guys. I've
got your tickets. Odell, Gordon...

The SONG FADES OUT.

She starts handing out the tickets. Freddy waits in line.
When she gets to him, she pretends to be busy finding
something in her purse.

MARILYN

Ah, Freddy, sorry to be the one to deliver the bad news, you're not on the list.

FREDDY

(outraged)

What d'ya mean? Does Marvin know about this?

MARILYN

I just found out myself. I'm sure Marvin will keep you informed.

HARVEY

(putting his arm around Freddy)
It's all about money, my friend.
Why upset Marvin. You wouldn't want to jeopardize his success?

FREDDY

(shaking him off)

I wouldn't do anything to harm Marvin. But he's a lot more vulnerable than you realize.

He takes off.

MARILYN

Not taking it well.

HARVEY

He'll survive... How long do we wait for Marvin?

Marilyn picks up the phone, dials.

Outside, the band starts loading their gear into the limo.

THE SCENE CUTS BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN MARILYN IN THE STUDIO AND JANIS IN HER KITCHEN COOKING AT THE STOVE, THE KIDS UNDERFOOT.

MARILYN (ON PHONE)

Hi, Janis, it's Marilyn. Is Marvin there?

JANIS (ON PHONE)

He just stepped out.

MARILYN (ON PHONE)

(giving Harvey a here-we-go-again look)

I see. Is he on his way over here?

JANIS (ON PHONE)

I'm not sure.

MARILYN (ON PHONE)

Well, we're all taking off in a few minutes to get everything set up for him in Germany. Tell him his ticket's here and we expect him on time tomorrow night.

JANIS (ON PHONE)

I'll let him know.

MARILYN (ON PHONE)

And Janis, I don't need to tell you how important this is. Whatever you can do to make sure he gets on that plane...

Janis hangs up the phone.

JANIS

Don't you make a liar outta me.

The shot widens and we see that Marvin is sitting at the dining-room table. Pie starts instigating.

PIE

Liar, liar pants on fire.

Bubby takes up the chant.

BUBBY & PIE

Liar, liar pants on fire. Liar, liar pants on fire...

MARVIN

(getting up)

Okay, that's enough. No one's a liar here.

He grabs his coat and walks toward the door.

JANIS

Where are you going?

MARVIN

To get my ticket. I'll be right back.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - DAY - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin walks toward the studio. It's a cold, blustery day.

EXT. STUDIO - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin stops in front. All is quiet. He keeps on walking.

EXT. DOCKS - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

A FISHERMAN points out a boat offshore. Marvin gives him some money.

E./I. DINGY - ON THE WATER - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

The fisherman rows Marvin out to his destination.

E./I. BOAT - OFFSHORE - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

As Marvin's dingy arrives, another dingy is just taking off. Marvin climbs on board and heads below deck.

BELOW DECK

Blowfish Dan is in the middle of weighing various packets for sale. He's startled to see Marvin.

BLOWFISH DAN
Hey, preacher man, ya miss me?

`MARVIN
Yeah, sure...

BLOWFISH DAN
I knew you couldn't stay away for long. I'm just too charming - at least that's what the ladies lookin' for coke tell me...

He LAUGHS his CRAZY MAN'S LAUGH and pushes out a chair.

BLOWFISH DAN
So, Mr. Marvin Gaye, what can your local dealer-in-dreams do for you?

MARVIN
I just need a little something to get me through the next few days.

Blowfish Dan takes a joint he's already rolled, lights it up, and takes a hit.

BLOWFISH DAN
(passing it to Marvin)
Check this out. I just got this shit.

Marvin takes a long, slow pull on the joint, exhaling the smoke slowly.

BLOWFISH DAN
You seem uptight, preacher man. This'll do ya.

He dips his long pinkie nail into one of the packets and scoops up some white powder, sticks it under Marvin's nose. Marvin hesitates.

BLOWFISH DAN
Just a taste. Instant courage **and**
hard-on.

He LAUGHS his crazy-man laugh.

Marvin snorts it up...

We HEAR the loud shrill sound of a BUZZER...

EXT./INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - NIGHT

The peep door opens, then shuts. The guard opens the door.

GUARD
Mr. Gaye. Hi...

MARVIN
(sheepish look)
Couldn't sleep.

Marvin steps in, and, from out of the shadows, Blowfish Dan steps in behind him.

MARVIN
He's with me.

Blowfish Dan gives the guard a bogeyman kind-of-look and follows Marvin toward the studio.

STUDIO

Marvin's ticket is lying on the console. Blowfish Dan gets out a pipe & packet of coke from his goody bag. Marvin plugs a mike into the 1/4" tape player.

MARVIN
As my old man would say: 'The Devil
doesn't stay where music is' - that
is, unless you're playing the
Devil's music.

BLOWFISH DAN
Hallelujah and pass the cocaine.

Blowfish Dan lights the pipe. Marvin hits 'PLAY' & speaks into the mike.

MARVIN
This is Marvin Gaye...

He practices it a few times till he gets the right tone, then takes a hit on the pipe, letting the smoke out slowly.

The SMOKE fills the frame.

EFX: THROUGH THE SMOKE - SLOW FADE UP ON LARKIN'S FREAKED OUT FACE

INT. CONVENTION HALL - GERMANY - THE NEXT NIGHT

Larkin is panicking as Harvey and Marilyn pace. Some CONVENTIONEERS are filing in for the show; OTHERS are already seated. Larkin's Boss is holding court at one of the tables.

On stage, the band is all set up.

LARKIN
Good to see ya... How ya doin'?
Make yourself comfortable...

Larkin shoots a look at Harvey and Marilyn.

LARKIN
Where the fuck is he?

HARVEY
Your guess is as good as mine.

INTERCUT THE CONVENTION IN GERMANY WITH MARVIN IN OSTEND.

EXT. STREETS - OSTEND - NIGHT

Marvin (long coat) walks with great purpose.

INT. CONVENTION HALL - GERMAN - CONTINUOUS

LARKIN
Well, he better not fuck this up.

On the stage, the band starts warming up.

E/I RED LIGHT DISTRICT - OSTEND - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Marvin goes right up to the Chinese whore at the window.

CHINESE WHORE
Ah, black man, you back.

INT. CONVENTION - GERMANY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

A COURIER is directed over to Larkin.

COURIER
Mr. Larkin Arnold?

LARKIN
That's me.

The courier hands him a package.

LARKIN
What the fuck is this?

He signs for it & rips open the package. A tape is inside.

INT. RED LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Marvin climbs the stairs and the Chinese Whore is waiting for him. She leads him to the back room where the African man/woman awaits. She smiles slightly when she sees him.

INT. CONVENTION HALL - GERMANY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

OFFICE

Harvey, Marilyn, and Larkin sit around listening to the tape, stunned.

MARVIN (ON TAPE)
This is Marvin Gaye...
(affecting a Richard Prior
accent)
...in Waterloo, Belgium...
(accent gone)
I've dubbed you an unfinished track
of '*Sexual Healing*' and, uh, I, uh,
could use a bit of that too...
(stoned LAUGH)
Huh huh huh, **huh huh huh huh huh...**

INT. RED LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Marvin stands before the dominatrix. She helps him off with his long coat, then rips his T-shirt off his back.

MARVIN (V.O.)
Seriously folks, as much as I'd
like to be there, I feel it's more
important that I stay here and
continue working on the album while
I'm inspired...
(stoned LAUGH)
Huh huh huh, **huh huh huh huh huh**

She walks about the room selecting a cat-o'-nine-tails for the occasion.

MARVIN (V.O.)
 (suddenly serious)
 I miss you all and wish I could be
 there, but I'm here...
 (Island accent)
 ...keepin' da creative fires
 burnin', man -
 (stoned laugh)
 Huh huh huh, **huh huh huh huh huh...**

Then she examines the old welt marks all over his back,
 rubbing the whip gently over them.

MARVIN (V.O.)
 Have a good convention. Love each
 other. Peace be with you. God bless
 us all. Hope you all enjoy the
 cut...
 (stoned laugh)
 Huh huh huh, **huh huh huh huh huh.**

She kisses the welts and whispers in his ear.

AFRICAN
 What do you have to say for
 yourself?

MARVIN
 (softly)
 I'm sorry.

AFRICAN
 Keep talking. LOUDER!

MARVIN
 I'm sorry. **I'm sorry. I'M SORRY...**

She starts to lash at his skin. The whip stings his flesh.

LARKIN (O.S.)
 If it's the last thing I do, I'll
 see to it **that muther-fuckin'**
brutha will **never** work again.

INT. CONVENTION HALL - GERMANY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Larkin, Harvey & Marilyn conspire - damage control.

HARVEY
 Easy, man. That might not be the
 best solution.

MARILYN
 I agree. I say we play the tape,
 apologize, and say he's too busy
 making CBS a lot of money.

HARVEY

And then we plan how to get this album done **with or without** him.

LARKIN

I'm listening. That little shit ain't gonna cost me my job.

HARVEY

We have two tracks almost finished. '*Sexual healing*' is so long we can make it one side of the album and do a shorter version for the single. Remember, my brutha, you got a lot'a coin to recoup.

LARKIN

What are you saying?

HARVEY

I can save this record.

MARILYN

And I'll get on the PR.

LARKIN

I'll teach that prick not to fuck with Larkin Arnold. Go back, grab the two main tracks and bring 'em to New York. Do whatever you gotta do to get a single out right away. Fuck Marvin Gaye.

Harvey & Marilyn nod in agreement.

We HEAR Byrd's ***Turn! Turn! Turn!***:

SONG

***To everything - turn, turn, turn,
there is a season - turn, turn,
turn - and a time to every purpose
under heaven...***

The SONG continues over:

INT. MARVIN'S BEDROOM - M'S HOUSE - OSTEND - MORNING

Janis stands over a sleeping Marvin. He's all bundled up, his back to her. The kids peek in and she shoos them off not to wake him. She leans down, WHISPERS in his ear.

JANIS

If you let us down one more time,
we're history.

She goes to leave, then turns.

JANIS
DAMN YOU, MARVIN.

His eyes snap open.

The SONG continues over:

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - SAME DAY

Harvey comes into the studio and packs up the master tapes.
Before he leaves, he places a note for Marvin on the console.

The SONG continues over:

EXT./INT. RECORDING STUDIO - WATERLOO - NIGHT

The guard opens the door and Marvin walks past him.

MARVIN
Thanks, man.

GUARD
(looking around)
Sir, is there anyone else?

MARVIN
Nah, I'm alone.

The song FADES OUT.

Marvin goes into the control room, finds the note, and starts reading.

HARVEY (V.O.)
My brutha, you sort'a blew it by
not showing up at the convention,
but I think I've got it chilled
out...

INT. CBS STUDIO - NEW YORK - THE SAME NIGHT

Harvey's in session adding horns to *"My Love is Waiting"*,
Larkin at his side.

HARVEY (V.O.)
...They liked the rough track and
agreed to let me take it and "My
Love Is Waiting" to New York to
overdub horns and mix them. While
I'm away, put together the material
for the rest of the album. And
brother, ...

INT. STUDIO - WATERLOO - THE SAME NIGHT

Marvin sits reading.

HARVEY (V.O.)
...for your career, and most of all
your family, STAY straight.
Remember, I'm the best friend you
got.

Marvin crumples the note, walks into the session room, and
starts BANGING on the DRUMS.

INT. CBS RECORDING STUDIO - NEW YORK - ANOTHER DAY

Harvey finishes the mix for the single version of '**Sexual
Healing.**' Larkin gives him a congratulatory slap on the back.

LARKIN
You saved my ass **big time.** Let's
get this baby mastered and out to
all the stations.

HARVEY
Shouldn't we play it for Marvin
before he hears it on the radio?

LARKIN
If it's a hit, he'll hear it soon
enough.

FANTASY FOOTAGE:

**QUICK SERIES OF SHOTGUN FLASH CUTS - FEMALE BODY PARTS -
ARCHITECTURAL, ABSTRACT**

POV KEYHOLE: We see the same black woman, seated at her
dressing table, her back to camera, pulling a curly blond wig
onto her head. She takes a perfume bottle and sprays her
neck, her wrists and, lifting her Bible, her private parts...

We HEAR a telephone **RINGING** over:

INT. SESSION ROOM - WATERLOO - ANOTHER DAY

Marvin, working alone, picks up the phone.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
Yeah.

INTERCUT MARVIN IN WATERLOO & HARVEY & LARKIN IN NEW YORK

HARVEY (ON PHONE)
My brutha, how ya doin'?

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
I'm doin'...

HARVEY (ON PHONE)
After this call, you're gonna be
doin' even better. We got the
single out-

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
What do you mean? ...It's not
finished.

HARVEY (ON PHONE)
The mutherfucker went number one!
There's more. Let my man tell you.

Harvey hands Larkin the phone.

LARKIN (ON PHONE)
I told you if you come thru for me,
I'd come thru for you...We got you
nominated for a Grammy & I intend
to keep the pressure on to keep the
single number one so you can win.

MARVIN (ON PHONE)
So you fuck me and make love to me
at the same time.

LARKIN (ON PHONE)
Just pack up Janis & the kids.
We'll finish the album here. I'm
arranging for your Mom & Pop to be
at the Grammys, so set your
differences aside and lay some
goodwill on the public. Marilyn'll
be back at you with the details.
One more thing, I'm gonna front you
the bread for the IRS so you don't
get arrested at the airport.

EXT. AIRPORT - OSTEND - ANOTHER NIGHT

Freddy pulls up to the curb and Marvin, Janis & the kids jump
out. A PORTER immediately starts unloading their bags.

FREDDY
(to Pie & Bubby)
Take good care of your Mom and Pop.
Will you do that?

PIE & BUBBY
We will, Uncle Freddy.

MARVIN
 (to Janis)
 Go ahead. I'll meet you at the
 gate. I gotta talk to my man here.

Janis and Freddy hug.

JANIS
 Thank you for loving Marvin.

She grabs the kids & leaves, leaving Marvin & Freddy alone.

MARVIN
 When I get to the States, I'm gonna
 make sure you get more respect.

FREDDY
 Thanks but you got more than enough
 on your plate. Hey, I'm just a
 small-town guy with small-town
 values - not into playing the game
 the way it needs to be played. I
 had my moment in the sun with the
 great Marvin Gaye. I'm just proud
 to call you my friend.

They hug, do the "brother" handshake.

MARVIN
 No matter what goes down, you won't
 be burned for any bread you laid
 out.

Marvin takes out all the cash he's got, sticks it in Freddy's
 hand.

MARVIN
 Here's a down-payment.

FREDDY
 You sure?

MARVIN
 (walking away)
 Tell Irene I'll be back for her
 Dover sole & bread, huh, huh, huh.

FREDDY
 I'll be rooting for you, Marvin...

MARVIN
 (blowing him a kiss)
 Love you, my brother.

INT. AIRPORT - LOS ANGELES - THE NEXT DAY

Marvin, Janis & the kids enter the terminal and are met by Harvey, Larkin & Marilyn and enveloped by the Press.

PRESS #1
Where've you been, Marvin? We missed you...

MARVIN
All I have to say is it's great to be back.

PRESS #2
Welcome back, Marvin. Are you here to stay?

MARVIN
The US is my home, where I was born and raised and where they'll probably scatter my bones, *huh huh huh huh huh huh....*

POP POP POP - the flashbulbs go off catching Marvin in various candid poses.

GRACE JONES (O.S.)
Yeaaaaa, LADIES! ...

INT. PODIUM - THE GRAMMYS - SHRINE AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - 1983

SUPERIMPOSE: THE GRAMMYS - SHRINE AUDITORIUM - LA - 1983

CLOSE ON MARVIN in the audience in a tux surrounded by Larkin, Harvey, Marilyn, his Mother, Father, brother Frankie, Janis & the kids, Record Exec & Bigwigs & his new BODYGUARDS.

RICK JAMES and GRACE JONES stand at the podium. Grace opens the envelope.

RICK JAMES
And the winner of the 25th GRAMMY AWARDS for Best Male R&B Vocal Performance is...

GRACE JONES
(very excited)
MARVIN GAYE, "Sexual Healing" ...

Everyone around Marvin goes crazy, congratulating him. He's so nervous he doesn't even get up but has to be led up to the stage by Frankie.

PODIUM

Marvin starts to speak slowly. He's blown away.

MARVIN

Huh huh huh huh huh... I want to thank God Almighty who's within each of us if we would only stop long enough to listen to the rhythm of our heartbeat, which is the rhythm of God's voice... There's just not enough love in the world. (making the peace sign) Make love not war, *huh, huh, huh, huh.*

There's an awkward silence as Marvin loses his focus.

MARVIN

I have waited a very long time - 20-some years - to win this.

He kisses the statue.

MARVIN

I've lost to George Benson, Otis Redding, Sam and Dave, Stevie Wonder, and Lou Rawls... **twice...** You didn't think I remembered, *huh, huh, huh, huh....*

This time the AUDIENCE LAUGHS with him. He spots Rawls in the audience, points his finger, and gives him an "I-got-you" grin.

MARVIN

Nobody takes the soul form seriously. Putting deep messages over a funk groove gets folks mixed up. Soul singers aren't supposed to be sayin' anything serious. Keep the lyrics simple an' just keep 'em dancin' - that's what the execs want... and, uh, **sex, sex, SEX.** Sex sells, *huh, huh, huh, huh....*

The MUSIC COMES UP and TWO GIRLS hover nearby to escort him off the stage, but Marvin's oblivious.

MARVIN

I want to thank my family; my friends, especially Freddy in Belgium; my wife Janis, and my children...
(shielding his eyes)
Bubby and Pie, stand up, babies, wave to everybody.

Shot of Bubby and Pie sitting with Janis in the audience - happy, camera-shy. The MUSIC gets LOUDER.

MARVIN
Thanks Mom. I love everybody. Bless
your enemies...

Marvin is whisked offstage.

BACKSTAGE PARTY

Marvin is surrounded by various WELL-WISHERS still tripping
out from his moment in the sun. Bubby and Pie run up to him.

BUBBY & PIE
Daddy, Daddy...

Marvin picks them up and gives them each a hug.

PIE
(excited)
You know Michael Jackson!

Marvin LAUGHS.

Janis, Frankie, his Mother & Father approach.

JANIS
(kissing him)
Baby, you deserve all of this!

FRANKIE
(doing the brother shake)
You're the man!

MOTHER
We're all so proud...

His Father steps forward.

FATHER
*Pride goest before destruction, a
haughty spirit before a fall. For
whoever exalts himself shall be
humbled, so sayest the Lord.*

MARVIN
(disgusted)
Fuck ... you!

Larkin, Harvey, Marilyn & the Bodyguards swarm Marvin.

HARVEY
(slapping him on the back)
You did it!

MARILYN
Brilliant!

LARKIN
The best investment I ever made.

HARVEY
We gotta get you on the road where
the real money is.

MARILYN
A world tour, *non-stop*.

LARKIN
We strike while the iron's hot.

MARVIN
(freaked)
Whoa, guys, huh, huh, huh... My
head's spinning... We got a hit-

LARKIN
Not for long.

HARVEY
You know airplay don't mean shit.
You gotta give 'em Marvin Gaye.

LARKIN
Marvin Gaye sells records.

Marilyn pulls out some paperwork and hands it to Marvin.

MARILYN
This isn't the best time, but I've
laid out some tour ideas.

JANIS
(stepping up)
Just a minute. This is a special
moment for Marvin. Can't you guys
back off and let him enjoy it?

HARVEY
Come on, Janis, Marvin knows the
score. It's probably his last shot
to get everything he worked for-

LARKIN
And that payday I'm sure you all
would appreciate-

HARVEY
We know what's best for my man.

Then Larkin, Harvey & Marilyn surround Marvin, turning their
backs on Janis. She steps forward and one of the bodyguards
blocks her path.

Janis, the kids, Frankie, Mom & Pop look on.

FATHER
 (shaking his head)
 Meaningless! ...
 A chasing after the wind...

We HEAR "*Son of a Preacher Man*" over:

MONTAGE:

MARVIN ON TOUR: SIDE OF STAGE - Marvin doesn't want to go on. A BANDMATE hands him a joint, he takes a hit, goes on, performs, eyes closed, the CROWD BOOING. EXT. DRESSING ROOM (Bodyguards): Harvey knocking, Marvin won't go on, Harvey lets a DEALER enter; Marvin hyper ON STAGE, shades on. EXT. DRESSING ROOM (Bodyguards) - Marilyn & Harvey confer, let the Dealer & a STYLIST with a satin robe enter. ON STAGE - Marvin performs, shades on, long satin robe, sexing it up, high as a kite, GROUPIES SCREAMING, a caricature of himself. He lets the robe drop, takes a bow, wearing nothing but leopard underpants.

In the audience, we spot Janis. She pushes her way to Marvin's dressing room, flings open the door only to find Marvin's Dealer, Bodyguards and HANGERS-ON.

JANIS
 Where is he?

The music FADES OUT.

She barrels past them to the bathroom door. It's locked. She SCREAMS right through it.

JANIS
 I know what you're doing in there!
 You've let them destroy you. Well,
 me & the kids are done! You hear
 me? **DONE!**

Two Bodyguards grab her and drag her kicking and screaming out of the dressing room.

JANIS
 Get your hands off me you
 lizards!... **DONE!**

Janis gone, the activity in the dressing room resumes like nothing happened.

From nowhere, A HAUNTING SOUND can gradually be heard. One by one, everyone stops talking. The sound is coming from the bathroom. It's Marvin SINGING the "*The Lord's Prayer*" A CAPELLA.

Marvin SINGING the "*The Lord's Prayer*" A CAPELLA over:

MONTAGE:

TOUR: Marvin in the back of the tour bus shielded by his BODYGUARDS and HANGERS-ON, freebasing. Marvin making the bus circle the hotel because he thinks somebody is following them. Marvin going up the elevator flanked by his bodyguards (one dressed exactly like him) - long white coat flared out at the bottom - so his "**assassin**" won't know which one is Marvin; the entourage going from floor to floor and leaving somebody off at each floor, again to throw off his attacker. THUGS with machine guns standing sentry outside his door as Marvin lays inside curled up in the fetal position - alone. Marvin going ON STAGE, glassy-eyed, in a white admiral's robe and cap, flanked by his thugs, one removing Marvin's robe, James Brown style, revealing Marvin in full military regalia, gold braids upon his chest, purple epaulets, etc. A thug runs up & says something to Gordon. Gordon approaches Marvin.

"The Lord's Prayer" FADES OUT.

GORDON

Sorry, brutha, your Mother's in the hospital.

EXT. AIRPORT - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Marvin arrives with no notice or fanfare. He's wearing shades, a knit cap & jeans, shaky as hell. He steps out to flag down a cab only to hear "*Sexual Healing*" BLASTING on the radio. Marvin jumps in.

CABBIE

Where to?

MARVIN

Cedar-Sinai Hospital. Hurry! ...
And turn that fuckin thing off!

The CABBIE complies & they're off.

INT. CEDAR-SINAI HOSPITAL - LOS ANGELES - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

Marvin rushes in, greeted by his SISTERS, FRANKIE and Frankie's wife IRENE. He's sweating and shaking a bit but they pretend not to notice.

MARVIN

How is she?

FRANKIE

Stable. Asking for you... Janis was here earlier.

It's obvious this hurts Marvin.

MARVIN

Where's the ol' man?

Frankie just shrugs, let's out a sigh.

FRANKIE

Back in D.C. We think he's selling
the house and pocketing the money.

MARVIN

You know I got you all covered...

FRANKIE

We know, Marvin. We're just glad
you're back home with us.

They hug.

Frankie leads Marvin into their mother's room. She's sound
asleep. Frankie refers to the drip by her bedside.

FRANKIE

Morphine. She's in and out.

Marvin pulls up a chair, sits down, and nods out.

When he comes to, his mother is staring at him, tears in her
eyes. She starts to speak, WHISPERING to him. He has to get
close to her mouth to hear her words.

MOTHER

(barely audible)

My boy's home. I can be at peace.

Marvin squeezes her hand.

MARVIN

I'm not goin' anywhere till you're
back in church singin' in tongues.

(Island accent)

Ya hear me, Ma'am...

This starts his mother CHUCKLING, which hurts.

MARVIN

We'll have plenty of time for
kiddin' around later.

He puts her finger on the button that delivers the morphine,
presses it.

MARVIN

Now just rest an' get well. I'm
gonna make sure you're treated like
a queen. I'm gonna get you that
house right here in LA and you'll
be free, Mama, to do your own thing
for the first time in your life.

She smiles, closes her eyes, and drifts off. Marvin goes back out to the waiting room and finds Larkin, Harvey, and Marilyn waiting for him.

MARVIN

What are **you** guys doin' here?

HARVEY

(ignoring his tone)

We caught the first plane out when we heard.

MARILYN

Sorry about your mom.

As if on cue, SEVERAL DELIVERY BOYS enter carrying a ridiculous array of flowers and balloons.

LARKIN

From the CBS family...

Marvin eyes it suspiciously, but Frankie & his sisters take over, guiding the delivery boys into his mother's room.

MARVIN

What do you want? You didn't come all this way to pay your respects.

MARILYN

We've got phenomenal news.

HARVEY

Dr. J called and wants **you** to sing the *na-tional fuckin'* anthem at the All-Star game. You're gonna be on national TV singing America's tune to the whole damn country. Millions of folks gonna hear Marvin Gaye do his thing.

Harvey does a two-step, twirling around doo-wop style.

MARVIN

No way, man...I'm not doing it.

MARILYN

We've made a commitment.

MARVIN

Then you start singing.

Larkin steps up - all concern.

LARKIN

Alright. I get it. Terrible timing... Insensitive.

(gazing around)

(MORE)

LARKIN (cont'd)
 I'm sure this hospital is costing
 you a lot'a bread.
 (signalling Marilyn)
 We'll be in touch. Give your mother
 our best.

Larkin & Marilyn head off, saying their good-byes to the family.

HARVEY
 (putting his arm around
 Marvin)
 Come on, my brutha, I know you're
 hurtin'...

MARVIN
 (stepping aside)
 Stop pretending like you care about
 me, man. You sold me out.

HARVEY
 Sold you out? I saved your ass. You
 gotta stop fightin' the system. A
 lot'a folks countin' on Marvin
 Gaye.

Marvin considers this, then hauls off and decks Harvey!

MARVIN
 Count *yourself* - OUT!

E./I. GREAT WESTERN FORUM - NBA ALL-STAR GAME - NIGHT - 1982

**SUPERIMPOSE: NBA ALL-STAR GAME - GREAT WESTERN FORUM - LA -
 1982**

SMALL BACKSTAGE BATHROOM

Marvin, dressed in a white suit & shades, snorts cocaine.

MARVIN'S DRESSING ROOM

Outside the bathroom door, Frankie and Gordon Banks wait. His bodyguards flank the room not letting anyone in.

FRANKIE
 (KNOCKING)
 Hurry, Marvin, it's almost time.

Marvin opens the door. There's white powder on his nose. Gordon gestures for him to wipe it off. Marvin does so.

FRANKIE
 Are you sure you want to go through
 with this? You gotta be respectful.
 The song's a national treasure.

MARVIN
I'm a soul singer. I gotta do it
how I hear it and I can't sing
unless I feel it inside.

FRANKIE
We're all playin' in your world.
How can **I** tell **you** what to do?

The two brothers slap hands.

FRANKIE
You know Janis & the kids are here,
and Mom & Dad...

MARVIN
What's Dad here for?

ANNOUNCER (DISTORTED, O.S.)
Ladies and Gentlemen, may I have
your attention...

Marvin freezes.

FRANKIE
Blow 'em away, Marvin.

They hug. Gordon gives him the "brother" handshake.

ANNOUNCER (DISTORTED, O.S.)
Singing the national anthem for
tonight's NBA All-Star Game, famed
recording artist, **MARVIN GAYE**...

MARVIN
Just have the get-away car waiting.

CENTER COURT - LIVE ACTION & STOCK FOOTAGE

The arena is dark. We HEAR the sound of a DRUM MACHINE. The spotlights switch on dramatically, beaming down, center stage, on Marvin, head bowed. He begins to SING the most compelling reggae version of the "**Star-Spangled Banner**" ever heard.

MARVIN (SINGING)
Oh, say can you see...

INTERCUT (MUSIC VIDEO STYLE) BETWEEN THE ALL-STAR GAME & MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOUSE, WHICH HE BOUGHT FOR HER

EXT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOUSE - LOS ANGELES - AM - MOS

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...by the dawn's early light.

An obviously tweaking Marvin escorts his frail Mama (using a cane) to the front door of her new house. She is filled with appreciation and gratitude. The scene is touching but Marvin's paranoia peeks thru as he peers around furtively.

INT. CENTER COURT - THE FORUM - CONTINUOUS

MARVIN (SINGING)
What so proudly we hailed...

PEOPLE stop eating & drinking, joking & talking, and just stand silently, spellbound, caught up in what they're hearing.

INT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOUSE - NIGHT (MOS)

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...at the twilight's last gleaming.

Marvin sits on his bed surrounded by drugs, drug paraphernalia, and guns of various shapes and sizes.

INT. CENTER COURT - THE FORUM - CONTINUOUS

MARVIN (SINGING)
Whose broad stripes and bright stars...

There's scattered HAND-CLAPPING to the drumbeat. Other than that, although there are thousands present, all you can hear is Marvin's plaintive WAIL as he stands in the darkened stadium shrouded in light.

EXT./INT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOUSE - CONTINUOUS - MOS

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...thru the perilous fight.

Father Gay arrives by taxi with a small suitcase.

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
O'er the ramparts we watched...

Mother Gay admits him, gesturing for him to be quiet, that Marvin knows nothing of his arrival & points to a room upstairs down the hall.

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...were so gallantly streaming.

Brushing her off, Father Gay heads upstairs, only to be greeted by a loaded gun - Marvin aiming it at him.

But he just grabs the gun, like taking candy from a baby, and proceeds down the hall to his room. Marvin is left - humiliated.

INT. CENTER COURT - THE FORUM - CONTINUOUS

MARVIN (SINGING)
And the rocket's red glare...

Marvin continues to SING from his heart & soul. CLOSE-UPS of Harvey (black eye), Larkin, & Marilyn, etc, in awe.

INT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOUSE - THAT EVENING - MOS

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...the bombs bursting in air,

Courageous from shooting up, Marvin makes his stoned way down the hall. At his Father's door, he kneels down and peeks through the keyhole.

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
Gave proof through the night...

THRU THE KEYHOLE: He sees the black woman with the blonde wig sitting at her makeup mirror, her Bible in her lap.

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
...that our flag was still there.

Marvin flings open the door, distraught at witnessing his Father in drag! He approaches - blaming, beseeching-

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
*Oh, say does that star-spangled
banner yet wave...*

Father Gay pulls the gun he took from Marvin out from under his Bible and points it at Marvin. But Marvin keeps coming, his eyes as clear as a child's, almost challenging, begging his Father to bless or kill him. And he does, shooting Marvin in the leg and the heart before collapsing on the bed in remorse.

MARVIN (SINGING) (V.O.)
O'er the land of the free...

Mother Gay comes into the room, drops down, and cradles her son's lifeless body in her arms...

INT. CENTER COURT - THE FORUM - CONTINUOUS

MARVIN (SINGING)
And the home of the brave!

Marvin finishes SINGING the Star-Spangled Banner and the APPLAUSE IS DEAFENING. CLOSE-UPS of Larkin, Harvey, Marilyn, Gordon, Odell, Frankie, the Record Execs, etc. Janis and Mother Gay stand APPLAUDING, tears streaming down their faces. Bubby & Pie jump up & down.

KIDS

That's my Daddy; that's my Daddy...

The only one not standing is Father Gay, conspicuously seated, his face a mask.

Marvin Gaye takes his final bow - TRIUMPHANT!

SLOW FADE TO BLACK:

FADE UP ON:

EXT. MARVIN'S MOTHER'S NEW HOME - LA - EARLY MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: APRIL FOOL'S DAY - 1984

AERIAL SHOT: It's the beginning of a beautiful spring day. Dew is on all the foliage, birds are CHIRPING.

As the shot widens, we see that the house is roped off. Emergency vehicles stand at the ready. PEOPLE gather outside the Gay house. At first it's the few who make the pilgrimage to be near their idol to pay their respects, kids on their fathers' shoulders, people standing on the roofs of cars to get a better look (the worshippers, the curious, the press). Father Gay is escorted out, handcuffed, and taken away in a police car.

BLEED INTO:

EXT. GRAMERCY PLACE - EARLY MORNING - SHORTLY THEREAFTER

PROCESS SHOT: We see the number of BYSTANDERS grow exponentially as the shot continues to widen.

FATHER (V.O.)

'Meaningless! Meaningless!' sayest
the Teacher. 'Everything is
meaningless!' ...

A chasing after the wind...

FADE TO BLACK:

POSTSCRIPTS:

Marvin Pentz Gaye, Jr., was buried the next day at Forest Lawn's Hall of Liberty Chapel in Los Angeles. There was such a large turnout that loudspeakers had to be employed.

Reverend Marvin Pentz Gay, Sr., was held in the Los Angeles County Men's Jail, awaiting his hearing in court. He did not attend Marvin's funeral. On November 2, 1984, the judge ordered Reverend Gay released on a six-year suspended sentence and five years' probation, calling the case "terribly tragic" and saying that Marvin provoked the incident. He died in 1998 at the age of 84.

Alberta "Babe" Gay, Marvin's mother, filed for divorce during Father Gay's trial. In 1987, three years after Marvin's death, she died of cancer.

In 1996, Marvin was posthumously awarded the Grammy's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Marvin is still loved and his music is played throughout the world today.